

April 2015 | Initial Study

RANCHO SAN GORGONIO SPECIFIC PLAN

City of Banning

Prepared for:

City of Banning

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAQS	ambient air quality standards
AB	Assembly Bill
AQMP	air quality management plan
BPD	Banning Police Department
Cal/EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CGS	California Geologic Survey
CO	carbon monoxide
CRB	Colorado River Basin
EIR	environmental impact report
GHG	greenhouse gases
IS	initial study
MSHCP	multiple species habitat conservation plan
NO _x	nitrogen oxides
O ₃	ozone
RCFD	Riverside County Fire Department
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SoCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SO _x	sulfur oxides
TIA	traffic impact analysis
TTM	tentative tract map
WQMP	water quality management plan
WSA	water supply assessment

Abbreviations and Acronyms

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1. Introduction

The City of Banning is circulating this Initial Study (IS) for the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan (proposed project) for public review and comment. The proposed project would provide comprehensive direction for the development of 671 acres in the City and 160 acres located within the City's Sphere of Influence (which is proposed to be annexed to the City as part of the overall project development).. In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City of Banning, as lead agency, is preparing the environmental documentation for the proposed project to determine if approval of the discretionary actions requested and subsequent development would have a significant impact on the environment.

As defined by Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study is prepared primarily to provide the lead agency with information to use as the basis for determining whether an environmental impact report (EIR), negative declaration, or mitigated negative declaration would be appropriate for providing the necessary environmental documentation for the proposed project.

1.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is in the southern portion of the City of Banning in Riverside County, California. The City of Yucaipa and San Bernardino National Forest border Banning to the north; the City of Palm Springs lies 17 miles to the east; the City of San Jacinto is 9 miles to the south; and the City of Beaumont borders Banning on the west (see Figure 1, *Regional Location*). The Morongo Indian Reservation is northeast of Banning. Sections of the Morongo Indian Reservation are checkered across portions of the Banning area—one is near the southeast site boundary, and a second is about 0.5 mile south of the west half of the project site. Areas of unincorporated Riverside County also border Banning on the north, east, and south.

As shown in Figure 2, *Local Vicinity*, the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan site is an irregularly shaped area on the southern edge of the City, about 0.4 mile south of Interstate 10 (I-10), which runs east–west through the City and provides regional access to the site.

The project site is bounded by Westward Avenue on the north, Sunset Avenue and Turtle Dove Lane on the west, San Gorgonio Avenue (State Route 243, SR-243) on the east, and Coyote Trail and Old Idyllwild Road on the south. Access to the site from I-10 is via ramps at Sunset Avenue, 22nd Street, and 8th Street, from west to east. A portion of the site (approximately 160 acres) is in the City's sphere of influence (SOI) and is anticipated to be annexed as part of the development process.

1. Introduction

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

1.2.1 Existing Land Use

The entire site is undeveloped and leased for cattle grazing; existing site conditions are shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph and Photo Location Map*, and Figure 4, *Site Photographs*. According to the City of Banning's 2006 General Plan and as shown in Figure 5, *Current Land Use Designations*, the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan site is primarily designated Very Low Density Residential, with limited Medium Density Residential, Rural Residential, Open Space-Parks, and Open Space-Resources. The portion of the project site within the SOI in unincorporated Riverside County is designated Ranch/Agriculture.

Four main creeks run through or adjacent to the project site. Pershing Creek runs northwest to southeast through the majority of the site; Montgomery Creek runs northwest to southeast through the eastern half of the site; Gilman Home Channel runs adjacent to the eastern boundary and next to Banning High School and the KOA Campground. All three drainage channels are tributary to Smith Creek, which flows southwest to northeast in the southeastern portion of the site. All creeks are unimproved within the boundaries of the project site.

1.2.2 Surrounding Land Use

Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph and Photo Location Map*, shows the surrounding land uses—Dysart Park abutting the northern project boundary between Victory Avenue and Lowell Street, residential to the north along Westward Avenue, a KOA campground and Banning High School to the northeast along San Gorgonio Avenue, and Mt. San Jacinto Community College San Gorgonio Pass campus to the northwest. Other surrounding land to the east, south, and west consists of rural residential and agricultural uses and vacant land. The site is approximately 0.5 mile south of the Ramsey Street commercial corridor and Banning's downtown area. Banning Municipal Airport is about 1.1 miles northeast of the site.

1.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is a master-planned community on the 831-acre site, and is organized into 44 planning areas (PAs)¹ that include a mixture of residential, commercial, open space, and recreational uses and a maximum of 3,385 residential units. Parks and paseos are incorporated to buffer the natural creeks onsite and to provide nonmotorized access throughout the planned community.

¹ The Specific Plan Planning Areas are numbered 1 through 18; however, some PAs include alpha character subsets of the same number. The total number of separate planning areas is therefore 44.

Figure 1 - Regional Location



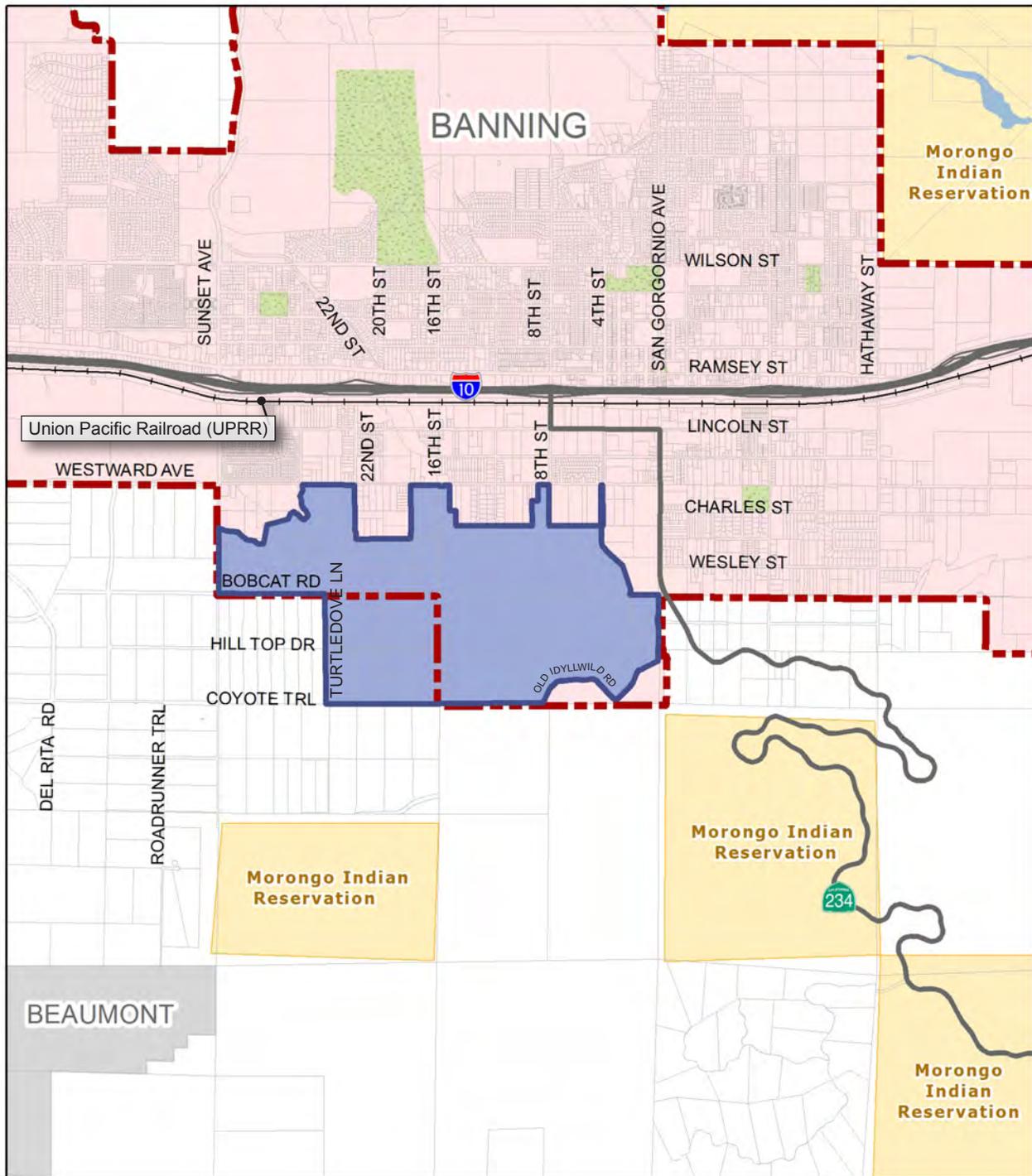
- Specific Plan Area
- Urban Areas
- City of Banning Boundary
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Water Bodies
- National Parks and Forests
- State Parks and Forests
- County Boundary



1. Introduction

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Figure 2 - Local Vicinity



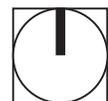
 City of Banning Boundary

 Local Park

 Railroads

 Specific Plan Area

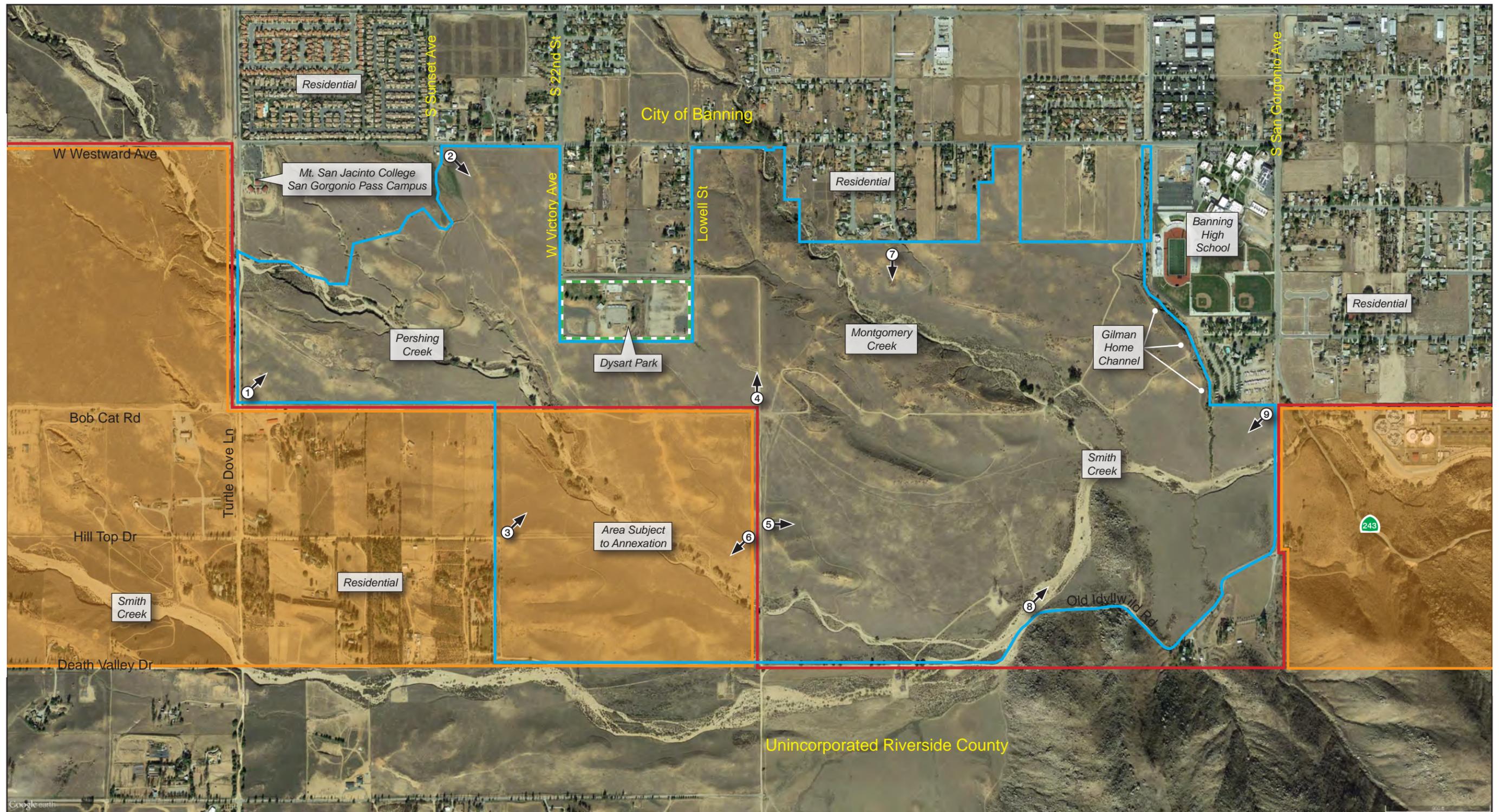
 Morongo Indian Reservation



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Figure 3 - Aerial Photograph and Photo Location Map



Source: Google Earth Pro, 2014



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Figure 4 - Site Photographs



① View looking northeast from west site boundary; the San Bernardino Mountains are in the background.



② View looking southeast from the northwest site perimeter. The houses in the middle ground are offsite; Mt. San Jacinto is in the background.



③ View looking northeast from southwest site perimeter. The San Bernardino Mountains are in the background.



④ View looking north from the central part of the site. The rust-colored hill in the middle ground is offsite to the north. Mt. San Gorgonio in the San Bernardino Mountains is in the background.



⑤ View looking east from the central part of the site. The San Jacinto Mountains are on the right, and the San Bernardino Mountains on the left.



⑥ View looking southwest from the central part of the site. The trees in the middle ground are onsite along Pershing Creek. The San Jacinto Mountains are in the background.



⑦ View looking south along a minor drainage from the north site perimeter; the San Jacinto Mountains are in the background.



⑧ View of Smith Creek bed looking northeast from southeast site perimeter. The hill covered with rock outcrops in the middle ground is onsite. The San Bernardino Mountains are in the background.

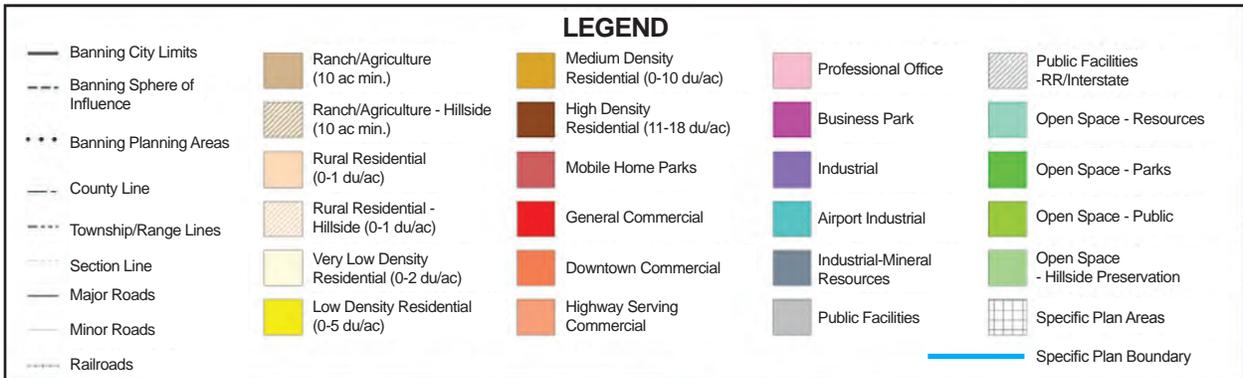
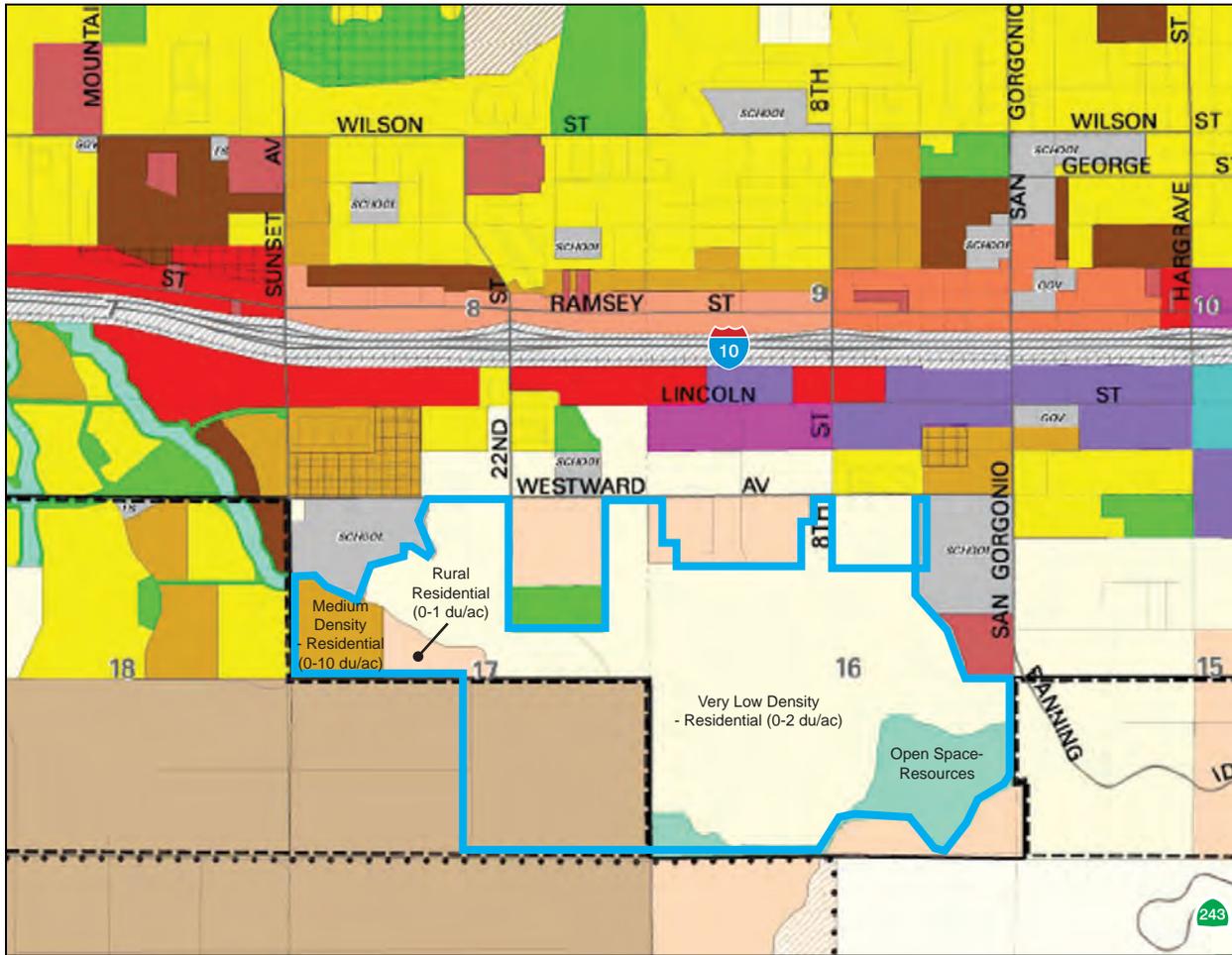


⑨ View looking south from the east site boundary; Old Idyllwild Road is on the left, and the San Jacinto Mountains are in the background.

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Figure 5 - Current Land Use Designations



Source: Terra Nova, 2006

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1. Introduction

1.3.1 Proposed Land Use

The following land uses are proposed for the project site:

- Residential, 62.2 percent (Very Low Density, Low Density, Medium Density, Medium Density – Age-Qualified, and Medium-High Density)
- Parks/Open Space, 25.2 percent (RSG Community Park, Confluence Park, Neighborhood Park, Entry Park, Village Paseos, Creeks/Creek Edge Linear Parks, Natural Open Space)
- Other, 12.5 percent (Neighborhood Commercial, Public Facility, Backbone Roadways Right-of-Way, Storm Drain Easement).

Table 1, *Proposed Land Uses*, provides a summary of land use categories proposed for the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan, and Figure 6, *Proposed Land Use Plan*, shows the location and distribution of the various land uses.

Table 1 Proposed Land Uses

Land Use	Gross Acres	% of Area	Dwelling Units (DUs)	Gross Density (du/ac)
Residential				
Very Low Density (VLDR) (0-2.5 du/ac)	47.1	5.7	94	2.0
Low Density (LDR) (2.6-6.0 du/ac)	301.8	36.3	1,355	4.5
Medium Density (MDR) Age Qualified (6.1-12.0 du/ac)	115.9	14.	754	6.5
Medium-High Density (MHDR) (12.1-18.0 du/ac)	51.7	6.2	930	18.0
Residential Totals	516.5 acres	62.2%	3,133 DUs	6.0 du/ac
Parks/Open Space				
RSG Community Park	26	3.2		
Confluence Park	10.2	1.2		
Neighborhood Park	12.7	1.5		
Entry Park	1.1	0.1		
Village Paseos	12.6	1.5		
Creeks/Creek Edge Linear Parks	122	14.7		
Natural Open Space	25.7	3.1		
Open Space Subtotals	210.3 acres	25.2%		
Other				
Neighborhood Commercial	9.3	1.1	168*	18.0*
Public Facility	2.6	0.3		
School	14	1.7	84**	6.0**
Backbone Roadways Right-of-Way	77.	9.3		
Storm Drain Easement	1.1	0.1		
Other Subtotals	104 acres	12.5%		
TOTAL	830.8	100%	3,385***	4.1

* A Residential Overlay alternative of Medium-High Density Residential (MHDR, 12.1-18.0 du/ac) is allowed on Planning Area 9 in lieu of the Neighborhood Commercial designation, if PA 9 does not develop as commercial.

** A Residential Overlay alternative of Low Density Residential (LDR, 2.6-6.0 du/ac) is allowed on Planning Area 16-C in lieu of the School use designation, if the Banning Unified School District does not to acquire PA 16-C and the site is not developed with a school use.

*** The maximum number of dwelling units to be allowed in the Specific Plan is 3,385.

1. Introduction

1.3.1.1 RESIDENTIAL USES

Very low, low, medium, and medium-high density residential uses make up 62.2 percent of the project site. Very-Low-Density Residential (VLDR) is proposed in PA 1; Low-Density Residential (LDR) in PAs 2 through 6; Medium-Density Residential (MDR) in PA 7; and Medium-High-Density Residential (MHDR) in PAs 8 and 9 (as a Residential Overlay alternative).

VLDR dwelling units would consist of conventional single-family detached homes with private side and rear yards. Similarly, LDR uses would be developed as single-family detached homes as well as alley-loaded homes with rear-facing garages with access via a common private alley. MDR uses, exclusively for residents 55 years and up in age, may include conventional single-family detached, single-family detached alley loaded, detached cluster, duplex, row townhome, and attached cluster housing. MHDR would allow for duplex, row townhome, attached cluster, and multi-family homes.

In total, a maximum of 3,385 dwelling units would be allowed in the specific plan area, with an average density of 4.1 dwelling units per acre.

1.3.1.2 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Approximately 210 acres of public park and open space would be developed in PA 10 through 15, including a community park, confluence park, neighborhood park, entry park, creek linear parks, and village paseos. The creek linear park would be developed along the Pershing and Smith Creeks as a buffer from residential development, and the village paseos would run east-west through the specific plan area to connect the residential and park developments. Both Pershing and Smith Creeks are proposed to remain in their natural condition with enhanced trail systems on either side for their full frontage through the community. In addition, natural open space is proposed in PA 17 in and around the small hill at the southeast corner of the site and would connect with the creek linear park near Smith Creek in PA 15-B.

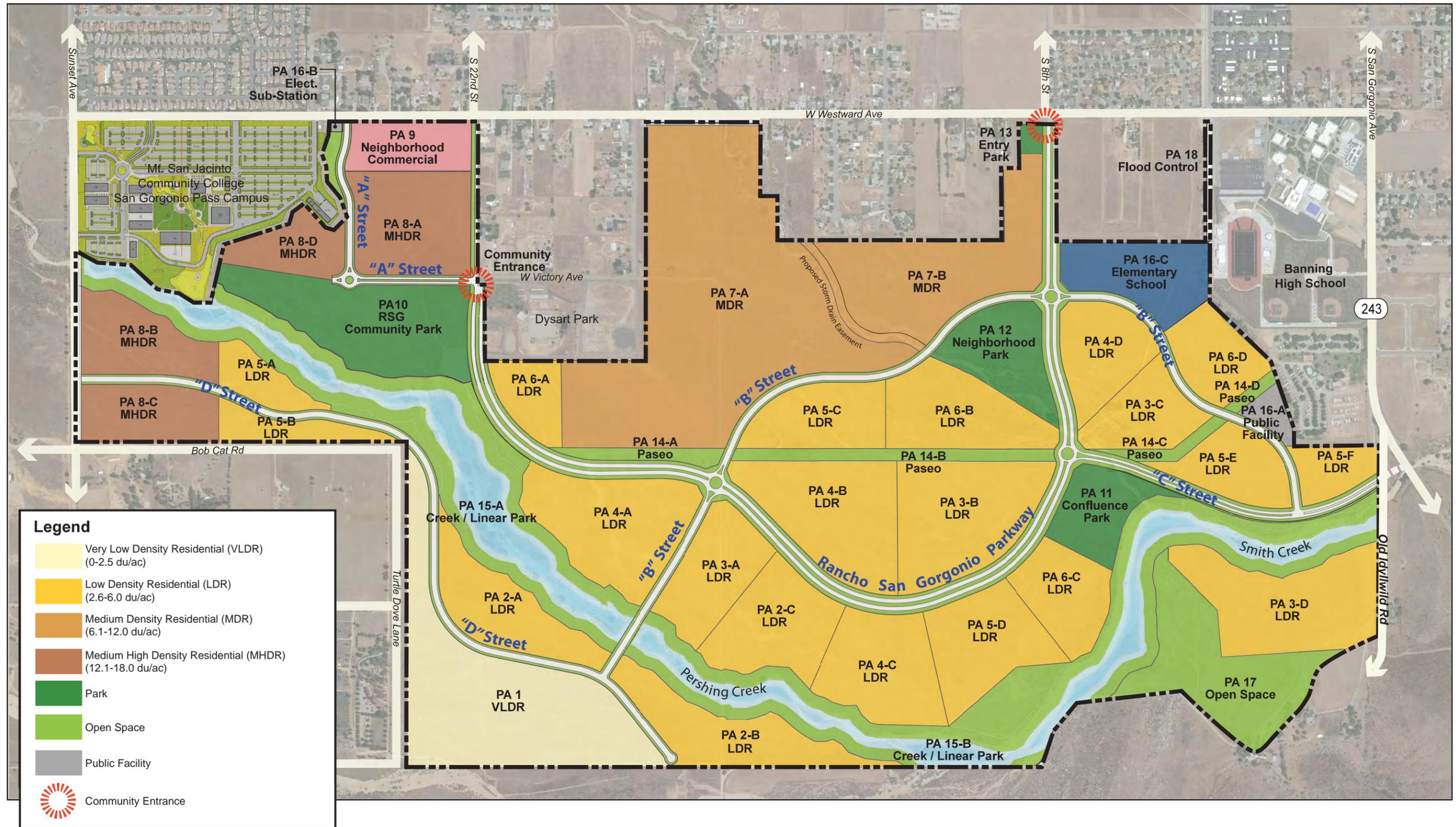
1.3.1.3 NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

The neighborhood commercial (NC) area is proposed in PA 9 on the northwestern corner of the project site. This area would provide locations for businesses that would serve the day-to-day shopping and service needs of the planned community's residential uses. NC uses are typically anchored by a grocery store, but may consist of a mix of retail and services, such as pharmacies, banks, cleaners, etc. If future market conditions indicate that all or a portion of the NC area is not needed, the proposed project allows for up to 168 units of MHDR residential use to be developed in its place.

1.3.1.4 PUBLIC FACILITIES

PA 16-A is set aside and planned for public facility land uses (e.g., pump-station sites for potable water, recycled water, or wastewater; wastewater treatment and recycle facility; or similar use). PA 16-B is planned for a City electrical substation use, and flood control easements are planned for PA 18.

Figure 6 - Proposed Land Use Plan



Legend

- Very Low Density Residential (VLDR)
(0-2.5 du/ac)
- Low Density Residential (LDR)
(2.6-6.0 du/ac)
- Medium Density Residential (MDR)
(6.1-12.0 du/ac)
- Medium High Density Residential (MHDR)
(12.1-18.0 du/ac)
- Park
- Open Space
- Public Facility
- Community Entrance

Source: RBF Consulting, 2015



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1.3.2 Circulation

The Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan would have pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems, including roadways, landscaping, street lighting, sidewalks, and pedestrian paths. The main objective of the circulation plan is to provide direct and convenient access throughout the project area and to substantially implement the Circulation Element of the City of Banning General Plan as it relates to the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan. Figure 7, *Vehicular Circulation Plan*, shows the proposed system of streets, categorized in Table 2 as Modified Arterial, Modified Major, Modified Divided Collector, and Modified Collector.

Table 2 Proposed Roadway Categories

Roadway Classification	Right-of-Way Width, feet	Lanes	Median	Bicycle Lanes ¹	Sidewalks ²	Multi-purpose Trails ²	Landscaping
Modified Arterial	146/156	4	Raised	Both sides	Along one or both sides	Along one side	Along both sides, between sidewalks and/or multi-purpose trail and roadway
Modified Major	116	4	Painted	Both sides	Along one side	Along one side	Along both sides, between sidewalks and/or multi-purpose trail and roadway
Modified Divided Collector	80 to 116	2	Raised	Both sides	Along one side	Along one side (some roadway segments)	Along both sides, including between sidewalk and roadway
Modified Collector	80	2	None	Both sides	Along one side	Along one side	Along both sides, between sidewalks and/or multi-purpose trail and roadway

Source: RBF 2015.

¹ Bicycle lanes on some roadways would be eight or more feet wide; such lanes may be designated as dual low-speed vehicle and bike lanes.

² All roadways would have pedestrian facilities—either sidewalks or multi-purpose trails—on both sides of the street.

Figure 8, *Non-motorized Circulation Plan*, illustrates the proposed pathways and multipurpose trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrian travel throughout the specific plan area.

Primary community access points would be at 22nd Street and 8th Street, south of Westward Avenue. A median-divided modified arterial named Rancho San Gorgonio Parkway is designed to connect 8th Street to 22nd Street, with an east-west connection to SR-243. Additional access will be provided via Sunset Avenue, with a proposed bridge crossing Pershing Creek.

Public transit in Banning is provided by Pass Transit. Route 6 serves the southern portion of the City, which includes the project area, along Westward Avenue from Sunset Avenue to South San Gorgonio Avenue/SR-243. The proposed circulation plan includes bus turnouts.

1.3.3 Infrastructure

Infrastructure extensions and improvements would be required to support the proposed project. Proposed onsite infrastructure includes storm drains, retention/detention basins, wastewater, water, recycled water, and dry utilities (i.e., electric, gas, telephone, and cable) that would connect to existing facilities adjacent to the

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project site. The proposed Specific Plan includes a Water Master Plan and a Sewer Master Plan outlining the sizes and locations of proposed water and sewer mains (see Figure 9, *Conceptual Potable Water Master Plan*, and Figure 10, *Conceptual Sewer Master Plan*). The Specific Plan includes construction of several storm drains, one of which would convey Montgomery Creek underground through the site, and about 37 detention/retention basins, as shown in Figure 11, *Drainage Master Plan*. The other three streams in the project site would be left largely in their existing condition.

1.3.4 Project Phasing

The proposed project would be phased to provide an orderly, built-out community based on market demand and infrastructure availability to service the project. Figure 12, *Phasing Plan*, illustrates the proposed six phases. Buildout of the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan is estimated to occur over a 20-year period. Assuming construction begins in year 2016, the time frame for completion could be from 2016 through 2035. However, construction depends on market conditions, project financing, and development of final construction plans. The six project phases would start consecutively every 3.3 years on average, depending on economic conditions. Phases may also occur concurrently so long as adequate infrastructure is provided.

1.4 EXISTING ZONING AND GENERAL PLAN

As stated above, the City of Banning's 2006 General Plan designates the Rancho San Gorgonio site as primarily Very Low Density Residential, with limited Medium Density Residential, Rural Residential, and Open Space-Parks and Open Space-Resources. The zoning designations of the site are the same as the general plan land use designations.

The portion of the project site in unincorporated Riverside County is designated Agriculture in the Riverside County General Plan, and is zoned A-1-10, Light Agriculture, with detached single-family residences at a maximum density of one unit per 10-acre lot.

A General Plan Amendment would create a Specific Plan Area overlay that would allow the land uses as proposed in the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan (see Figure 6, *Proposed Land Use Plan*).

1.5 DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS

The following discretionary approvals by the Banning City Council are prerequisites to implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. The Planning Commission will make recommendations to the City Council on the discretionary approvals.

- **Certification of the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan EIR:** The Banning City Council would consider the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan Final EIR for certification after considering all written comments to the Draft EIR.
- **Adoption of the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan:** The Specific Plan is a regulatory document that establishes the zoning, land use designations, development standards, and design guidelines for the entire Specific Plan project area. The Specific Plan would implement the City's general plan as amended

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by the Specific Plan. The development regulations of the document would be adopted by ordinance, and the balance of the document would be adopted by ordinance or resolution. Upon approval of the Specific Plan, subsequent tract/parcel maps or site development plans must be in substantial compliance with the Specific Plan.

- **Approval of a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change:** Text and map amendments of the general plan and zoning code would be required prior to the adoption of the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan to identify the project with a designation of “Specific Plan,” as well as general plan circulation plan adjustments.
- **Approval of Tentative Tract Map No. 36586:** A large-lot tentative tract map (TTM) prepared would be considered by the City concurrently with the review of this Specific Plan. The TTM creates the backbone road right-of-ways, planning areas, park, and open space parcels.
- **Approval of Development Agreement:** A statutory development agreement, authorized pursuant to California Government Code Section 65864 et seq., would be processed as part of the approval of this Specific Plan. The development agreement of this Specific Plan would include, among other items, methods for financing acquisition and construction of infrastructure and acquisition and development of adequate levels of parkland and schools. Such a development agreement shall be fully approved before the issuance of the first building permit for this project.
- **Annexation of 160 acres in the City’s Sphere of Influence (SOI) into the City limits:** Prior to any development within the unincorporated portions of the site, the 161 acres in the City’s sphere of influence must be formally annexed into the City. The Local Agency Formation Commission approval process would be completed after project approvals by the City of Banning.

1.6 CITY ACTION REQUESTED

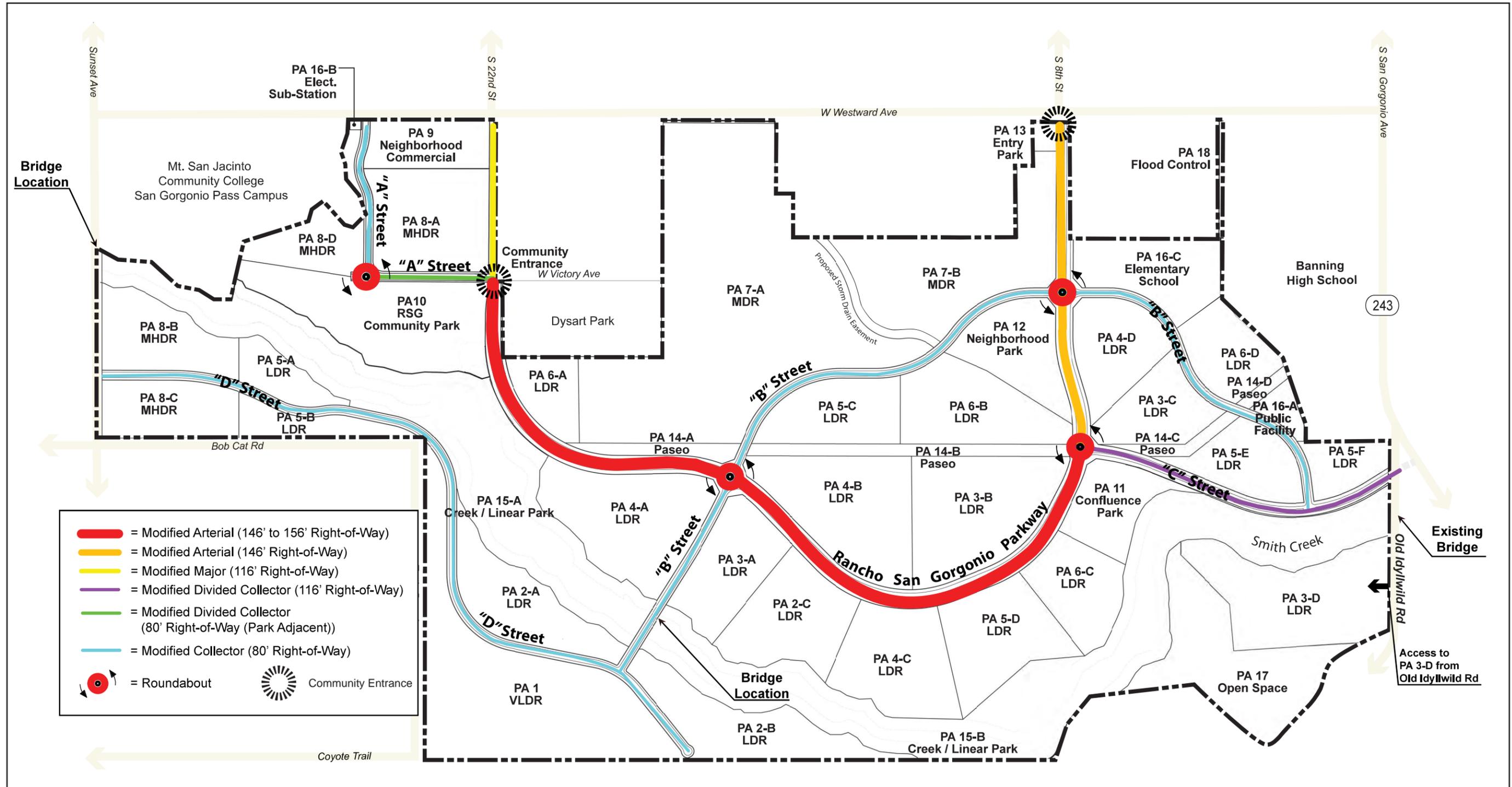
The Banning City Council is the City’s legislative body and the approving authority for the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan. In order to implement the proposed project, the City Council must take the following actions:

- Certification of the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan EIR
- Adoption of the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan
- Approval of a General Plan Amendment/Zone Change to reflect the proposed project
- Approval of Tentative Tract Map No. 36586
- Approval of Development Agreement
- Annexation of 160 acres in SOI into City limits

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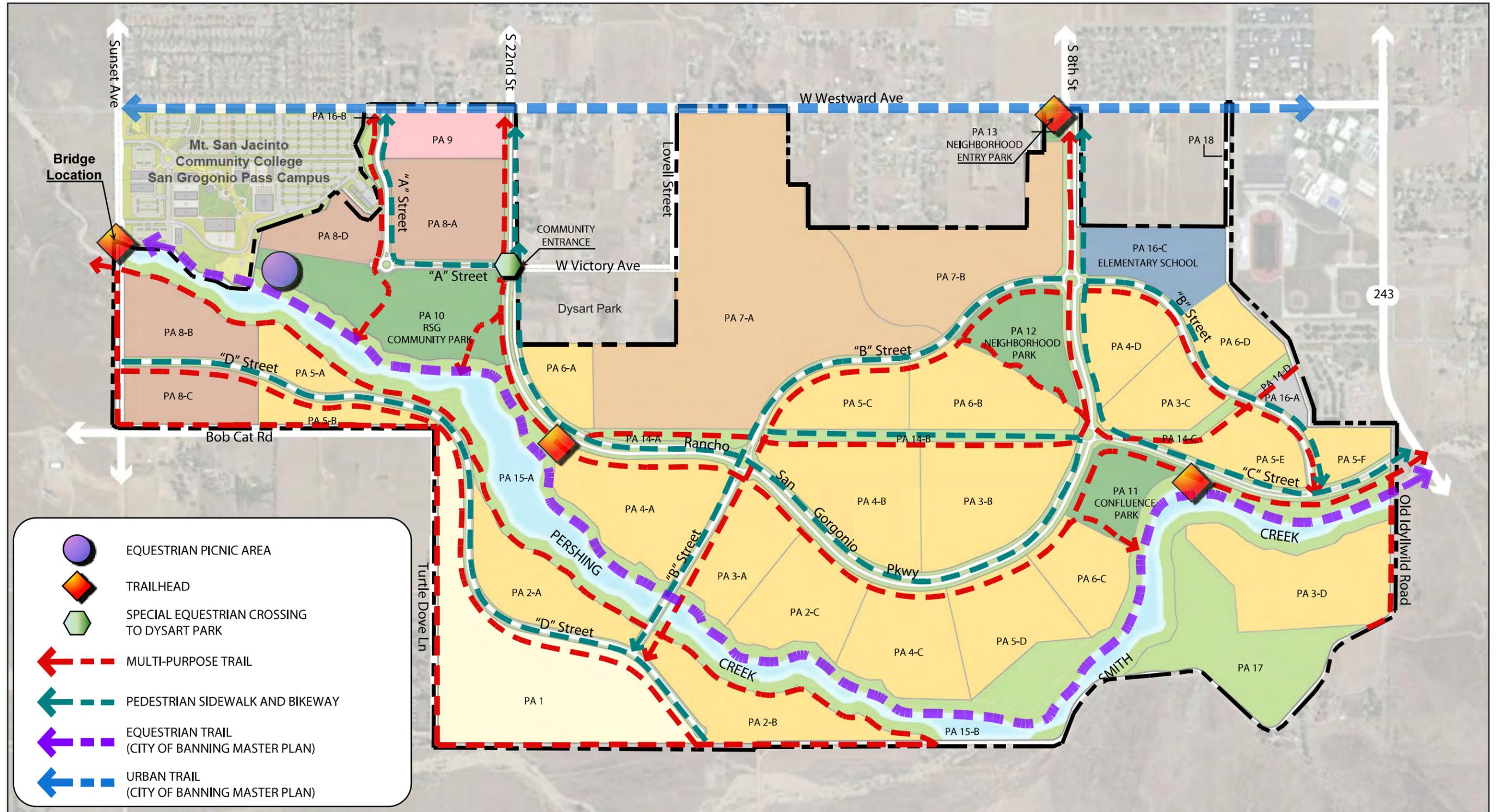
Figure 7 - Vehicular Circulation Plan



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Figure 8 - Non-motorized Circulation Plan



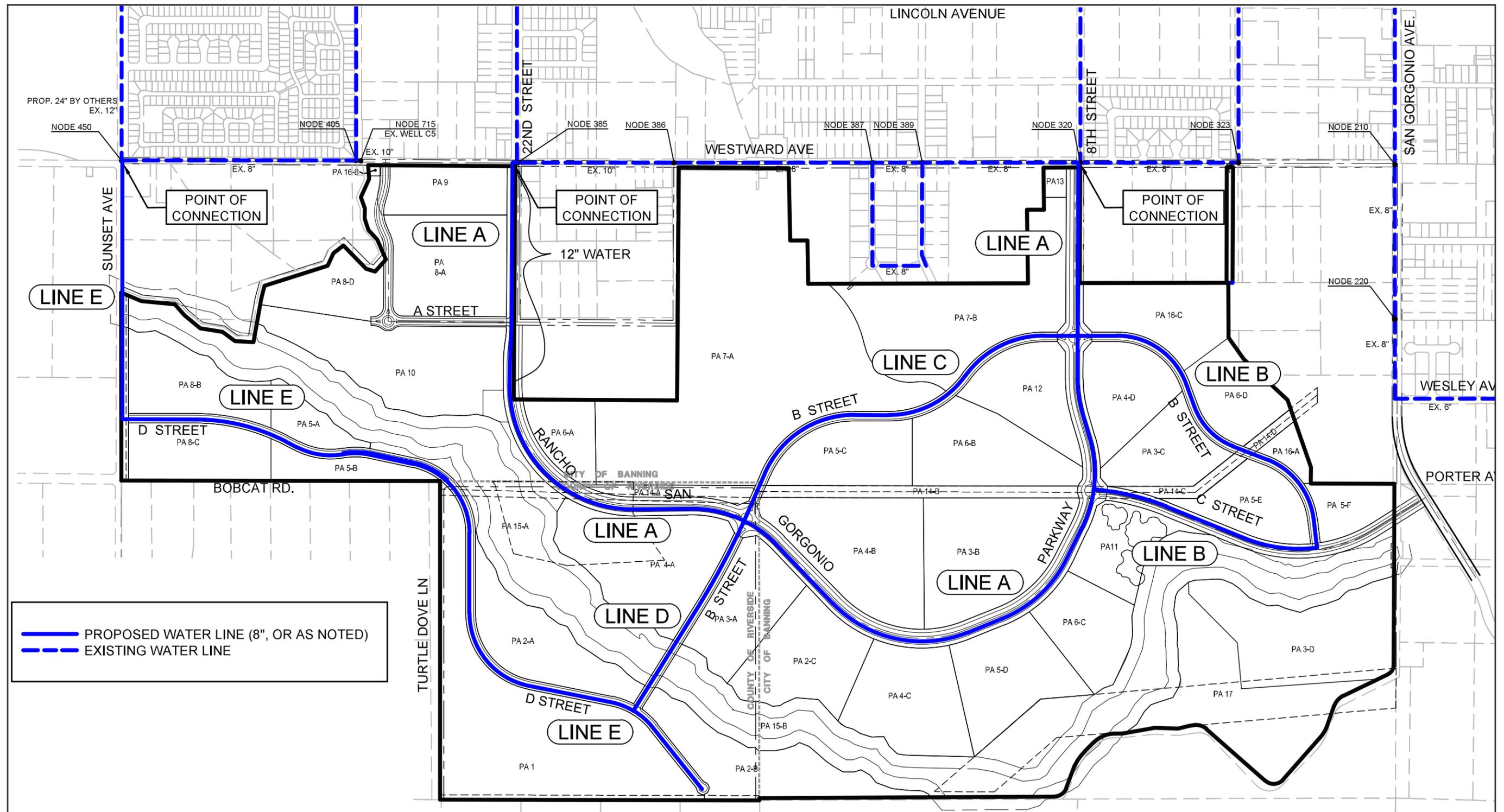
Source: RBF Consulting, 2015



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Figure 9 - Conceptual Potable Water Master Plan



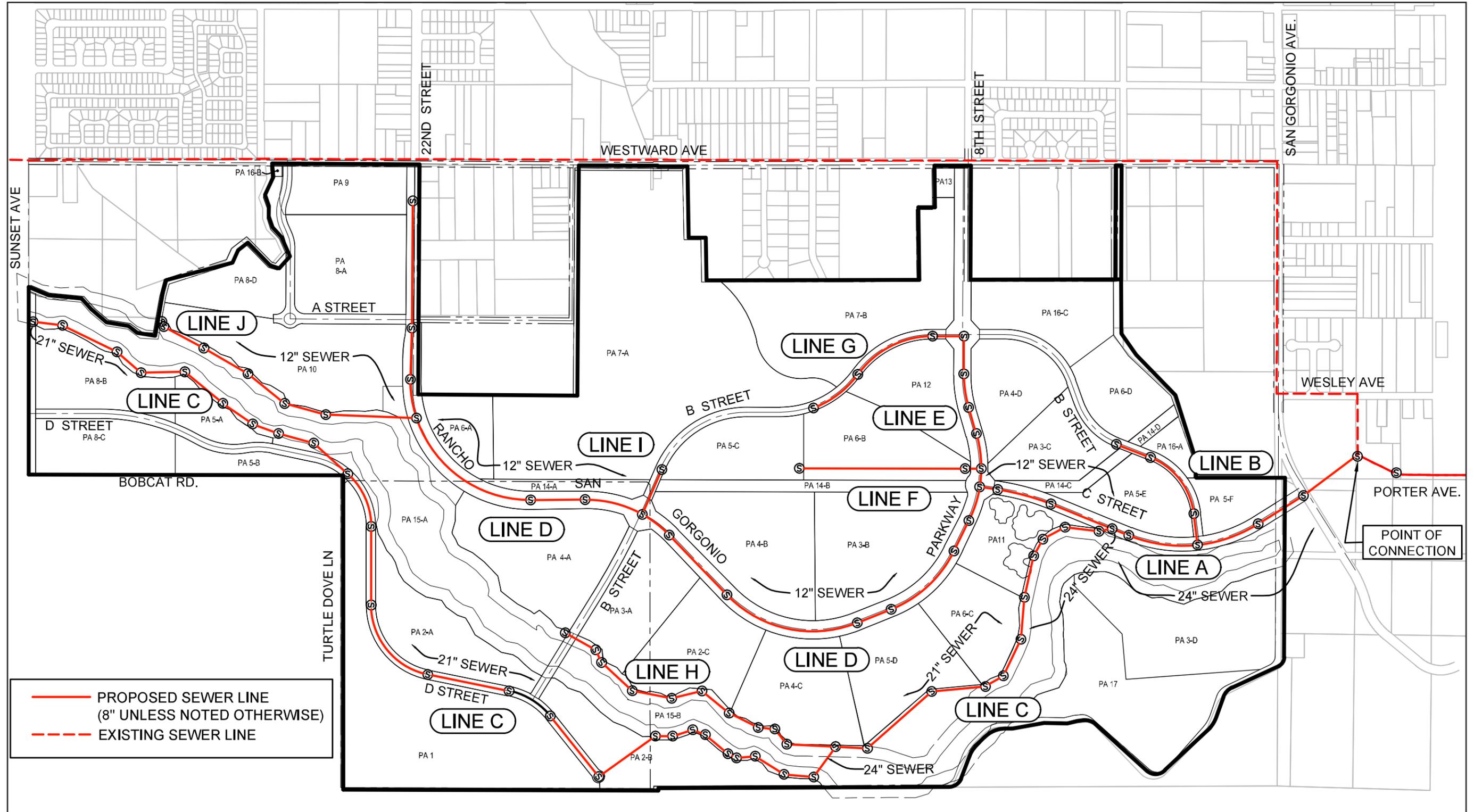
Source: RBF Consulting, 2015



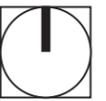
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Figure 10 - Sewer Master Plan



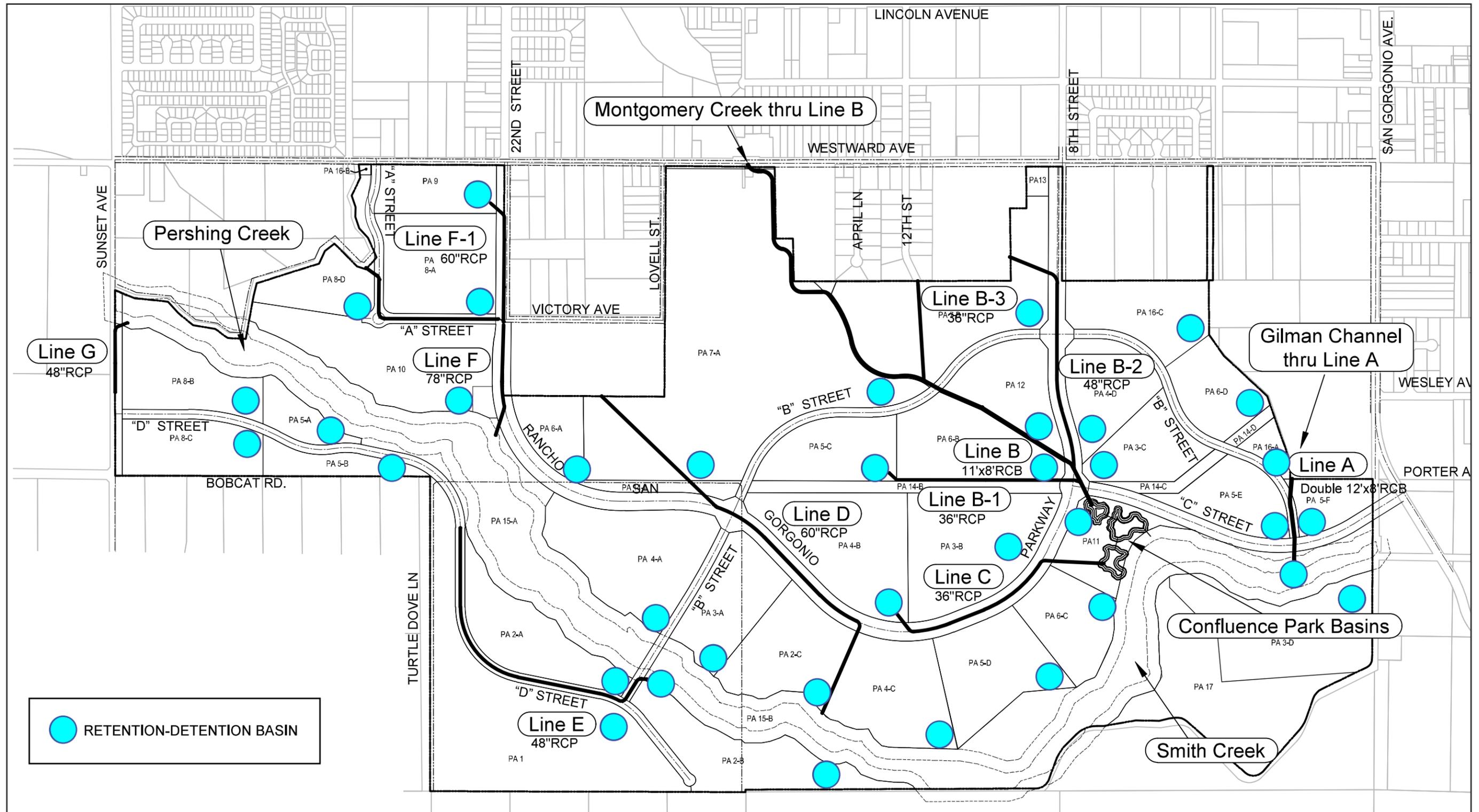
Source: RBF Consulting, 2015



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Figure 11 - Drainage Master Plan



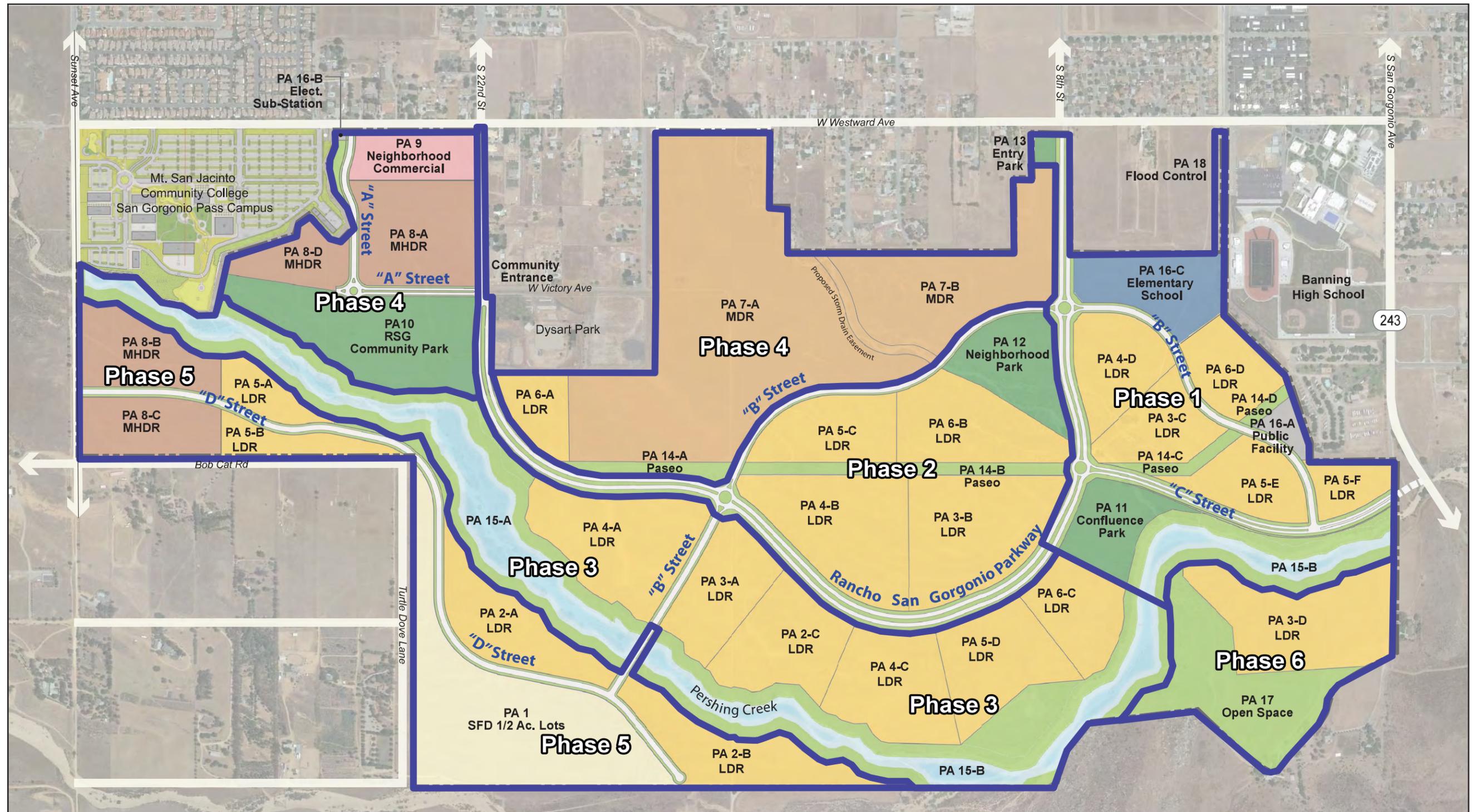
Source: RBF Consulting, 2015



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Figure 12 - Phasing Plan



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2. Environmental Checklist

2.1 BACKGROUND

1. **Project Title:** Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan

2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**

City of Banning
99 E. Ramsey Street
Banning, CA 92220

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**

Brian Guillot, Acting Community Development Director
(951) 922-3131

4. **Project Location:** The project site is bounded by Westward Avenue on the north, Sunset Avenue and Turtle Dove Lane on the west, San Gorgonio Avenue (SR-243) on the east, and Coyote Trail and Old Idyllwild Road on the south.

5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:**

Rancho San Gorgonio, LLC
Phil Burum, Vice President
10621 Civic Center Drive
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

6. **General Plan Designation:** The current land use designations of the project site include Very Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Rural Residential, Open Space-Parks, and Open Space-Resources. The portion of the project site located in the SOI in unincorporated Riverside County is designated as Agriculture (AG).

7. **Zoning:** Same as General Plan designations above. The part of the project site in the City's SOI in unincorporated Riverside County is zoned A-1-10 (light agriculture, 1 dwelling unit per 10-acres).

8. **Description of Project:** Buildout of the Specific Plan would involve development of up to 3,385 residential units on 831 acres, including: 9.3 acres of neighborhood commercial uses; parks and open space; circulation improvements including roads and several types of trails; a school site and fire station

2. Environmental Checklist

site; and utility improvements including water, sewer, and drainage improvements. The Specific Plan would be built out in six phases over about 20 years.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: Depicted in Figure 2, *Local Vicinity*, the surrounding land uses include Dysart Park abutting the northern project boundary between Victory Avenue and Lowell Street, residential properties to the north along Westward Avenue, a KOA Campground to the east, Banning High School to the northeast, and Mt. San Jacinto Community College San Gorgonio Pass campus to the northwest. The site is approximately 0.5 miles south of the Ramsey Street commercial corridor and Banning's downtown area. Banning Municipal Airport is about two miles northeast of the site. There are no structures for human occupancy onsite. The site is leased for cattle grazing.

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required:

- Riverside County Local Agency Formation Commission: Annexation of part of SOI into City
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife: Section 1602 Permit
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit
- Regional Water Quality Control Board: Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification
- Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board: Water Quality Management Plan Approval

2. Environmental Checklist

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact,” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural and Forestry Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

2.3 DETERMINATION (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE LEAD AGENCY)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.



Signature

April 17, 2015

Date

Brian Guillot
Printed Name

City of Banning
For

2. Environmental Checklist

2.4 EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors, as well as general standards (e.g., the project would not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including offsite as well as onsite, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) “Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) **Earlier Analyses Used.** Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) **Impacts Adequately Addressed.** Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) **Mitigation Measures.** For effects that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated. A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

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- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
- the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	X			
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	X			
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	X			
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	X			
II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	X			
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?				X

2. Environmental Checklist

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
III. AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	X			
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	X			
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	X			
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	X			
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	X			
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	X			
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	X			
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	X			

2. Environmental Checklist

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	X			
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5?	X			
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	X			
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	X			
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	X			
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?			X	
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	X			
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	X			
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	X			
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				X

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Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	X			
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	X			
VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			X	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?			X	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	X			
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	X			
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	X			
IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	X			
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	X			

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Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site	X			
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	X			
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	X			
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	X			
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	X			
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	X			
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	X			
X. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	X			
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	X			
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X
XII. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	X			
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	X			

2. Environmental Checklist

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	X			
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	
XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	X			
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a) Fire protection?	X			
b) Police protection?	X			
c) Schools?	X			
d) Parks?	X			
e) Other public facilities?	X			
XV. RECREATION.				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	X			
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	X			

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Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	X			
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	X			
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	X			
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	X			
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	X			
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	X			
XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a) Exceed waste water treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	X			
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or waste water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	X			
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	X			
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	X			
e) Result in a determination by the waste water treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	X			
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	X			
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	X			

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Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	X			
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	X			
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	X			

3. Environmental Analysis

Section 3.2 provided a checklist of environmental impacts. This section provides an evaluation of the impact categories and questions contained in the checklist and identifies mitigation measures, if applicable.

3.1 AESTHETICS

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Potentially Significant Impact. Scenic vistas are panoramic views of natural or man-made features that are important on a community-wide basis and helps define the aesthetic character of a community —such as mountains, oceans or lakes, forests, or urban skylines. The project site is in the San Gorgonio Pass, a valley flanked by two high mountain ranges, the San Bernardino Mountains to the north and the San Jacinto Mountains to the south. The southeast part of the project site is at the northern foot of the San Jacinto Mountains, which can be seen from nearly the entire site. The San Bernardino Mountains dominate the view north from the site, and the Little San Bernardino Mountains are also visible to the east. Development of the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan could block scenic vistas from some surrounding land uses. This topic will be assessed in the EIR.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Potentially Significant Impact. SR-243 is a designated State Scenic Highway and is designated a National Forest Scenic Byway by the US Forest Service (Caltrans 2011; USFS 2014). There are trees onsite, mostly along streams. There are rock outcroppings on a bedrock knob in the southeast part of the site. Project development could damage scenic resources, including scenic resources within a state scenic highway. This topic will be addressed in the EIR.

c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

Potentially Significant Impact. The visual character of most of the site is gently rolling hills vegetated with grasses and cut by four drainage courses. Surrounding land uses include Dysart Park abutting the northern project boundary between Victory Avenue and Lowell Street, residences to the north along Westward Avenue, a KOA campground to the east, Banning High School to the northeast, and Mt. San Jacinto Community College San Gorgonio Pass campus to the northwest. Other surrounding land to the east, south, and west consist of rural residential and agricultural uses and vacant land. Project development would substantially alter the existing visual character of the project site. This topic will be evaluated in the EIR.

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- d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

Potentially Significant Impact. There are no existing light sources onsite because the site is vacant and is leased for cattle grazing. The proposed project would increase the amount of light in the area above what is being generated by vacant land by directly adding new sources of illumination including security lighting, decorative lighting, and street lighting. The EIR will describe proposed types of lighting and impacts of such lighting on existing nighttime views in the area.

3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project, the Forest Legacy Assessment project, and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

- a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?**

No Impact. According to the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the project site does not contain Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. The project site consists of land primarily categorized as Farmland of Local Importance and Other Land (DLRP 2012a). Farmland of Local Importance is defined as soils that would be classified as Prime and Statewide, but lack available irrigation water. Other Land is defined as land not pertinent to agricultural use, such as low-density rural developments, brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing. Given that the project area lacks available irrigation water to be considered Prime or Statewide, development of the proposed project would have no impact on existing Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

- b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Williamson Act contracts restrict the use of privately owned land to agriculture and compatible open-space uses under contract with local governments. In exchange, the land is taxed based on actual use rather than potential market value.² The part of the site in unincorporated Riverside

² The portion of the site in unincorporated Riverside County was mapped as Williamson Act Non-Prime Agricultural Land on the Riverside County Williamson Act FY 2008-2009 map. Williamson Act Non-Prime Agricultural Land is defined as land enrolled under California Land Conservation Act contract and does not meet any of the criteria for classification as Prime Agricultural Land (DLRP 2012b). Non-Prime Land is defined as Open Space Land of Statewide Significance under the California Open Space Subvention Act (see California Government Code Section 16143). Most Non-Prime Land is in agricultural uses such as grazing or nonirrigated crops.

3. Environmental Analysis

County is in San Gorgonio Pass Agricultural Preserve No. 1. Riverside County Agricultural Preserves aim to encourage continued agricultural use of land through Williamson Act contracts (RCACR 2015). However, there are no Williamson Act contracts in effect on the project site (Caslav 2015).

The Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan proposes very low and low-density residential uses, and portions of the creek linear park and paseo are on Non-Prime Agricultural Land. These uses are not consistent with the City of Banning General Plan, which designates this area as Ranch/Agriculture, or with the existing Light Agriculture zoning on the part of the site in unincorporated Riverside County. Thus, development in this portion of the project area could have a potentially significant impact on agricultural resources. This topic will be addressed in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be recommended as appropriate.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?

No Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would not cause the rezoning or conflict with the existing zoning of forest land or timberland as defined by Public Resources Code Sections 12220(g) or 51104(g). The City of Banning does not have any areas designated forest land or timberland for production or resource management, so the proposed Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan would not cause any impacts to such areas. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. No forest vegetation was identified onsite in the General Biological Resources and Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Compliance Report completed for the proposed project (LSA Associates 2013); therefore, the development of the proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land or convert forest land to nonforest use. Impacts to forest land will not be examined in the EIR.

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. Surrounding land is not designated as important farmland or forest use. No impacts would occur, and this issue will not be further addressed in the EIR.

3.3 AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project site is in the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB), and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) is the air-pollution control agency for the SoCAB. The

3. Environmental Analysis

air quality plan for the SoCAB is the air quality management plan adopted in 2012. Construction of projects permitted under the proposed Specific Plan would generate exhaust from equipment and vehicle trips, fugitive dust from demolition and ground-disturbing activities, and off-gas emissions from architectural coatings and paving. Specific Plan buildout would result in increased criteria air pollutants. The EIR will evaluate the proposed project for consistency with regional growth forecasts and any impacts the planning program may have on the attainment of regional air quality objectives. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

b) Violate any air-quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air-quality violation?

Potentially Significant Impact. Construction and operation of projects pursuant to the proposed Specific Plan could generate fugitive dust, stationary-source emissions, and mobile-source emissions. Emissions would include short-term construction emissions and long-term operational emissions. An air-quality analysis has been conducted for the proposed project to determine if the resulting project's short- or long-term emissions would exceed SCAQMD's regional significance thresholds. This topic will be addressed in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air-quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project site is in the SoCAB, and is designated under the California and National ambient air-quality standards as nonattainment for ozone (O₃), coarse inhalable particulate matter (PM₁₀), fine inhalable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), nitrogen oxides (NO_x) (California standard only), and lead (Los Angeles County only). Specific Plan buildout may increase existing levels of criteria pollutants and contribute to the nonattainment status for these criteria pollutants in the SoCAB. Emissions would include short-term construction emissions and long-term operational emissions. An air-quality analysis has been prepared to determine if the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in any criteria air pollutant. This topic will be addressed in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be recommended, as appropriate.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Potentially Significant Impact. An impact is also potentially significant if emission levels exceed the state or federal ambient air-quality standards, thereby exposing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Sensitive receptors are persons more sensitive to the unhealthful effects of emissions (such as children and the elderly). Land uses that are considered sensitive receptors typically include residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, hospitals, convalescent homes, and retirement homes.

Surrounding land uses include residences next to the north site boundary, Banning High School next to the northeast site boundary, and scattered rural residential uses near the east and southwest site boundaries. The EIR will evaluate the potential for construction and operation activities of the proposed project to exceed

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SCAQMD's localized significance thresholds (LSTs) in accordance with SCAQMD's guidance methodology. Mitigation measures will be recommended, as necessary.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project site is currently leased for cattle grazing. Depending on project phasing, parts of the project could be developed with operating residential, school, and park uses, and the remainder of the project could remain temporarily in use for cattle grazing. Such neighboring land uses could expose residents and/or workers to objectionable odors from cattle manure. This impact is potentially significant and will be addressed in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

Potentially Significant Impact. Special status species include those listed as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act or California Endangered Species Act; species otherwise given certain designations by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife; and plant species listed as rare by the California Native Plant Society. Vegetation types onsite include nonnative grassland, Riversidean upland sage scrub, Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub, and riparian scrub. The site is within the plan area of the Western Riverside County Multiple-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). Biological investigations of the site conducted in 2012 include a general biological resources and MSHCP compliance report, a jurisdictional delineation of waters and wetlands, and a supplemental jurisdictional delineation conducted in June 2013 of several parcels added to the site in December 2012 (LSA 2013). The project site is in an area where habitat suitability assessments are required. If suitable habitat is identified, focused species are required for the following species: Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*); Los Angeles pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris*); and two narrow endemic plant species, Yucaipa onion (*Allium marvinii*) and many-stemmed dudleya (*Dudleya multicaulis*). Suitable habitats for burrowing owl and Los Angeles pocket mouse were identified onsite, and focused surveys were conducted for burrowing owl in August 2012 and for Los Angeles pocket mouse in August and September 2012. No suitable habitat for the two narrow endemic plant species was identified onsite, and no focused surveys for the two aforementioned plant species were conducted. Focused surveys were also conducted for Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus woottoni*) and vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*). Several sensitive species were identified onsite, including burrowing owl, Stephens' kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys stephensi*), Los Angeles pocket mouse, American badger, golden eagle, and white-tailed kite. Burrowing owl, Los Angeles pocket mouse, and American badger are designated California Species of Special Concern by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Golden eagle and white-tailed kite are designated fully protected species by the CDFW. Stephens' kangaroo rat is listed as federally endangered and as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act. One other California Species of Special Concern, pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), is considered to have moderate potential to occur onsite (LSA 2013). Impacts on sensitive species would be potentially significant.

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The methods and findings of biological resources surveys, including jurisdictional delineations, will be described in the EIR. Necessary mitigation measure will be included to reduce impacts to less than significant and for consistency with MSHCP.

- b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Sensitive natural communities are natural communities that are considered rare in the region by regulatory agencies, that are known to provide habitat for sensitive animal or plant species, or that are known to be important wildlife corridors. Riparian habitats are those occurring along the banks of rivers and streams. The jurisdictional delineation for the project identified 89.3 acres of onsite streams and riparian vegetation potentially jurisdictional to the CDFW, including two sensitive natural communities—Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub (82.6 acres) and riparian scrub (1.5 acres). Project development would have significant impacts on sensitive natural communities and/or riparian habitats. This topic will be addressed in the EIR.

- c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Wetlands are defined under the federal Clean Water Act as land that is flooded or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that normally does support, a prevalence of vegetation adapted to life in saturated soils. Wetlands include areas such as swamps, marshes, and bogs. Approximately 0.20 acre of wetland was identified onsite by the jurisdictional delineation. Project impacts to wetlands would be potentially significant, and this topic will be addressed in the EIR.

- d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Smith Creek, the largest drainage onsite, provides cover for movement of bobcat, coyote, badger, and other wildlife through the area. Several burrowing owl burrows were identified onsite, and the project could impact burrows used for nesting by burrowing owls. The project could have significant impacts on a wildlife movement corridor and on burrowing owl burrows, and this topic will be analyzed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be required as appropriate.

- e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?**

Potentially Significant Impact. A tree removal and replacement plan must be prepared in accordance with Section 17.32.060 of the City of Banning Municipal Code. Project plans must take into account the preservation of trees and other natural features and avoid the use of invasive species for landscaping in

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accordance with Section 17.32.020 of the Municipal Code. The project landscape plan will be discussed in the EIR relative to requirements of the specified Municipal Code section.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Potentially Significant Impact. Several habitat suitability assessments and focused surveys were conducted as part of the MSHCP compliance process. The determination of Project consistency with the MSHCP and the DBESP concurrence are pending and will be discussed in the EIR. The Project would be required to implement on-site and off-site mitigation, to be set forth in the EIR, for reducing project impacts to biological resources to less than significant levels.

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Senate Bill 18

Senate Bill 18 (SB 18; California Government Code Sections 65352.3 et seq.) requires local governments to consult with Native American tribal representatives regarding cultural resources before adopting or amending a general plan or specific plan. Tribes have 90 days after local governments send invitations for consultation to accept such invitations. The SB 18 consultation process is separate from CEQA but is part of planning for general plans and specific plans. On March 25, 2015, the City held a consultation meeting with tribal representatives identified for consultation for the project by the Native American Heritage Commission.

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5?

Potentially Significant Impact. Section 15064.5 defines historic resources as resources listed or determined to be eligible for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission, a local register of historical resources, or the lead agency. Generally a resource is considered “historically significant” if it meets one of the following criteria:

- i) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage;
- ii) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
- iii) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values;
- iv) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

A cultural resources assessment of the project site was completed by BRC Consulting LLC in April 2013. The assessment identified 18 cultural resources onsite—14 historic-period resources and 4 prehistoric-period resources. One of the prehistoric resources, a milling slick—was also used as an historic-period granite

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quarry.³ Three of the resources—two prehistoric milling slicks and a third prehistoric milling slick also used as a historic granite quarry—were evaluated as being potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR). A house was formerly at the southeast corner of Westward Avenue and Lowell Street in the north-central part of the site. Other improvements onsite include livestock watering troughs, pipes supplying some of the troughs, electrical transmission lines and their supporting towers, and fencing. Impacts to historic resources are potentially significant and will be analyzed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be required as appropriate.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

Potentially Significant Impact. Three prehistoric resources identified onsite were evaluated as potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP and CRHR. Parts of the Morongo Indian Reservation are checkered across portions of the Banning area. One section of the reservation is near the southeast site boundary, and a second section is about 0.5 mile south of the west half of the project site. Impacts to prehistoric archaeological resources are potentially significant. The methods and findings of the cultural resources assessment will be described in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be required as appropriate.

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Potentially Significant Impact.

Paleontological Resources

A paleontological overview for the project site was conducted by the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC) as part of the cultural resources assessment. Deeper excavations into older quaternary alluvium underlying most of the site could encounter significant vertebrate fossils. The nearest fossil locality in the records of the NHMLAC is southwest of the project site on the east side of the San Jacinto Valley and produced a specimen of fossil horse, *Equus*. Impacts to paleontological resources, that is, fossils, are potentially significant and will be analyzed further in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be required as appropriate.

Unique Geological Features

There are no unique geological features onsite. Gently rolling hills cut by drainages and a small hill with granitic and metamorphic rock outcrops are common features in many areas. No impacts to unique geological features would occur, and this topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less Than Significant Impact. California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, CEQA Section 15064.5, and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 mandate the process to be followed in the event of an accidental

³ A milling slick is a flat, horizontal area of a rock or outcrop that has been worn smooth by grinding or processing materials with a handstone or mano. Slicks have very little or no depth (SDCAS 2014).

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discovery of any human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery. Specifically, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that, if human remains are discovered in a project site, disturbance of the site shall halt until the coroner has conducted an investigation into the circumstances, manner, and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to his or her authorized representative, in the manner provided in Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and if the coroner recognizes or has reason to believe that the human remains are those of a Native American, he or she shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission by telephone within 24 hours. Although soil-disturbing activities associated with development in accordance with the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan could result in the discovery of human remains, compliance with existing law would ensure that significant impacts to human remains would not occur. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR, and no mitigation measures are required.

3.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- a) **Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:**
- i. **Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.**

No Impact. No Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zones are mapped on or next to the site. Two faults not located within an Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zone have been mapped onsite:

- The McMullen Fault passes northwest-southeast through the eastern half of the site. This fault is buried under Pleistocene-age alluvium and does not pose a hazard of surface rupture onsite.⁴ A fault must displace Holocene-age deposits to be classified as active by the California Geological Survey (RMA Geosciences 2012a).⁵
- The Central Banning Barrier Fault, a postulated buried fault mapped passing through the northwest part of the site, is inferred to exist due to evidence suggesting a groundwater barrier in that area. This postulated fault, if it exists, would be buried under about 300 feet of alluvium, including Pleistocene-age alluvium. Thus, this postulated fault is not classified as active and does not pose a hazard of surface rupture in the site (RMA Geosciences 2012a).

No impact would occur, and this topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

⁴ The Pleistocene Epoch extends from 1.8 million years ago to 11,500 years ago.

⁵ The Holocene Epoch extends from 11,500 years ago to the present.

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ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

Potentially Significant Impact. There are several active faults in the region, including the San Andreas Fault, the Banning Fault, and the San Gorgonio Pass Fault Zone. Strong ground shaking is likely to occur during the design lifetimes of structures that would be developed by the proposed project. A geotechnical investigation has been prepared for the proposed project. Findings and recommendations of the geotechnical investigation regarding strong ground shaking will be discussed in the EIR.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less Than Significant Impact. Liquefaction refers to loose, saturated sand or silt deposits that behave as a liquid and lose their load-supporting capability when strongly shaken. Loose granular soils and silts that are saturated by relatively shallow groundwater are susceptible to liquefaction. The site is considered to have no risk of liquefaction due to deep groundwater, 240 feet or more below ground surface (RMA Geosciences 2012a).⁶ The project is required to comply with the *California Building Standards Code* and *City Building Code* as well as the recommendations in the project's geotechnical investigation report. Therefore, project development would not place people or structures at risk due to liquefaction, and impacts would be less than significant. This topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

iv. Landslides?

Less Than Significant Impact. No large landslides were encountered during the field investigation or observed on aerial photographs in the course of the geotechnical investigation for the project. Most of the site is not susceptible to landsliding due its low gradient. Soils along and adjacent to some drainage courses have been eroded by water, and there have been some failures of channel banks. However, these areas are restricted to the immediate channel areas (RMA Geosciences 2012a).

Construction contractors would adhere to recommendations of the geotechnical investigation report for temporary slopes and for shoring or shielding for temporary excavations over five feet deep, as required by the City of Banning. Project development would not result in significant landslide hazards, and this topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Potentially Significant Impact. Project construction would disturb large amounts of soil during site grading and construction, and thus could cause widespread erosion if effective erosion control measures were not used. Erosion control measures to be specified in Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) – that would be prepared and implemented for each project developed pursuant to the Specific Plan – will be described in the EIR.

⁶ Note that parts of the eastern and southern portions of the project site are mapped as areas of moderate susceptibility to liquefaction, and most of the balance of the site as areas of low susceptibility to liquefaction, in the City of Banning General Plan. However, mapping of susceptibility to liquefaction in the general plan was based on a generalized assessment of conditions in the City. The determination of liquefaction hazard in the geotechnical investigation is based on onsite investigation of subsurface soils and calculation of seismic design parameters for the site, and is thus relied on here in favor of the assessment in the general plan.

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- c) **Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?**

Potentially Significant Impact (collapsible soils only).

Landslide

Project development would not cause substantial landside hazards, as substantiated above in Section 3.6.iv, and this topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

Liquefaction and Lateral Spreading

Project development would not cause substantial hazards related to liquefaction, as substantiated above in Section 3.6.a.iii. Lateral spreading is the downslope movement of surface sediment due to liquefaction in a subsurface layer. There is negligible potential for lateral spreading onsite due to the minimal risk of liquefaction. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

Subsidence

Ground subsidence is a gradual settling or sinking of the ground surface that is typically associated with oil, gas or groundwater extraction. The site is in an area that is susceptible to regional land subsidence, according to the Riverside County General Plan. However, the City of Banning General Plan indicates that subsidence has not been observed within the City.

There are no oil or gas fields within or near the site. Consequently, regional land subsidence due to extraction of oil or gas is not a hazard at the site. Alluvial sediments beneath could be susceptible to land subsidence if proper groundwater management practices are not followed. The City of Banning General Plan indicates that groundwater conservation and recharge activities have been implemented in the Banning area to prevent ground subsidence due to extraction of groundwater (RMA Geosciences 2012a). Project development would not result in substantial hazards due to ground subsidence, and this topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

Collapsible Soils

Collapsible soils shrink upon being wetted, subjected to a load, or both. During site grading, prior to placement of compacted fill soils, all nonengineered fills and loose, porous, or compressible soils would need to be removed down to soil capable of supporting the proposed improvements. Depths of removals will depend on the nature of the underlying soils and proposed land use. Depths of removals could extend to 20 to 30 feet below ground surface in parts of the site (RMA Geosciences 2012a). Recommendations in the geotechnical investigation report for removals and overexcavation—to remove compressible soils—will be described in further detail in the EIR.

- d) **Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Table 18-1-B of the 1994 Uniform Building Code no longer exists. Expansive soils are defined in Section 1803.5.3 of the 2013 California Building Code. Expansive soils shrink

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or swell as the moisture content decreases or increases, and the shrinking or swelling can shift, crack, or break structures built on such soils. Expansion test results from three site soil samples showed very low expansion potential. Based on visual observation, it appears that some surficial soils overlying older alluvial deposits may be expansive. However, these soils account for only a small portion of the soils that underlie the site (RMA Geosciences 2012a). Further analysis is needed, and this topic will be discussed in the EIR.

- e) **Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?**

No Impact. The project would include installation of sanitary sewers and would not use septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems, and no impact would occur. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

3.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- a) **Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Global climate change is not confined to a particular project area and is generally accepted as the consequence of global industrialization over the last 200 years. Buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would generate both operational and construction GHG emissions. A typical project, even a very large one, does not generate enough greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on its own to influence global climate change significantly; hence, the issue of global climate change is, by definition, a cumulative environmental impact. The State of California, through its governor and legislature, has established a comprehensive framework for the substantial reduction of GHG emissions over the next 40-plus years. This will occur primarily through the implementation of Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32, 2006) and Senate Bill 375 (SB 375, 2008), which address GHG emissions on a statewide, cumulative basis. The EIR will evaluate the potential for the project to generate a substantial increase in GHG emissions, and mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

- b) **Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?**

Potentially Significant Impact. The California Air Resources Board's Scoping Plan is California's GHG-reduction strategy to achieve the state's GHG emissions reduction target, established by AB 32, of 1990 emission levels by year 2020. SCAG's 2012 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy sets a development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network and other transportation measures and policies, would reduce GHG emissions from transportation (excluding goods movement) in accordance with the region's per capita GHG reduction goals under SB 375. In addition, the City of Banning is a participating jurisdiction in the Subregional Climate Action Plan issued by the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) in September 2014. The EIR will evaluate the project's consistency with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

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3.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- a) **Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?**

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction

Hazardous materials such as fuels, greases, paints, and cleaning materials would be used during construction of development accommodated by the proposed project. Onsite construction equipment might require routine or emergency maintenance that could result in the release of oil, diesel fuel, transmission fluid, or other materials. The use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials in construction of projects developed pursuant to the Specific Plan would comply with existing regulations of several agencies including the EPA, US Department of Transportation (DOT), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA), and Riverside County Department of Environmental Health (DEH), the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for Riverside County.⁷ Impacts would be less than significant. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

Operations

Operation of future uses could involve the use of hazardous materials, such as those used for cleaning and maintenance purposes. The majority of developed land uses would be residential uses where only small amounts of hazardous materials would be used. Uses of hazardous materials during project operation would be subject to many of the same regulations as govern hazardous materials use in construction operations. Impacts would be less than significant. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

- b) **Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?**

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction

Construction of projects developed pursuant to the proposed Specific Plan would involve use of hazardous materials and could result in accidental releases of hazardous materials. Construction contractors would maintain equipment and supplies onsite for containing and cleaning up hazardous materials spills, and would train workers in such containment and cleanup. In the event of an accidental hazardous materials release of toxicity and/or quantity that onsite workers would be unable to safely contain and clean up, the construction contractor would notify the DEH of the release immediately. The use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials in construction projects in accordance with the proposed Specific Plan would not cause

⁷ The Riverside County Department of Environmental Health is the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for Riverside County; the Certified Unified Program coordinates and makes consistent enforcement of several state and federal regulations governing hazardous materials.

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significant hazards to the public or the environment through accidental releases of hazardous materials. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

Operations

While operation of most proposed land uses would only involve small amounts of hazardous materials, the project would permit development of about nine acres of commercial land uses, which could use larger amounts of hazardous materials. An electrical substation proposed in the northwestern part of the project site would also use some hazardous materials. Commercial land uses utilizing hazardous materials, and the electrical substation, would be required to prepare and submit a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) to the DEH. An HMBP includes an inventory of hazardous materials used and stored onsite; a site map; an emergency plan; and a training program for employees. The use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials in operations of projects pursuant to the proposed Specific Plan would not cause significant hazards to the public or the environment through accidental releases of hazardous materials. Impacts would be less than significant. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

Less than Significant Impact. There are two existing schools next to the project site boundary, and the proposed project includes a site for a future elementary school.

- Banning High School is next to the northeast corner of the project site. Land uses proposed as part of the project within 0.25 mile of Banning High School consist of high-density residential, low-density residential, a street, and a paseo or linear park (see Figure 6, *Proposed Land Use Plan*). Such land uses would use small amounts of hazardous materials for cleaning and maintenance purposes during project operation. Such use of hazardous materials would not pose substantial hazards to persons at Banning High School.
- The site plan designates a site for a future elementary school in the northeast corner of the project site. Proposed land uses next to the school site are residential uses; and a narrow flood control channel extending north from the northeast corner of the school site (see Figure 6, *Proposed Land Use Plan*). Residential uses would use small amounts of hazardous materials; such use would not pose substantial hazards to persons at a future elementary school.
- Mount San Jacinto Community College San Gorgonio Pass Campus (MSJC) is next to the northwest site boundary. MSJC currently consists of four buildings and a parking lot at the southeast corner of Westward Avenue and Sunset Avenue; however, approximately 63 acres is designated for development of the campus according to the City of Banning General Plan. Proposed land uses near MSJC include medium-high-density residential; open space; creek/linear park; a community park; an electrical substation; and neighborhood commercial (see Figure 6, *Proposed Land Use Plan*). The electrical substation, and any commercial land uses utilizing hazardous materials, would be required to prepare and submit a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) to the DEH. Construction and operation of projects in accordance with the Specific Plan within 0.25 mile of the MSJC campus would not pose substantial

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hazards to persons on that campus. Impacts would be less than significant. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

- d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?**

Less Than Significant Impact. An environmental database search was conducted in September 2012 as part of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment of the project by RMA Geoscience. No hazardous materials sites were identified on the project site. Environmental records were identified for five properties next to the project site, as described below in Table 3. None of the environmental records are considered “recognized environmental conditions” for the project site.⁸ Specific Plan buildout would not create a substantial hazard for the public or the environment related to hazardous materials sites identified in the database search. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

Soil Testing for Potential Pesticide Residues

Seven soil samples from in and near the northeast quarter of the site—which formerly contained orchards—were tested for organochlorine pesticides. Samples were collected from ground surface to six inches below ground surface and tested using EPA Method 8081. Three pesticides were detected: DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane), DDE (dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene), and dieldrin. All pesticide concentrations detected were below California Human Health Screening Levels (CHHSLs) for residential land uses established by the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA), as shown in Table 4, below. Buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would not expose people to substantial hazards arising from the aforementioned pesticides. Impacts would be less than significant. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

⁸ A recognized environmental condition is the presence or likely presence of hazardous materials or petroleum products under conditions indicating an existing or past release or a material threat of a release into structures or soil or groundwater or surface water, even under conditions in compliance with laws.

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Table 3 Properties Next to Project Site Listed on Environmental Databases

Site Address	Database	Reason for Listing
Banning High School 100 W. Westward Avenue	FINDS, Haznet	The FINDS database contains facilities information and pointers to other sources of information, including a federal database of educational facilities. HAZNET is a database of hazardous waste shipment manifests. Two hazardous waste shipments from the school were documented, one of other inorganic solid waste in 2006 and one of other inorganic solids in 2011.
Max Marquez 2850 W. Westward Avenue	CHMIRS, CDL, Haznet	CHMIRS is the California hazardous materials incident report system. This listing is for a sewage backup in 2001 caused by a buildup of grease. CDL identifies the locations of illegal drug labs. The impact of the drug lab is expected to be localized and not impact the project site.
HUD Intown Properties 892 April Lane	Haznet	One shipment of household waste to a transfer station in 1998.
City of Banning 810 South 22nd Street	Haznet	One shipment in 1997.
Mt. San Jacinto College 3144 Westward Avenue	NPDES	NPDES contains a listing of National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits, including storm water permits. An NPDES construction permit was issued for this site in 2010 and terminated in 2011.

Source: RMA Geoscience 2012b.

Table 4 Pesticide Concentrations Found Onsite

Pesticide	Max. Concentration Found	CHHSL (Residential Land Use)	Max. Concentration/ CHHSL
DDT	0.0011	2.3	0.0005
DDE	0.0010	1.6	0.0006
Dieldrin	0.00043	0.035	0.012

Source: RMA Geosciences 2012.

Notes: All concentrations are in mg/kg (that is, part per million).

CHHSL = California Human Health Screening Levels

- e) **For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles or a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Banning Municipal Airport is about 1.1 miles northeast of the project site. A small portion of the northeast part of the project site is in Airport Land Use Compatibility Zone E for Banning Municipal Airport set by the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission. Part of the eastern portion of the site is also in an area where heights of structures are limited pursuant to Federal Aviation Administration Part 77 Regulations to prevent obstructions to navigable airspace (RCALUC 2004). Project development could result in hazards to people living or working onsite related to aircraft approaching or departing Banning Municipal Airport, and this topic will be evaluated further in the EIR.

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- f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

No Impact. The project site is not within the vicinity of a private airstrip. The nearest heliport to the site is at San Gorgonio Memorial Hospital at 600 North Highland Springs Avenue in the City of Banning, about 2.3 miles northwest of the site. Over congested areas, helicopters must maintain an altitude of at least 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within 2,000 feet of the aircraft, except as needed for takeoff and landing (Code of Federal Regulations Title 14 Section 91.119). Project development would not create any hazard for people living or working onsite arising from helicopters operating to or from the abovementioned heliport, and no impact would occur. This topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

- g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

Potentially Significant Impact. The emergency response plan for the City of Banning is the Riverside County Emergency Operations Plan adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in 2006. Project activities that could impair emergency access to surrounding properties, such as construction staging, will be discussed in the EIR.

- h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Much of the southern part of the site is in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones designated by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention (CAL FIRE 2007; CAL FIRE 2010). Project development could result in hazards arising from wildland fires. This topic will be analyzed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be required as appropriate.

3.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Project construction and project operation would generate pollutants that could contaminate water. The project site is in the Whitewater River Watershed and in the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRB RWQCB) region. Waste-discharge requirements for discharges to stormwater for construction activities are set by the State Water Resources Control Board. Waste-discharge requirements for post-construction stormwater discharges to municipal storm drainage systems in the Whitewater River Watershed are set by the CRB RWQCB. This impact is potentially significant. Pollutants that could be generated by the project, waste-discharge requirements, and water-quality protection measures that would be implemented by the project will be discussed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

- b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater**

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table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

Potentially Significant Impact.

Groundwater Recharge

The project Master Drainage Plan includes 44 detention or retention basins that would have capacity to retain stormwater from a 100-year, three-hour storm. Part of the runoff from the site would be infiltrated into groundwater in detention basins. Groundwater recharge will be discussed further in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

Groundwater Use

The City of Banning Water Division would supply water to the project. The City's entire water supply is obtained from groundwater from the San Gorgonio Pass Groundwater Basin. The basin is recharged naturally by surface water and intentionally by water imported from northern California via the State Water Project. A water supply assessment (WSA) was completed for the project by Madole & Associates in 2013. Findings from the WSA on project water demands relative to existing and forecast City of Banning water supplies will be discussed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.

Potentially Significant Impact. There are four major water courses onsite: Smith Creek, which forms part of the southern site boundary; Pershing Creek and Montgomery Creek, which both flow northwest to southeast across parts of the site, discharging into Smith Creek; and Gilman Home Channel, which extends north to south along part of the east site boundary and also discharges into Smith Creek. The general direction of drainage flow is downgrade to the southeast and east. Smith Creek discharges into the San Gorgonio River about five miles east of the site; the San Gorgonio River flows into the Whitewater River, which discharges into the Salton Sea.

The proposed drainage plan maintains the four existing creek watersheds. Smith Creek, Pershing Creek, and most of Gilman Home Channel would be left in their existing conditions. Montgomery Creek would be conveyed through the project site in an underground storm drain pipe. A short segment of storm drain pipe would convey Gilman Home Channel about 700 feet to the Channel's terminus into Smith Creek (see Figure 11, *Drainage Plan*).

The drainage plan would include development of 44 detention/retention basins as well as installation of new storm drains (see Figure 11, *Drainage Plan*) (Madole & Associates 2013b). Projects developed pursuant to the Specific Plan would implement erosion control and sediment control measures during project construction to minimize runoff and erosion during project operation, and would include treatment controls to reduce sediment in runoff during project operation. Project impacts on drainage and erosion will be analyzed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

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- d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?**

Potentially Significant Impact. The project would develop detention/retention basins and storm drains. Smith Creek, Pershing Creek, and Gilman Home Channel would be left largely in their existing conditions. Site runoff rates and volumes in post-project conditions, compared to current rates and volumes, will be estimated in the project Master Drainage Plan and will be discussed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

- e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Project impacts to storm-drainage capacity and water-quality impacts will be analyzed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

- f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Project water-quality impacts will be analyzed in the EIR.

- g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?**

Potentially Significant Impact. There are 100-year flood zones designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) onsite along Smith Creek, Montgomery Creek, and Gilman Home Channel. The project would convey Montgomery Creek through the site in a pipe and would address flood potential from Smith Creek through grading and other improvements. The project would include applications to FEMA for Letters of Map Revision requesting changes to 100-year flood zones after the improvements are completed. Project-related impacts on flood hazards will be analyzed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

- h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Project-related impacts on flood hazards will be analyzed in the EIR.

- i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?**

No Impact. The project site is not in an area mapped by FEMA as protected from 100-year floods by levees. There are no dams upstream from the site on Smith Creek or the San Gorgonio River that could pose a flood threat to the site due to dam failure. No impact would occur, and this topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

- j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?**

Potentially Significant Impact (mudflow only).

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Seiche

A seiche is a surface wave created when an inland water body is shaken, usually by an earthquake. There are no inland bodies of water near enough to the site to pose a flood threat to the site due to a seiche, and no impact would occur.

Tsunami

A tsunami is a sea wave caused by a sudden displacement of the ocean floor, most often due to earthquakes. The site elevation ranges from about 2,215 to 2,402 feet above mean sea level, and is about 52 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean; thus, there is no potential for flooding onsite due to tsunamis.

Mudflow

A mudflow is a landslide composed of saturated rock debris and soil with a consistency of wet cement. Most of the site consists of gently rolling terrain vegetated with grasses, and is unlikely to be capable of generating a mudflow. However, steep slopes above the southeast site boundary and in a hill in the southeast part of the site may be capable of generating mudflows. The hill onsite will not be developed. Hazards arising from mudflows will be assessed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

3.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

a) **Physically divide an established community?**

No Impact. Project development would not divide an established community. The site is currently leased for cattle grazing and is not available for travel between surrounding land uses. The project would build several proposed roadways connecting to surrounding roadways; thus, there would be ready access across the site between surrounding land uses, where there is no such public access today. The project would have a favorable impact on access across the site between surrounding land uses, and no adverse impact would occur. This topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

b) **Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Project approval would require several discretionary approvals by the City of Banning regarding land use regulation, including certification of the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan EIR; adoption of the Rancho San Gorgonio Specific Plan; annexation of 160 acres in the SOI into City limits; and approvals of: General Plan Amendment/Zone Change to reflect the proposed project; Tentative Tract Map No. 36586; and a Development Agreement.

The project would also require several discretionary permits regarding biological resources and water quality, including a California Fish and Game Code Section 1602 Permit from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife; a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers; and a Clean Water

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Act Section 401 Certification, and approval of the project water quality management plan (WQMP) by the CRB RWQCB.

The project may require a Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation Report for compliance with the MSHCP, depending on impacts to certain MSHCP-covered species.

Project impacts on policies aimed at avoiding or mitigating environmental effects will be discussed in the EIR.

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?

Potentially Significant Impact. Project compliance with the MSHCP will be discussed in the EIR.

3.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact. Most of the project site is mapped as urban area on the relevant Mineral Land Classification Map by the California Geological Survey (CGS). The remainder of the site is mapped as Mineral Resource Zone 3, indicating that the area contains known or inferred mineral occurrences of unknown significance. None of the project site is mapped by the CGS as containing known Portland-cement concrete (PCC) grade aggregate resources (CGS 2008). Project development would not cause a loss of availability of known mineral resources valuable to the region and the state, and no impact would occur. This topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

No Impact. No mining site in or near the project site is identified in the City of Banning General Plan. The nearest mine to the project site mapped on the Office of Mine Reclamation's "Mines Online" map is the Banning Quarry, an active sand and gravel mine about 2.1 miles northeast of the site (OMR 2014). No impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed in the EIR.

3.12 NOISE

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Potentially Significant Impact. Specific Plan buildout could increase noise levels near the site due to project-generated vehicle trips as well as from operation of proposed land uses. In addition, project-related construction activities could generate substantial noise affecting existing residents north, east, and southwest of the project site; as well as students and staff at Banning High School next to the northeast site boundary, and Mt. San Jacinto Community College Banning Campus next to the northwest site boundary. A noise and

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vibration technical study has been prepared for the proposed project. The EIR will address the potential noise impacts associated with the proposed project and will recommend mitigation measures as needed.

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Potentially Significant Impact. Groundborne vibration or noise would mainly result from construction of projects pursuant to the Specific Plan. These temporarily increased levels of vibration could impact vibration-sensitive land uses surrounding the project site. A noise and vibration technical study has been prepared for the proposed project. This topic will be addressed in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Potentially Significant Impact. Development pursuant to the Specific Plan would generate noise, mainly from project-generated traffic. A noise and vibration technical study has been prepared for the proposed project. The EIR will evaluate the potential for the project to cause a substantial permanent increase in existing noise levels in the project vicinity. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Potentially Significant Impact. Construction of projects pursuant to the proposed Specific Plan would result in a temporary increase in noise levels at the project site and at adjacent land uses. A noise and vibration technical study has been prepared for the proposed project. These impacts will be addressed in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Potentially Significant Impact. Banning Municipal Airport is about 1.1 miles northeast of the project site. Potential impacts of airport noise on people in the project site will be addressed by the noise and vibration technical study and will be discussed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is not in the vicinity of a private airstrip. The nearest heliport to the site is at San Gorgonio Memorial Hospital at 600 North Highland Springs Avenue in the City of Banning, about 2.3 miles northwest of the site. Project development would not expose residents or workers onsite to excessive noise from helicopters operating to or from San Gorgonio Memorial Hospital heliport, and impacts would be less than significant. This topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

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3.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

- a) **Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?**

Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed Specific Plan would permit development of up to 3,385 residential units and would install infrastructure onsite, including roads; sewers; water mains and laterals; and electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications infrastructure. The project would induce substantial growth. This impact will be assessed in the EIR.

- b) **Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

No Impact. There are no houses onsite. The project would permit development of up to 3,385 housing units. The project would not displace existing housing and would not require construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impact would occur, and this topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

- c) **Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

No Impact. There are no residents onsite. No impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed in the EIR.

3.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

- a) **Fire protection?**

Potentially Significant Impact. The Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD) provides fire protection and emergency medical services to the City of Banning. Project development would add up to 3,385 residential units and 9.3 acres of commercial land uses to the project site, thus generating increased demands for fire protection and emergency medical services. The RCFD will be consulted regarding project impacts on needs for fire stations, firefighting equipment, and staffing. Project impacts on fire protection will be assessed in the EIR.

- b) **Police protection?**

Potentially Significant Impact. The Banning Police Department (BPD) provides police protection to the City of Banning. The project would add up to 3,385 residential units to the project site, as well as other land uses, including commercial uses and parks. Thus, the project would increase demands for police protection.

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The BPD will be consulted regarding project impacts to police services. This topic will be addressed in the EIR.

c) Schools?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project site is in the Banning Unified School District. The project would permit development of up to 3,385 housing units onsite, and would thus increase demands for school facilities. Project impacts on schools will be analyzed in the EIR.

d) Parks?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project would increase demands for parks through permitting development of up to 3,385 housing units. The project would develop several parks onsite. Project impacts on park facilities will be analyzed in the EIR.

e) Other public facilities?

Potentially Significant Impact. The Banning Library District provides public library services to the City of Banning. The project would increase demands for library services through permitting development of up to 3,385 residential units. Project impacts on library facilities will be analyzed in the EIR.

3.15 RECREATION

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project would permit development of up to 3,385 residential units, thus increasing use of park facilities in the area. The project would also develop three parks, a linear park along Smith Creek and Pershing Creek, and a paseo (see Figure 6, *Proposed Land Use Plan*). Project impacts on usage of parks, and whether proposed onsite parks would reduce project-generated demands for use of offsite parks, will be evaluated in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project would develop three parks plus one linear park along Smith Creek and one paseo. Impacts of construction and operation of these parks would be part of the impacts of the whole project that will be analyzed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

3.16 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation

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system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project would generate substantial numbers of vehicle trips through permitting development of up to 3,385 housing units in addition to commercial uses, parks, and other land uses. Project impacts on transportation and traffic would be potentially significant. A traffic impact analysis (TIA) has been prepared for the proposed project, and this topic will be analyzed in the EIR.

b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to, level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

Potentially Significant Impact. Impacts to congestion management program roadways and intersections are assessed in the TIA and will be analyzed in the EIR.

c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

Potentially Significant Impact. Hazards related to aircraft approaching or departing Banning Municipal Airport will be discussed in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials Section of the EIR. No further analysis of this topic as a transportation and traffic matter is required.

d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project would not add incompatible uses such as farm equipment to area roadways. Design features of the project circulation plan will be discussed in the EIR regarding potential hazards such as sharp curves or dangerous intersections. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Potentially Significant Impact. Potential impacts of the project on access to surrounding properties will be assessed in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project circulation plan includes networks of on-street bicycle lanes, sidewalks, and multi-purpose trails. Pass Transit provides public transit in the City of Banning; Pass Transit Route 6 currently operates on Westward Avenue along the north site boundary. Proposed roadways onsite will include bus turnouts, based on recommendations from the City and Pass Transit. Project impacts to public transit will be analyzed in the EIR.

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3.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

a) Exceed waste water treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

Potentially Significant Impact. Project construction and project operation would generate pollutants that could contaminate water. The project site is in the Whitewater River Watershed and in the CRB RWQCB region. Waste discharge requirements for discharges to stormwater for construction activities are set by the State Water Resources Control Board. Waste discharge requirements for post-construction stormwater discharges to municipal storm drainage systems in the Whitewater River Watershed are set by the CRB RWQCB. This impact is potentially significant. Pollutants that could be generated by the project, waste discharge requirements, and water quality protection measures that would be implemented by the project will be discussed in the EIR.

b) Require or result in the construction of new water or waste water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Potentially Significant Impact.

Water Treatment Facilities

Water treatment facilities filter and/or disinfect water before it is delivered to customers. The project would generate substantial water demands through permitting development of up to 3,385 housing units as well as other land uses. Project impacts on water treatment capacity will be evaluated in the EIR.

Wastewater Treatment Facilities

The City of Banning Wastewater Utility operates the City's Wastewater Reclamation Plant. The project would generate substantial wastewater. Wastewater generation relative to existing and planned wastewater treatment capacity will be assessed in the EIR.

c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project would construct a network of storm drains, and some proposed storm drains would extend into areas tributary to the site (see Figure 11, *Drainage Master Plan*). Impacts of construction of proposed storm drains will be analyzed in the EIR.

d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

Potentially Significant Impact. Project development would increase water demands in the City of Banning. Estimated project water demands, relative to existing and forecast water supplies, will be discussed in the EIR.

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- e) **Result in a determination by the waste-water treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Project wastewater generation relative to existing and planned wastewater treatment capacity will be assessed in the EIR.

- f) **Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Project development would increase solid waste generation through permitting development of residential, commercial, and other land uses. Project solid waste generation will be assessed in the EIR relative to existing and planned landfill capacity in the region.

- g) **Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**

Potentially Significant Impact. The following federal and state laws and regulations govern solid waste disposal. The EPA administers the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 and the Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1965, which govern solid waste disposal. In the State of California, Assembly Bill 939 (Integrated Solid Waste Management Act of 1989; Public Resources Code 40050 et seq.) required every California city and county to divert 50 percent of its waste from landfills by the year 2000 by such means as recycling, source reduction, and composting. In addition, AB 939 requires each county to prepare a countywide siting element specifying areas for transformation or disposal sites to provide capacity for solid waste generated in the county that cannot be reduced or recycled for a 15-year period. AB 1327, the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991, requires local agencies to adopt ordinances mandating spaces for collection and loading of recyclable materials in development projects. The Mandatory Commercial Recycling Act of 2011 (AB 341) requires recycling by businesses generating four or more cubic yards of solid waste per week and by multifamily residences of five or more units. Individual development projects would be required to comply with the provisions of the 2013 Green Building Standards Code, which outlines requirements for construction waste reduction, material selection, and natural resource conservation. Project-related impacts on landfill capacity, in relation to requirements of AB 939, will be discussed in the EIR.

3.18 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

- a) **Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?**

Potentially Significant Impact. Specific Plan implementation could reduce the population, habitat, or range of sensitive species or wildlife species and could damage or destroy prehistoric and historic cultural resources that have been evaluated as potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and

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California Register of Historic Resources. Impacts to biological resources and cultural resources would be potentially significant and will be analyzed in the EIR. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

- b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)**

Potentially Significant Impact. Project buildout in combination with development of related projects could result in significant cumulative impacts. This impact is potentially significant. Each topical section of the EIR will analyze cumulative impacts based on General Plan projections or lists of related projects, as appropriate for each respective topic. Mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

- c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?**

Potentially Significant Impact. The following potentially significant impacts identified in this Initial Study could include substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly: aesthetics, air quality, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. These topics will be analyzed in the EIR, and mitigation measures will be recommended as needed.

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