Proposed

Mitigated Negative Declaration

Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department
2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403
(707) 565-1900 FAX (707) 565-1103

Publication Date:	June 15, 2021
Public Review Period:	30 days
State Clearinghouse Number:	
Permit Sonoma File Number:	PLP19-0044
Prepared by:	Eric Gage at
Phone:	(707) 562-1391

Pursuant to Section 15071 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this proposed Negative Declaration and the attached Initial Study, constitute the environmental review conducted by the County of Sonoma as lead agency for the proposed project described below:

Project Name:	Verano Hotel and Housing
Project Applicant/Operator:	Springs Investors Group, LP
Project Location/Address:	135-175 Verano Avenue
APN:	127-071-013, -012, -005
General Plan Land Use Designation:	UR 8, RVSC
Zoning Designation:	R2 B6 8 DU, K F2 RC50/25
Decision Making Body:	Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Appeal Body:	None
Project Description:	See Project Description, below

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" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation" as indicated in the attached Initial Study and in the summary table below.

AFTER completing the analysis fill out the table to reflect the significance determinations for each topic.

Table 1. Summary of Topic Areas

Topic Area	Abbreviation*	Yes	No
Aesthetics	VIS		No
Agricultural & Forest Resources	AG		No
Air Quality	AIR	Yes	
Biological Resources	BIO	Yes	
Cultural Resources	CUL	Yes	
Energy	EN		No
Geology and Soils	GEO	Yes	
Greenhouse Gas Emission	GHG	Yes	
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	HAZ		No
Hydrology and Water Quality	HYDRO		No
Land Use and Planning	LU		No
Mineral Resources	MIN		No
Noise	NOISE	Yes	
Population and Housing	POP		No
Public Services	PS		No
Recreation	REC		No
Transportation and Traffic	TRAF		No
Tribal Cultural Resources	TCR	Yes	
Utility and Service Systems	UTL		No
Wildfire	WFR		No
Mandatory Findings of Significance			No

RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

The following lists other public agencies whose approval is required for the project, or who have jurisdiction over resources potentially affected by the project.

Table 2 list the agencies and other permits that will be required to construct and/or operate the project. Leave this section out if there are no permits required.

Table 2.

Agency	Activity	Authorization
State Water Resources Control Board	Generating stormwater (construction, industrial, or municipal)	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requires submittal of NOI

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDING:

Based on the evaluation in the attached Expanded Initial Study, I find that the project described above will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment, provided that the mitigation measures identified in the Initial Study are included as conditions of approval for the project and a Mitigated Negative Declaration is proposed. The applicant has agreed in writing to incorporate identified mitigation measure into the project plans.

6/14/2021

Prepared by: Eric Gage Date

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County of Sonoma
Permit & Resource Management Department

Initial Study

Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department
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I. INTRODUCTION:

Springs Investor Group, LP proposes to build a 120-room mid-priced hotel facing Verano Avenue, and MidPen Housing Corporation proposes to construct a 71-unit apartment complex behind the hotel, on the northern portion of the property. A referral letter was sent to the appropriate local, state and federal agencies and interest groups who may wish to comment on the project.

This report is the Initial Study required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The report was prepared by Eric Gage, Planner with the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department, Comprehensive Planning Division. Information on the project was provided by Springs Investor Group, LP and MidPen Housing Corporation. Technical studies provided by qualified consultants are attached to this Expanded Initial Study to support the conclusions. Other reports, documents, maps and studies referred to in this document are available for review at the Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma) or on the County's website at: http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/divpages/projrevdiv.htm

Please contact Eric Gage, Planner, at (707) 565-1391, for more information.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to construct a three-story, 120-room hotel with a rooftop observation deck and garden on the southern portion of the 5.9 acre property. The hotel also includes a café/bar on the roof deck, and swimming pool for guests. The height of the hotel at the highest point is 52 feet and 10 inches at tower elements. The proposed housing project is located on the northern portion of the property and consists of a 100 percent affordable rental apartment complex of 71 units and a manager's unit, in six buildings with a maximum height of 43 feet, with community rooms, landscaped courtyards and pedestrian paths. The proposed project has a residential density of 22 units per acre and will utilize the Rental Housing Opportunity Density Bonus Program, to exceed the maximum residential density of the proposed R3 (High Density Residential) zoning district of 20 units per acre. Fifteen percent of the units will be restricted to very low income renters through an affordability agreement with the County. The remaining 85% with the exception of the manager's unit will be affordable to moderate, low, and very low income levels, to be determined by funding sources. Also proposed is a landscaped parklet of approximately 15,000 square feet on land owned by County Parks Department, but maintained by the applicant. The parklet property is located at the southwest corner of the project and will contain passive recreation amenities such as benches, water fountains, historical and educational markers. The parklet will extend offsite to the west to the entrance of the adjacent residential complex.

Portions of the site are currently zoned Recreational and Visitor Serving Commercial and Medium Density Residential. The project includes a rezoning and General Plan Amendment to establish multifamily residential use on the site. The Zone Change and General Plan Amendment include changing property currently zoned for recreational use to residential use, and from the designated zoning district of R2 (Medium Density Residential) to R3 (High Density Residential) and an increase in Urban Residential Land Use Density designation. The construction of the housing will begin in advance of the hotel. The combined construction timeframe will exceed a year. The majority of the site will be graded for parking and structures, but the area adjacent to the creek will be avoided. Cut and fill is concentrated around the structures, with preliminary grading quantities of 4,400 cubic yards of cut and 6,725 cubic yards of fill with the balance imported from offsite.

PROJECT SITE AND SURROUNDING LANDS:

The ± 5.9-acre project site is located on Verano Avenue, approximately 650 feet west of the intersection of Verano Avenue and Highway 12, and about 1.3 miles from central Sonoma. The site is mostly level with gentle sloping from east to west, and a defined creek bank at Agua Caliente Creek along the northern boundary of the parcel. The property is bordered to the west by a multifamily apartment building, to the east by a mobile home park, and to north by single family residences. Verano Road and Maxwell Farms Regional Park are located to the south of the property. Between Verano Avenue and the southern property line is an undeveloped right-of-way and a parcel of land owned by the County Regional Parks.

The site contains remnants of former structures along the northern and eastern portions of the site that were destroyed by fire or recent demolition. The northern portion of the property also contains several trees. The southern portion of the site contains a baseball field and an unpaved parking area no longer in use. The site is located in Zone 1 groundwater availability area, but the proposed project will be served by Valley of the Moon Water District, and sewer provided by Sonoma County Water Agency. Existing well and septic facilities onsite will be removed as part of site clearing.

Existing Uses: The property is currently vacant. Formerly the site of a cottage-style resort use, all structures on the property have been demolished. The southern portion of the site was recently used as a baseball playing field served by an unpaved parking area.

Topography: The subject property has minimum slope with an elevation of 120' mean sea level in the eastern portion, sloping to 117'msl at the southwestern portion of the site. The Agua Caliente Creek that borders the site along the northern property line has a defined bank with a grade change sloping downward from 120'msl to about 110'msl.

Drainage: The site is relatively level with slopes less than 10% generally falling from the northeast to southwest. There is a high point near the northern property boundary where runoff on the north drains to Agua Caliente Creek. Runoff from the rest of the site currently drains to a roadside ditch along Verano Avenue. The nearest water feature is the Agua Caliente Creek that runs along the northern property boundary that flows into the Sonoma Creek approximately 950-feet, west of the project.

Vegetation: The northern portion of the site has substantial tree cover which becomes denser in the direction of Agua Caliente Creek. Several trees were planted on the site as ornamentals, including fig, palm, plum, ash, and gum trees. Native tries include Coast Live Oak, Valley Oak, Bay Laurel, and Coast Redwood. The site contains 136 trees with 38 protected trees proposed for removal to construct the project.

Proposed Buildings and Uses: The project consists of two components, the hotel and the residential property:

1. Hotel building: a 120-room structure with a footprint of approximately 30,609 square feet in size, three stories with a rooftop observation deck, with a height of approximately 53 feet at the highest point, and a total square footage of 92,411 square feet. The hotel includes a swimming pool, gym, and meeting rooms on the ground floor, and a roof deck composing the fourth floor.

Employees: 40 full time employees

Hours of Operation: The check-in desk will operate 24 hours, 7 days a week. No more than 25 employees will be onsite at any one time. The peak hours for staffing would occur after check-out when rooms are being changed.

Parking: The hotel has a dedicated parking lot with 138 spaces.

2. Residential Apartment buildings: The residential component of the project is divided across six three-story apartment buildings, 43 feet in height, covering approximately 26,825 square feet. The unit mix will include 32 one-bedroom units, 22 two-bedroom, 18 three-bedroom units.

Employees: Four full time employees

Parking: The apartment complex has a dedicated parking lot with 97 spaces.

Design Style: The project consists of two separate developments designed by different architects. The residential project consists of six buildings arranged around a central courtyard. The residential site emphasizes the connection to the creek-adjacent wooded areas, through preservation of existing trees in courtyard and transitional areas. Emphasis on the natural environment is also achieved through the use of natural wood materials and earth tone colors. The hotel portion of the site evokes Spanish mission style, such as stucco exteriors, decorative screens, dome and arch design elements.

Access:
All access and egress for vehicles and trucks would be from Verano Avenue through a primary shared entrance and exit at the southeast corner of the property. The hotel access includes a secondary entrance and exit onto Verano Avenue from the circular driveway in front of the hotel main entrance.

Sewage Disposal:
Both residential and hotel components of the project will be served by a shared public main connection under Verano Avenue. Service will be provided by Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District.

Water supply:
Water will be provided by a private shared looped water system. The line will connect to an existing water main in Verano or Old Maple, come down the common access through the Verano Family Housing site and then return to the existing main in Verano or Old Maple. This looped system will have fire hydrants serving both the Verano Family Housing and the Verano Hotel sites. Each site will have its own domestic and irrigation meters. Service will be provided by Valley of the Moon Water District.

Landscape: Landscaping will include drought-tolerant, ornamental, native species complementing the architectural design of the structures. Landscaping will comply with the County's Water-Efficient Landscaping Ordinance. Trees removed from the site will be replaced per the Tree Ordinance. Coast live oaks in the northern portion of the site will be preserved. Preliminary design review was completed by the Design Review Committee (refer to Item 1 in the initial study checklist).

Construction: Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to occur over 18–24 months. It is anticipated that both project components will be constructed within one year of each other, beginning sometime in 2021. Due to impacts of the COVID19 pandemic on the tourism industry, it is anticipated that the residential component will be the first to break ground pending funding disbursements.

III. SETTING

The site is located within the Sonoma Valley Urban Service Area and will be served by the Valley of the Moon Water District. The infill site is vacant, and located approximately 500 feet west of the intersection with State Highway 12 and Verano Avenue. The property is surrounded by residential uses to the west, north and east, including multifamily residential, single-family homes, and a mobile home park. The

Maxwell Farms Regional Park is located to the south. The northern boundary of the site generally follows Agua Caliente Creek riparian corridor. This oak woodland habitat can support various State- and federally listed plant and animal species, including California Tiger Salamander, and Foothill Yellow Legged Frog.

IV. ISSUES RAISED BY THE PUBLIC OR AGENCIES

A referral packet was circulated to inform and solicit comments from selected relevant local, State, and federal agencies; and to stakeholder groups that were anticipated to take interest in the project. No comments were received other than noting that agency regulations and standards must be met.

V. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

This section analyzes the potential environmental impacts of this project based on the criteria set forth in the State CEQA Guidelines and the County's implementing ordinances and guidelines. For each item, one of four responses is given:

> **No Impact: The project would not have the impact described.** The project may have a beneficial effect, but there is no potential for the project to create or add increment to the impact described.
>
> **Less Than Significant Impact**: The project would have the impact described, but the impact would not be significant. Mitigation is not required, although the project applicant may choose to modify the project to avoid the impacts.
>
> **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated:** The project would have the impact described, and the impact could be significant. One or more mitigation measures have been identified that will reduce the impact to a less than significant level.
>
> **Potentially Significant Impact:** The project would have the impact described, and the impact could be significant. The impact cannot be reduced to less than significant by incorporating mitigation measures. An environmental impact report must be prepared for this project.

Each question was answered by evaluating the project as proposed, that is, without considering the effect of any added mitigation measures. The Initial Study includes a discussion of the potential impacts and identifies mitigation measures to substantially reduce those impacts to a level of insignificance where feasible. All references and sources used in this Initial Study are listed in the Reference section at the end of this report and are incorporated herein by reference.

The Springs Investors Group, LP and MidPen Housing, have agreed to accept all mitigation measures listed in this Initial Study as conditions of approval for the proposed project, and to obtain all necessary permits, notify all contractors, agents and employees involved in project implementation and any new owners should the property be transferred to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures.

1. AESTHETICS:

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

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

Comment:
The project is not in an area designated as visually sensitive by the Sonoma County General Plan. The site is not located on a scenic hillside, nor would it involve tree removal, construction or grading that would affect a scenic vista. Using the County of Sonoma's Visual Assessment Guidelines, the project site's sensitivity is Low, because it has an urban land use designation and no land use or zoning protecting scenic resources. The project's visual dominance is Dominant, because it stands out against its setting and attracts attention away from the surrounding landscape. Using these

guidelines, the impact is less than significant because the project is dominant in a low sensitivity area for visual impacts.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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

Comment:
Although Verano Avenue intersects State Highway 12, the scenic highway designation ends roughly two miles north of the intersection. Therefore, there is no state designated scenic highway in the vicinity of the project site and there would be no impact to state scenic highways.

Significance Level: No Impact

c) In non-urbanized areas substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Comment:
The project is located in an area designated as urbanized by the US Census, and is not in conflict with applicable local requirements governing scenic quality. The majority of the site area has been previously developed with resort buildings and cottages, and a baseball playing field. All structures have since been destroyed or demolished, with the exception of the baseball field seating area and related storage structures. The parcel is mostly flat or gently sloping, from the highest point at 120 feet above MSL at the north portion of the site, the grade drops quickly to the Agua Caliente Creek bank at approximately the northern property boundary. The grade slopes gently from the highest point to about 117 feet at the southern property boundary. The infill site is surrounded on three sides by residential development. Given the context of surrounding development, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would degrade the visual character of the area. The proposed project received preliminary approval by the County Design Review Committee review on June 3, 2020, ensuring that the aesthetic qualities of the project are maximized, and visual impacts are minimized.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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

Comment:
New structures will introduce new sources of light and glare. Lighting of the facility, especially lighting of the parking lot and security and safety lighting, may affect nighttime views. The proposed 96-unit development will result in an intensification of use of the site and, consequently, the need for increased lighting. The additional light sources created by the project would introduce more light and glare into the area contributing to a cumulative impact on nighttime views and potentially creating light trespass onto adjacent properties. All proposed exterior light sources are dark sky compliant, fully shielded and directed downward. An exterior lighting plan and photometric study were prepared for the project demonstrated that outdoor night lighting would not exceed one lux at the property boundary, with exception of some parking lot areas that must maintain a one foot-candle for safety. These areas border adjacent parking areas offsite, so adverse effects from light spillage are kept to a minimum. The outdoor lighting plan received preliminary approval at the Design Review Committee hearing held on June 3, 2020. Therefore, impacts from glare and night lighting will be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

2. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES:

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?

Comment:
The parcel is not designated as Prime or Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance on the Important Farmland maps. It is designated as Urban Lands reflecting the previously existing use of the site. There are already a considerable number of small parcels and lack of significant agricultural operations in the area.

Significance Level: No Impact

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or Williamson Act Contract?

Comment:
The project site is not included in a Williamson Act contract.

Significance Level: No Impact

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

Comment:
The project is not forest land and is not zoned Timberland Production (TP), or located near forest land or lands zoned TP, and therefore would not conflict with or have any effect on effect on forest lands or lands zoned TP.

Significance Level: No Impact

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

Comment:
The project is not forest land and is not located near any forest land, and would therefore not result in the loss of forest land.

Significance Level: No Impact

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?

Comment:
The project does not involve other changes in the environment that could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or forest land to non-forest use.

Significance Level: No Impact

3. 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?

Comment:
The project is within the jurisdiction of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, which is currently designated as a nonattainment area for state and federal ozone standards, the state PM 10 standard, and the state and federal PM 2.5 standard. The District has adopted an Ozone Attainment Plan and a Clean Air Plan in compliance with Federal and State Clean Air Acts. These plans include measures to achieve compliance with both ozone standards. The plans deal primarily with emissions of ozone precursors (nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds, also referred to as Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)). The project will not conflict with the District's air quality plans because the proposed use is below the emission thresholds for ozone precursors (see Comment in 1 (b) below.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) 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?

Comment:
State and federal standards have been established for "criteria pollutants": ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and particulates (PM10 and PM2.5). The pollutants NOx (nitrogen oxides) and reactive organic gases (ROG) form ozone in the atmosphere in the presence of sunlight. Sources of ozone precursors include vehicle emissions and stationary internal combustion engines.

The Bay Area is considered a non-attainment area for ground-level ozone and PM2.5 under both the Federal Clean Air Act and the California Clean Air Act. The area is also considered nonattainment for PM10 under the California Clean Air Act, but not the federal act. The area has attained both State and federal ambient air quality standards for carbon monoxide. As part of an effort to attain and maintain ambient air quality standards for ozone and PM10, the BAAQMD has established thresholds of significance for these air pollutants and their precursors. These thresholds are for ozone precursor pollutants (ROG and NOX), PM10, and PM2.5 and apply to both construction period and operational period impacts. BAAQMD identified the threshold quantities for criteria pollutants are listed below in Table 1.

Table 1. BAAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds

Criteria Air Pollutant	**Construction Thresholds Average Daily Emissions** (lb/day)	**Operational Thresholds**	
		Average Daily Emissions (lb/day)	**Annual Average Emissions** (ton/year)
ROG	54	54	10
NOx	54	54	10
PM10	82 (Exhaust)	84	15
PM2.5	54 (Exhaust)	54	10

The estimated emissions for this project have been calculated using the current CalEEMod program. Detailed discussion, construction schedules, and calculations are contained in the report *Verano Family Housing and Hotel Project Air Quality Assessment*, prepared by Illingworth and Rodkin (2020).

Table 2, Construction Period Emissions

	ROG	NOx	PM10	PM2/5
Total Construction Emmissions (tons)	1.3	1.1	<0.1	<0.1
Average daily Emissions (lbs)	11.4	9.5	0.2	0.2
BAAQMD Thresholds (lb/day)	**54**	**54**	**82**	**54**
Exceed Threshold	*No*	*No*	*No*	*No*

Criteria Pollutant emissions during construction would be less than significant, as shown in Table 2. Construction activities, including site preparation and grading, would temporarily generate fugitive dust in the form of PM10 and PM2.5. The BAAQMD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines consider these impacts to be less-than-significant if best management practices are implemented to reduce these emissions.

Table 3, Operational Emissions

	ROG	NOx	PM10	PM2/5
2023 Buildout Emissions (tons/year)	1.4	2.3	1.3	0.4
BAAQMD Annual Thresholds (tons/year)	**10**	**10**	**15**	**10**
Exceed Threshold	*No*	*No*	*No*	*No*
2023 Buildout Emissions (lb/day)	7.4	12.7	7.0	2.0
BAAQMD Daily Thresholds (lb/day)	**54**	**54**	**82**	**54**
Exceed Threshold	*No*	*No*	*No*	*No*

Operational air pollutant emissions from the project would be generated primarily from the project's automobile traffic. CalEEMod was also used to estimate emissions from operation of the proposed project assuming full build-out. As depicted in Table 3, operational emissions in buildout year 2023 would not exceed any applicable threshold and would be less than significant.

The project will not generate enough traffic to result in significant emissions of ozone precursors (ROG and NO_x). The project will have no long-term effect on fugitive dust. $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}, because all surfaces will be paved gravel, landscaped or otherwise treated to stabilize bare soils, and dust generation will be insignificant. However, there could be a short-term emission of dust (which would include $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}) during construction. These emissions would be less than significant with BAAQMD's recommended dust control measures.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

Mitigation Measure AIR-1:
The following dust control measures shall be included in the project:

1. All exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered two times per day.

2. All haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site shall be covered.

3. All visible mud or dirt track-out onto adjacent public roads shall be removed using wet power vacuum street sweepers at least once per day. The use of dry power sweeping is prohibited.

4. All vehicle speeds on unpaved roads shall be limited to 15 miles per hour (mph).

5. All roadways, driveways, and sidewalks to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible. Building pads shall be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.

6. Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to 5 minutes (as required by the California airborne toxics control measure Title 13, Section 2485 of California Code of Regulations [CCR]). Clear signage shall be provided for construction workers at all access points.

7. All construction equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. All equipment shall be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition prior to operation.

8. Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact at the Lead Agency regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The Air District's phone number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

Mitigation Monitoring:

Mitigation Monitoring AIR-1:
Dust control measures shall be listed on all grading, building or improvement plans prior to issuance of grading or building permits.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Comment:

A substance is considered toxic if it has the potential to cause adverse health effects in humans, including increasing the risk of cancer upon exposure or acute and/or chronic noncancer health effects. A toxic substance released into the air is considered a toxic air contaminant by CARB and as a hazardous air pollutant by the EPA. Examples include certain aromatic and chlorinated hydrocarbons, certain metals, and asbestos. Toxic air contaminants are generated by a number of sources, including stationary sources, such as dry cleaners, gas stations, combustion sources, and laboratories; mobile sources, such as automobiles or diesel emissions from trucks; and area sources, such as landfills. Adverse health effects associated with exposure to toxic air contaminants may include carcinogenic (i.e., cancer-causing) and noncarcinogenic effects. Noncarcinogenic effects typically affect one or more target organ systems and may be experienced either on short-term (acute) or long-term (chronic) exposure to a given toxic air contaminants.

Toxic Air Contaminants do not have ambient air quality standards, but are regulated by the BAAQMD using a risk-based approach. This approach uses a Health Risk Assessment to determine what sources and pollutants to control as well as the degree of control. A Health Risk Assessment is an analysis in which human health exposure to toxic substances is estimated and considered together with information regarding the toxic potency of the substances, to provide quantitative estimates of health risks. Community risk impacts are addressed by predicting increased lifetime cancer risk, the increase in annual PM2.5 concentrations and computing the Hazard Index (HI) for non-cancer health risks.

Construction equipment and associated heavy-duty truck traffic generates diesel exhaust, which is a known TAC. These exhaust air pollutant emissions would not be considered to contribute substantially to existing or projected air quality violations. Construction exhaust emissions may still pose health risks for sensitive receptors such as surrounding residents. The primary community risk impact issues associated with construction emissions are cancer risk and exposure to PM2.5. Diesel exhaust poses both a potential health and nuisance impact to nearby receptors. A health risk assessment of the project construction activities on maximally exposed individuals (MEI) was conducted that evaluated potential health effects to nearby sensitive receptors from construction emissions of DPM and PM2.5.

Implementation of *Mitigation Measure AIR-1* will reduce exhaust emissions by 5 percent and fugitive dust emissions by over 50 percent. Implementation of *Mitigation Measure AIR-2* using all construction equipment meeting Tier 3 engine standards with Tier 3 filters at minimum would further reduce on-site diesel exhaust emissions from construction equipment by 83 percent. This would reduce the cancer risk and PM2.5 concentration, such that the mitigated infant cancer risk from the project at the construction MEI would be less than 1.9 in one million, which would not exceed the BAAQMD significance threshold. After implementation of these mitigation measures, the project would have a less than significant impact with respect to community risk caused by construction activities.

Table 4, Construction Health Risk, Single Source

Source	Cancer Risk (per million)	Annual PM2.5 (µg/m3)	Hazard Index
Project Construction Unmitigated	**11.5 (infant)**	0.11	0.01
BAAQMD Single-Source Threshold	**>10.0**	**>0.3**	**>0.1**
Exceed Threshold?	***Yes***	*No*	*No*
Project Construction Mitigated*	1.9 (infant)	0.03	<0.01

BAAQMD Single-Source Threshold	**>10.0**	**>0.3**	**>0.1**
Exceed Threshold?	*No*	*No*	*No*
**Tier 3 DPF 3 Mitigation*			

Table 5, Construction Health Risk, Cumulative

Source	Cancer Risk (per million)	Annual PM2.5 (µg/m3)	Hazard Index
Project Construction Unmitigated	**11.5 (infant)**	0.11	0.01
State Route 12 (Link 1052, 6ft) at 300 feet west	3.2	0.03	0.01
Plant #18339 (Generator) at 1,000 feet	<0.1	<0.01	<0.01
Cumulative Total Unmitigated	<14.8	<0.15	<0.03
BAAQMD Cumulative Source Threshold	**>100**	**>0.8**	**>10.0**
Exceed Threshold?	***Yes***	*No*	*No*
Project Construction Mitigated*	1.9 (infant)	0.03	<0.01
State Route 12 (Link 1052, 6ft) at 300 feet west	3.2	0.03	0.01
Plant #18339 (Generator) at 1,000 feet	<0.1	<0.01	<0.01
Cumulative Total Mitigated*	<5.2	<0.07	<0.03
BAAQMD Cumulative Source Threshold	**>100**	**>0.8**	**>10.0**
Exceed Threshold?	*No*	*No*	*No*
**Tier 3 DPF 3 Mitigation*			

Community health risk assessments typically look at all substantial sources of TACs located within 1,000 feet of project site and at new TAC sources that would be introduced by the project. These sources include highways, railways, busy surface streets, and stationary sources identified by BAAQMD. A review of the project area indicates that traffic on State Route 12 (S.R. 12) has an average daily traffic (ADT) of over 10,000 vehicles, which are sources of TACs. One other TAC source was identified within 1,000 feet of the site, a stationary diesel powered generator. This project would not introduce any new TAC sources, such as substantial truck traffic or generators powered by diesel engines. Details of the screening, modeling, and community risk calculations are contained in the report *Verano Family Housing and Hotel Project Air Quality Assessment*, prepared by Illingworth and Rodkin (2020). Project construction health risk and cumulative community health risk are summarized in Tables 4 and 5 respectively below. Health risk to project residents is summarized in Table 6 below. Health risk impacts are less than significant.

Table 6, Health Risk Impact to New Project Residences

Source	Cancer Risk (per million)	Annual PM2.5 (µg/m3)	Hazard Index
State Route 12 @ 400 ft west	2.6	0.02	<0.01
Plant #18339 Generator @ 870 ft	<0.1	<0.01	<0.01
BAAQMD Single-Source Threshold	**>10.0**	**>0.3**	**>0.1**
Exceed Threshold	*No*	*No*	*No*
Cumulative Source Total	<2.7	<0.03	<0.02
BAAQMD Cumulative Source Threshold	**>100**	**>0.8**	**>10.0**
Exceed Threshold	*No*	*No*	*No*

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation

Mitigation Measure AIR-2:
Prior to building permit issuance, the developer shall provide a construction equipment list and schedule that demonstrates a reduction in TACs from construction equipment by 85%, such as using all construction equipment meeting Tier 3 engine standards with Tier 3 diesel particulate filters at minimum.

Mitigation Monitoring:

Mitigation Monitoring AIR-2:
The construction equipment list and supporting calculations will be reviewed and approved by Permit Sonoma staff prior to issuance of building permits.

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Comment:
The project is not an odor generating use, nor located near an odor generating source that may affect the use, and would have no odor impact. Construction equipment may generate odors during project construction. The impact would be less than significant as it would be a short-term impact that ceases upon completion of the project.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

Regulatory Framework

The following discussion identifies federal, state and local environmental regulations that serve to protect sensitive biological resources relevant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process.

Federal

Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA)

FESA establishes a broad public and federal interest in identifying, protecting, and providing for the recovery of threatened or endangered species. The Secretary of Interior and the Secretary of Commerce are designated in FESA as responsible for identifying endangered and threatened species and their critical habitat, carrying out programs for the conservation of these species, and rendering opinions regarding the impact of proposed federal actions on listed species. The USFWS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) are charged with implementing and enforcing the FESA. USFWS has authority over terrestrial and continental aquatic species, and NOAA Fisheries has authority over species that spend all or part of their life cycle at sea, such as salmonids.

Section 9 of FESA prohibits the unlawful "take" of any listed fish or wildlife species. Take, as defined by FESA, means "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such action." USFWS's regulations define harm to mean "an act which actually kills or injures wildlife." Such an act "may include "significant habitat modification or degradation where it actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding or sheltering" (50 CFR § 17.3). Take can be permitted under FESA pursuant to sections 7 and 10. Section 7 provides a process for take permits for federal projects or projects subject to a federal permit, and Section 10 provides a process for incidental take permits for projects without a federal nexus. FESA does not extend the take prohibition to federally listed plants on private land, other than prohibiting the removal, damage, or destruction of such species in violation of state law.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA)

The U.S. MBTA (16 USC §§ 703 et seq., Title 50 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 10) states it is "unlawful at any time, by any means or in any manner, to pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill; attempt to take, capture or kill; possess, offer for sale, sell, offer to barter, barter, offer to purchase, purchase, deliver for shipment, ship, export, import, cause to be shipped, exported, or imported, deliver for transportation, transport or cause to be transported, carry or cause to be carried, or receive for shipment, transportation, carriage, or export any migratory bird, any part, nest, or egg of any such bird, or any product, whether or

not manufactured, which consists, or is composed in whole or in part, of any such bird or any part, nest or egg thereof…" In short, under MBTA it is illegal to disturb a nest that is in active use, since this could result in killing a bird, destroying a nest, or destroying an egg. The USFWS enforces MBTA. The MBTA does not protect some birds that are non-native or human-introduced or that belong to families that are not covered by any of the conventions implemented by MBTA. In 2017, the USFWS issued a memorandum stating that the MBTA does not prohibit incidental take; therefore, the MBTA is currently limited to purposeful actions, such as directly and knowingly removing a nest to construct a project, hunting, and poaching.

The Clean Water Act (CWA)

The CWA is the primary federal law regulating water quality. The implementation of the CWA is the responsibility of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). However, the EPA depends on other agencies, such as the individual states and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), to assist in implementing the CWA. The objective of the CWA is to "restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters." Section 404 and 401 of the CWA apply to activities that would impact waters of the U.S. The USACE enforces Section 404 of the CWA and the California State Water Resources Control Board enforces Section 401.

Section 404

As part of its mandate under Section 404 of the CWA, the EPA regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into "waters of the U.S.". "Waters of the U.S: include territorial seas, tidal waters, and non-tidal waters in addition to wetlands and drainages that support wetland vegetation, exhibit ponding or scouring, show obvious signs of channeling, or have discernible banks and high-water marks. Wetlands are defined as those areas "that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions" (33 CFR 328.3(b)). The discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. is prohibited under the CWA except when it is in compliance with Section 404 of the CWA. Enforcement authority for Section 404 was given to the USACE, which it accomplishes under its regulatory branch. The EPA has veto authority over the USACE's administration of the Section 404 program and may override a USACE decision with respect to permitting. Substantial impacts to waters of the U.S. may require an Individual Permit's Projects that only minimally affect waters of the U.S. may meet the conditions of one of the existing Nationwide Permits, provided that such permit's other respective conditions are satisfied. A Water Quality Certification or waiver pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA is required for Section 404 permit actions (see below).

Section 401

Any applicant for a federal permit to impact waters of the U.S. under Section 404 of the CWA, including Nationwide Permits where pre-construction notification is required, must also provide to the USACE a certification or waiver from the State of California. The "401 Certification" is provided by the State Water Resources Control Board through the local Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The RWQCB issues and enforces permits for discharge of treated water, landfills, storm-water runoff, filling of any surface waters or wetlands, dredging, agricultural activities and wastewater recycling. The RWQCB recommends the "401 Certification" application be made at the same time that any applications are provided to other agencies, such as the USACE, USFWS, or NOAA Fisheries. The application is not final until completion of environmental review under the CEQA. The application to the RWQCB is similar to the pre-construction notification that is required by the USACE. It must include a description of the habitat that is being impacted, a description of how the impact is proposed to be minimized and proposed mitigation measures with goals, schedules, and performance standards. Mitigation must include a replacement of functions and values, and replacement of wetland at a minimum ratio of 2:1, or twice as many acres of wetlands provided as are removed. The RWQCB looks for mitigation that is on site and in-kind, with functions and values as good as or better than the water-based habitat that is being removed.

<u>State</u>

California Endangered Species Act (CESA)

Provisions of CESA protect state-listed threatened and endangered species. The CDFW is charged with establishing a list of endangered and threatened species. CDFW regulates activities that may result in "take" of individuals (i.e., "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill"). Habitat degradation or modification is not expressly included in the definition of "take" under the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC), but CDFW has interpreted "take" to include the killing of a member of a species which is the proximate result of habitat modification.

Fish and Game Code 1600-1602

Sections 1600-1607 of the CFGC require that a Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) application be submitted to CDFW for "any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake." CDFW reviews the proposed actions in the application and, if necessary, prepares a LSAA that includes measures to protect affected fish and wildlife resources, including mitigation for impacts to bats and bat habitat.

Nesting Birds

Nesting birds, including raptors, are protected under CFGC Section 3503, which reads, "It is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto." In addition, under CFGC Section 3503.5, "it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto". Passerines and non-passerine land birds are further protected under CFGC 3513. As such, CDFW typically recommends surveys for nesting birds that could potentially be directly (e.g., actual removal of trees/vegetation) or indirectly (e.g., noise disturbance) impacted by project-related activities. Disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings, or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered "take" by CDFW.

Non-Game Mammals

Sections 4150-4155 of the CFGC protects non-game mammals, including bats. Section 4150 states "A mammal occurring naturally in California that is not a game mammal, fully protected mammal, or fur-bearing mammal is a nongame mammal. A non-game mammal may not be taken or possessed except as provided in this code or in accordance with regulations adopted by the commission". The non-game mammals that may be taken or possessed are primarily those that cause crop or property damage. Bats are classified as a non-game mammal and are protected under the CFGC.

California Fully Protected Species and Species of Special Concern

The classification of "fully protected" was the CDFW's initial effort to identify and provide additional protection to those animals that were rare or faced possible extinction. Lists were created for fish, amphibians and reptiles, birds, and mammals. Most of the species on these lists have subsequently been listed under CESA and/or FESA. The Fish and Game Code sections (fish at §5515, amphibians and reptiles at §5050, birds at §3503 and §3511, and mammals at §4150 and §4700) dealing with "fully protected" species state that these species "…may not be taken or possessed at any time and no provision of this code or any other law shall be construed to authorize the issuance of permits or licenses to take any fully protected species," although take may be authorized for necessary scientific research. This language makes the "fully protected" designation the strongest and most restrictive regarding the "take" of these species. In 2003, the code sections dealing with "fully protected" species were amended to allow the CDFW to authorize take resulting from recovery activities for state-listed species.

California Species of Special Concern (CSC) are broadly defined as animals not listed under the FESA or CESA, but which are nonetheless of concern to the CDFW because they are declining at a rate that could

result in listing or because they historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist. This designation is intended to result in special consideration for these animals by the CDFW, land managers, consulting biologists, and others, and is intended to focus attention on the species to help avert the need for costly listing under FESA and CESA and cumbersome recovery efforts that might ultimately be required. This designation also is intended to stimulate collection of additional information on the biology, distribution, and status of poorly known at-risk species, and focus research and management attention on them. Although these species generally have no special legal status, they are given special consideration under the CEQA during project review.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The intent of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne) is to protect water quality and the beneficial uses of water, and it applies to both surface and ground water. Under this law, the State Water Resources Control Board develops statewide water quality plans, and the RWQCBs develop basin plans that identify beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and implementation plans. The RWQCBs have the primary responsibility to implement the provisions of both statewide and basin plans. Waters regulated under Porter-Cologne, referred to as "waters of the State," include isolated waters that are not regulated by the USACE. Projects that require a USACE permit, or fall under other federal jurisdiction, and have the potential to impact waters of the State are required to comply with the terms of the Water Quality Certification Program. If a proposed project does not require a federal license or permit, any person discharging, or proposing to discharge, waste (e.g., dirt) to waters of the State must file a Report of Waste Discharge and receive either waste discharge requirements (WDRs) or a waiver to WDRs before beginning the discharge.

Local

Sonoma County General Plan

The *Sonoma County General Plan 2020* Land Use Element and Open Space & Resource Conservation Element both contain policies to protect natural resource lands including, but not limited to, watershed, fish and wildlife habitat, biotic areas, and habitat connectivity corridors.

Riparian Corridor Ordinance

The RC combining zone is established to protect biotic resource communities, including critical habitat areas within and along riparian corridors, for their habitat and environmental value, and to implement the provisions of the General Plan Open Space and Resource Conservation and Water Resources Elements. These provisions are intended to protect and enhance riparian corridors and functions along designated streams, balancing the need for agricultural production, urban development, timber and mining operations and other land uses with the preservation of riparian vegetation, protection of water resources, floodplain management, wildlife habitat and movement, stream shade, fisheries, water quality, channel stability, groundwater recharge, opportunities for recreation, education and aesthetic appreciation and other riparian functions and values.

Valley Oak Habitat (VOH) Combining District

The VOH combining district is established to protect and enhance valley oaks and valley oak woodlands and to implement the provisions of *Sonoma County General Plan 2020* Resource Conservation Element Section 5.1. Design review approval may be required of projects in the VOH, which would include measures to protect and enhance valley oaks on the project site, such as requiring that valley oaks shall comprise a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the required landscape trees for the development project.

Sonoma County Tree Protection Ordinance

The Sonoma County Tree Protection Ordinance (Sonoma County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 26, Article 88, Sec. 26-88-010 [m]) establishes policies for protected tree species in Sonoma County. Protected trees are defined (Chapter 26, Article 02, Sec. 26- 02-140) as the following species: big leaf maple (*Acer*

macrophyllum), black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*), blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*), coast live oak (Quercus *agrifolia*), interior live oak (*Quercus wislizenii*), madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), oracle oak (*Quercus morehus*), Oregon oak (*Quercus garryana*), redwood (Sequoia sempervirens), valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), California bay (*Umbellularia californi*a), and their hybrids.

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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Regulatory Framework

Special-Status Species

Special-status species include those plant and wildlife species that have been formally listed, are proposed as endangered or threatened, or are candidates for such listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) or California Endangered Species Act (CESA). These acts afford protection to both listed and proposed species. In addition, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Species of Special Concern, which are species that face extirpation in California if current population and habitat trends continue, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (The Service) Birds of Conservation Concern, and CDFW special-status invertebrates, are all considered special-status species. Although CDFW Species of Special Concern generally have no special legal status, they are given special consideration under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In addition to regulations for special-status species, most birds in the United States, including non-status species, are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. Plant species on California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants with California Rare Plant Ranks (Rank) of 1 and 2 are also considered special-status plant species and must be considered under CEQA. Bat species designated as “High Priority” by the Western Bat Working Group (WBWG) qualify for legal protection under Section 15380(d) of the CEQA Guidelines. Species designated High Priority” are defined as “imperiled or are at high risk of imperilment based on available information on distribution, status, ecology and known threats.

Endangered Species Act

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended (16 USC 1531 *et seq*.) was enacted to provide a means to identify and protect endangered and threatened species. Under the Section 9 of the ESA, it is unlawful to take any listed species. “Take” is defined as harassing, harming, pursuing, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing, or collecting a listed species. “Harass” is defined as an intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering. “Harm” is defined as an act which actually kills or injures fish or wildlife and may include significant habitat modification or degradation which actually kills or injures fish or wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, spawning, rearing, migrating, feeding, or sheltering. Actions that may result in “take” of a federal-listed species are subject to The Service or National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) permit issuance and monitoring. Section 7 of ESA requires federal agencies to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by the agency is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat for such species. Any action authorized, funded, or carried out by a federal agency or designated proxy (e.g., Army Corps of Engineers) which has potential to affect listed species requires consultation with The Service or NOAA Fisheries under Section 7 of the ESA.

Critical Habitat

Critical habitat is a term defined in the ESA as a specific geographic area that contains features essential for the conservation of a threatened or endangered species and that may require special management and protection. The ESA requires federal agencies to consult with the USFWS to conserve listed species on their lands and to ensure that any activities or projects they fund, authorize, or carry out will not jeopardize the survival of a threatened or endangered species. In consultation for those species with critical habitat, federal agencies must also ensure that their activities or projects do not adversely modify critical habitat to the point that it will no longer aid in the species' recovery. In many cases, this level of protection is similar to that already provided to species by the ESA jeopardy standard. However, areas that are currently unoccupied by the species but which are needed for the species' recovery are protected by the prohibition against adverse modification of critical habitat.

Essential Fish Habitat

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) is regulated through the NMFS, a division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Protection of Essential Fish Habitat is mandated through changes implemented in 1996 to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) to protect the loss of habitat necessary to maintain sustainable fisheries in the United States. The Magnuson-Stevens Act defines Essential Fish Habitat as "those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity" [16 USC 1802(10)]. NMFS further defines essential fish habitat as areas that "contain habitat essential to the long-term survival and health of our nation's fisheries" Essential Fish Habitat can include the water column, certain bottom types such as sandy or rocky bottoms, vegetation such as eelgrass or kelp, or structurally complex coral or oyster reefs.

Comment:

Special Status Plants

A total of 14 special status plant species were identified in a 5-mile radius from the project site in search of the California Natural Diversity Database search (CNDDB, accessed on January 21, 2019). Two site evaluations were conducted in May and June 2015 to coincide with late-flowering special status plants, including white seaside tarplant. However no special status species plants native to the site were identified in two site evaluations occurring in May and June 2015. The habitat for these plants onsite is considered marginal and due to the extent of prior development and disturbance, it is extremely unlikely that special status plant species occur in the area. Therefore, impacts to special status plants are found less than significant.

California Tiger Salamander and Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog

The California tiger salamander (Ambystoma californiense) is associated with vernal pools and seasonal wetlands on the Santa Rosa Plain. The salamander is federal listed as Endangered and is State listed as Threatened.

The proposed project site is not located in critical habitat of the California tiger salamander (CTS) as shown in the CDFW Santa Rosa Plain Conservation Strategy Map prepared by CDFW, but CTS has been documented to occur within five miles of the site in similar habitats. A biological resource evaluation was conducted by Lucy Macmillan and Dr. Roy Buck, in October 2015 to identify the presence of special status plants, animals, and sensitive habitat, including CTS. An update to the biological assessment was prepared by Lucy Macmillan in January 2019. A focused wildlife survey was also prepared by Sol Ecology in April 2019 to evaluate the site for special status amphibians, including CTS.

The biotic assessments determined that the area of the site adjacent to the creek presents a small 0.7 acre area of suitable aquatic habitat along the creek channel for both CTS and Foothill Yellow Legged Frog (FYLF), the extensive urbanization surrounding the site makes the habitat less viable and the presence of amphibians less likely. None of the surveys conducted observed the presence of

CTS or FYLF.

The remaining 5.2 acres of the site is disturbed and developed including graded areas with demolished structures, and the baseball field, which are not be considered suitable habitat for CTS. There are no other wetlands on the project site outside of the riparian corridor, providing suitable CTS breeding habitat.

Therefore, the project would not result in a cumulative direct or indirect alteration to or destruction of habitat that appreciably diminishes the value of critical habitat for both the survival and recovery of the listed species, with the application of mitigation measure BIO-1.

Special Status Bats and Nesting Birds

The site contains several mature trees that could provide nesting habitat for a variety birds and roosting habitat for bats, although due to changing conditions it is not possible to know whether these species will be present until subsequent surveys are conducted. To avoid impacts to nesting birds, if work will occur between February 1st and August 15th, a qualified biologist should conduct a pre-construction survey for potential nesting habitat within 500 feet of project activities no more than 14 days prior to ground disturbance to determine if any birds are nesting in trees on the project site, and follow mitigation measure BIO-2 Similarly, to avoid impacts to roosting special status bats, if work will occur between April 1st through November 1st, a qualified biologist shall conduct a survey for potential maternity roosts and establish appropriate exclusion zone. With the application of mitigation measures BIO-3, the impact to special status raptors and bats would be reduced to less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:

Mitigation Measure BIO-1:

If proposed work is within 40 meters (130 feet), outside the stream channel of Aqua Caliente Creek, there is the potential for FYLF to potentially be impacted if present. In addition, it is possible the California giant salamander could be present therefore the same mitigation measures that address FYLF shall apply for the salamander and include the following (Riggs, 2017):

- All vegetation clearing should be done by hand under the supervision of a qualified biologist.
- Prior to any work, protocol-level surveys shall be conducted to determine if adult FYLF are present in the adjacent stream channel. Survey methodology must be provided to CDFW for review and approval at least 30 days prior to implementing the survey. No project activities shall begin until foothill yellow legged frog surveys have been completed using a method approved by CDFW. The survey shall encompass the project area, upland habitat within and adjacent to the project area no less than 150 feet from the streambed, and 500 feet upstream and downstream of the project area. Survey methodology shall target all life stages and shall include wet and dry stream surveys. Egg mass surveys shall be conducted weekly between March and June.
- If any life stage of FYLF is found either during surveys or during the course of activities, PRMD shall be notified, and all activities shall cease until a qualified biologist approves any avoidance measures necessary to avoid adverse impacts to the species. Additional avoidance measures shall include installation of wildlife exclusion fencing between the outfall and the stream channel to prevent FYLF from entering the work area and/or biological monitoring during all work occurring within the riparian habitat.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2:

Tree removal and roadway construction shall be initiated during the non-nesting season from September 1 to January 31 if feasible. If work cannot be initiated during this period, or if there is a break in activity lasting more than 14 days after February 1 then nesting bird surveys shall be performed by a qualified biologist within 500 feet of proposed activities no more than 14 days before initial ground disturbance. If nests are found, a no-disturbance buffer shall be placed around the nest until young have fledged or the nest is determined to be no longer active by the biologist. The size of

the buffer may be determined by the biologist based on species and proximity to activities; larger buffers up to 500 feet may be required for special status raptor species.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3:
If initial ground disturbance occurs during the bat maternity roosting season (April 1 through November 1), a bat roost assessment of all trees shall be conducted within 100 feet of the project site to determine the likelihood of occurrence for roosting bats on site. If suitable roost habitat is found, then nighttime emergence surveys shall be performed to determine if a maternity roost is present. Acoustic analysis shall also be performed to determine if special status species are present. If a maternity day roost is confirmed, a qualified biologist shall establish an appropriate exclusion zone sufficient to protect the maternity roost area until after Sept. 1.

To the extent feasible, tree removal shall be performed between Sept.1 and April 15. If trees cannot be removed during this time, then they should be removed in a two-phased approach. To avoid impacts to solitary roosters, trees should be removed in pieces, rather than felling the entire tree. Felled tree pieces should be shaken gently to rouse any bats and then left overnight prior to removal from the site or on-site chipping to allow any bats to exit the roost.

Monitoring:

Monitoring Measure BIO-1:
Prior Permit Sonoma staff shall review the results of any pre-construction surveys and any measures required by the biologist to avoid sensitive habitat or species. All mitigation measures shall be noted on the final project plans.

Monitoring Measure BIO-2:
Prior to issuance of grading permits during the breeding season, Permit Sonoma staff shall review the results of any pre-construction surveys and any measures requiredby the biologist to avoid sensitive habitat or species. All mitigation measures shall be noted on the final project plans.

Monitoring Measure BIO-3:
Prior to issuance of grading permits during the bat maternity roosting season, Permit Sonoma staff shall review the results of any pre-construction surveys and any measures required by the biologist to avoid sensitive habitat or species. All mitigation measures shall be noted on the final project plans.

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 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Comment:

All blueline streams shown on the USGS maps are designated for protection in the Sonoma County General Plan. Streamside Conservation Areas have been established in the riparian corridor overlay zone to protect riparian habitat. Removal of vegetation must comply with General Plan and Riparian Corridor Ordinance policies that govern riparian corridors for a distance of 50 feet from the top of bank. In compliance with these policies, the top of bank of Agua Caliente Creek was surveyed and a buffer measured 50 feet from the top of bank. The measured buffer is a few feet from the footprint of prior development and structures that have since been removed. The vegetation within the buffer is characterized as coast live oak woodland. No development is occurring within the riparian buffer and no disturbance of the oak woodland within the buffer will occur. The citing of structures has been done to preserve the oak trees in the northeast corner of the site that extend outside of the riparian corridor. Arborist mitigation measures, BIO-4, for earthwork, plantings, and hardscape within the dripline of existing oaks will reduce impacts to the riparian corridor to less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation: See Mitigation Measures BIO-4, below.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Regulatory Framework

The Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) regulates "Waters of the United States", including adjacent wetlands, under Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act. Waters of the United States include navigable waters, interstate waters, territorial seas and other waters that may be used in interstate or foreign commerce. Potential wetland areas are identified by the presence of (1) hydrophytic vegetation, (2) hydric soils, and (3) wetland hydrology. All three parameters must be present, under normal circumstances, for an area to be designated as a jurisdictional wetland under the Clean Water Act. Areas that are inundated for sufficient duration and depth to exclude growth of hydrophytic vegetation are subject to Section 404 jurisdiction as "other waters" and are often characterized by an ordinary high water mark (OHWM). The discharge of dredged or fill material into a Waters of the U.S. (including wetlands) generally requires a permit from the Corps under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

"Waters of the State" are regulated by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) under the State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Waters of the State are defined by the Porter-Cologne Act as any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the State. RWQCB jurisdiction includes "isolated" wetlands and waters that may not be regulated by the ACOE under Section 404 (such as roadside ditches). Section 401 of the Clean Water Act specifies that any activity subject to a permit issued by a federal agency must also obtain State Water Quality Certification (401 Certification) that the proposed activity will comply with state water quality standards. If a proposed project does not require a federal permit, but does involve dredge or fill activities that may result in a discharge to Waters of the State, the Water Board has the option to regulate the dredge and fill activities under its state authority through its Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) program.

Comment:
A jurisdictional wetlands delineation was conducted on the project site (Macmillan, Buck 2015). The project site was walked to identify and map potential jurisdictional wetland features. Agua Caliente Creek was the only potential jurisdictional feature identified on the project site. The creek features a dense riparian canopy comprised of coast live oak, California bay, and others. No work is proposed that would result in the discharge of fill material into the creek and therefore no wetlands-related permits would be required from ACE or RWQCB. No work is proposed within the 50-foot riparian buffer measured from top of bank, and no clearance would be required from CDFW.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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?

Comment:
The project site includes a riparian corridor containing the seasonal Agua Caliente Creek. No work is proposed within the riparian corridor buffer measured from top of bank, reducing impacts to salmon and migratory fish to a less than significant level.

The project site includes many trees. Many common bird species (including their eggs and young), are given special protection under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (Migratory Bird Act). The mitigations measures recommended below are sufficient to address impacts to birds protected by the Migratory Bird Act. See Section 4,a) for additional discussion of special status bats and Foothill Yellow Legged Frog that may utilize the site for breeding and roosting respectively.

Impacts to migratory birds are typically avoided by removing vegetation during non-nesting season, by having a qualified biologist verify absence immediately prior to vegetation removal, or, in the case of bridges, by employing exclusionary bird netting during the nesting season. If it is not feasible to remove vegetation outside of bird-nesting season, then Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, and BIO-3 will reduce impacts to a level that would be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

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

Regulatory Framework

Tree Protection Ordinance

Chapter 26, Article 88. Sec. 26-08-010 (m) of the Sonoma County Code contains a tree protection ordinance (Sonoma County 2013). The ordinance designates 'protected' trees as well as provides mitigation standards for impacts to protected trees. While this ordinance is not applicable to County Public Works projects, it is used as a guide for determining impacts and appropriate mitigation measures.

Sonoma County General Plan

The *Sonoma County General Plan 2020* (Sonoma County 2008) Land Use Element and Open Space & Resource Conservation Element both contain policies to protect natural resource lands including, but not limited to watershed, fish and wildlife habitat, biotic areas, and habitat connectivity corridors. Policy OSRC-8b establishes streamside conservation areas along designated riparian corridors.

Riparian Corridor Ordinance

The RC combining zone is established to protect biotic resource communities, including critical habitat areas within and along riparian corridors, for their habitat and environmental value, and to implement the provisions of the General Plan Open Space and Resource Conservation and Water Resources Elements. These provisions are intended to protect and enhance riparian corridors and functions along designated streams, balancing the need for agricultural production, urban development, timber and mining operations, and other land uses with the preservation of riparian vegetation, protection of water resources, floodplain management, wildlife habitat and movement, stream shade, fisheries, water quality, channel stability, groundwater recharge, opportunities for recreation, education and aesthetic appreciation and other riparian functions and values.

Comment:
A Tree Preservation and Mitigation Report was prepared for the site (Meserve, 2019) evaluated 136 trees on the site. Many of the trees are non-native plantings from the former resort use on the property. Tree species planted as ornamentals not subject to mitigation include Monterey Pine, Fig, Canary Island Date Palm, London Plane Tree, Apple, Camphor, Mulberry, Plum, Grapefruit, Glossy Privet, Catalpa, Honey Locust, Deodar Cedar, Blue Gum, Oregon Ash, Giant Sequoia, Olive, Sweet Gum, Horse Chestnut, Callery Pear, and Incense Cedar.

The Sonoma County Tree Protection Ordinance requires that projects be designed so as to minimize the destruction of protected trees. Existing native trees subject to mitigation replacement per the Sonoma County Tree Ordinance include Coast Live Oak, Valley Oak, Bay Laurel, and Coast Redwood. A total of 38 protected trees are proposed for removal, and mitigation in the form of 105 replacement trees proposed by the project and in-lieu fees as required.

Before the start of clearing, excavation, construction on the site, every tree designated for protection on the approved site will be marked by fencing within the dripline.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:

Mitigation Measure BIO-4:

Only the minimum amount of vegetation from coast live oaks to be preserved will be pruned or removed that is necessary to construct the project, and pruning and removal shall be done under the supervision of an arborist to avoid adverse impacts to coast live oaks. Where feasible, vegetation will be tied back in lieu of cutting. Native vegetation that must be removed will be cut at or above grade to facilitate re-growth. Any pruning that is done, including for utility line clearance, will conform to the American National Standard for Tree Care Operation Tree, Shrub, and Other Woody Plant Maintenance Standard Practices, Pruning (ANSI A300 Part 1)-2008 Pruning), and the companion publication Best Management Practices: Tree pruning (ISA 2008). Roots will only be unearthed when necessary.

The following are the arborist's project-specific mitigation measures for the project:

a. Any work or construction activities performed under the drip line of preserved oaks will need review and approval from the project arborist.
b. 4-foot high orange plastic fence to be installed at the drip line or as otherwise approved by the project arborist.
c. In areas where construction in tree protection zones is approved by the project arborist, the trees shall be protected with a strapped barrel stave-like surrounding of 2"x4"'s around the full circumference of the tree trunk.
d. Parking vehicles, storing materials, supplies or construction equipment will not be allowed unless otherwise approved by the project arborist.
e. Any trenching required within the root zone shall be done by hand or air spaded as directed by the project arborist.
f. Any existing roots that must to be cut or removed will be done so as directed and approved by the project arborist.
g. Any pruning or limb removal that needs to occur will be done so as directed and approved by the project arborist.

Mitigation Monitoring BIO-4:
The arborist conditions will be printed on the building permit plans prior to issuance of the building permit.

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?

Comment:
There are no Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plans within the project area. Federally designated Critical Habitat is discussed in 4(b), above.

Significance Level: No Impact

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES:

Background

Before the European settlement, the Pomo, Miwok, and Kashaya Indians inhabited what is today Sonoma County. In 1812, the Russians established the short-lived Fort Ross along the coast north of the Russian River. Further east, the Sonoma Mission was established during the Mexican period in 1823. Shortly afterwards, Sonoma became the county's first town, a pueblo, under General Mariano Vallejo. During that time, sections of the county were transformed into vast land-grant ranchos, such as Vallejo's holdings that

extended from today's Petaluma to the town of Sonoma. Most of the construction during the first half of the nineteenth century was adobe and wood. These construction methods drew on the Mexican tradition while incorporating some of the features and floor plans of the Anglo Americans.

After statehood, logging along the coast hills, cattle ranching, wheat and potato farming, and the early development of the wine industry supported the sparsely settled county. During this time, commercial and industrial buildings used local stone or brick, while most residences were built of wood. During the 1860s to the 1890s, Petaluma, at the head of navigation on the Petaluma Creek, enjoyed rapid economic growth that fueled the construction of [its] downtown with sophisticated iron-front commercial buildings and elegant residences nearby.

Later the railroads facilitated the movement of goods and people leading to the establishment of processing plants and factories along the rail lines.

Around the turn of the century, the Russian River developed as a vacation resort, a destination for those in the San Francisco Bay Area. During this time, Santa Rosa also enjoyed an increase in population and importance as the center of finance and county government. Until World War II, the poultry industry, the processing of local fruit, and the production of hops sustained the economy throughout the county. In 1935, Sonoma County ranked tenth in the nation in overall agricultural production.

During the first half of the twentieth century, many of the stylish buildings were designed by local architects such as Brainerd Jones in Petaluma and William Herbert in Santa Rosa. After World War II, Clarence Caulkins and J. Clarence Felciano worked on many projects in the county. With reference to residential, commercial, and industrial architecture, many of the towns still retain excellent examples of both high style and vernacular building examples from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Today the southwestern part of the county continues to support cattle grazing and dairy farms. Toward the north many of the ranches and orchards have been replaced with acres of vineyards and thriving winery operations that rival Napa County. Over the years many of the poultry farms, fruit growers, and dairy operations have relocated to the Central Valley or sold their businesses completely. In their place, small specialty farms and ranches now operate sustainable and organic endeavors. Dotting the countryside throughout the county are modern residences where rural homesteads used to be. The Russian River area still caters to vacationers, but on a smaller scale, and the cities along the freeway continue to expand to provide housing and services with new subdivisions, business parks, and strip-mall shopping centers.

With 467,000 residents, the county has doubled its population since 1980. Part of the challenge has been to retain its agricultural and small-town character while providing for the livelihood of the expanding population. Related to this is the specific challenge of encouraging new development that complements both the physical beauty of the countryside and the county's rich heritage (Hurley 2020).

State Regulations

CEQA requires that a lead agency determine whether a project could have a significant effect on historical resources and tribal cultural resources (PRC Section 21074 [a][1][A]-[B]). A historical resource is one listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR, PRC Section 21084.1), a resource included in a local register of historical resources (PRC Section 15064.5[a][2]), or any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that a lead agency determines to be historically significant (PRC Section 15064.5[a][3]).

If a project can be demonstrated to cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require reasonable efforts to permit any or all these resources to be preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state. To the extent that resources cannot be left undisturbed, mitigation measures are required (PRC, Section 21083.2[a], [b], and [c]).

Impacts to significant cultural resources that affect the characteristics of any resource that qualify it for the NRHP or adversely alter the significance of a resource listed in or eligible for listing in the CRHR are considered a significant effect on the environment. These impacts could result from physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5

[b][1]). Material impairment is defined as demolition or alteration in an adverse manner [of] those characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion or eligibility for inclusion in the CRHR (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5[b][2][A]).

California Public Resources Code

Section 5097.5 of the California PRC states:

> No person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure or deface any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands. Violation of this section is a misdemeanor.

As used in this PRC section, "public lands" means lands owned by or under the jurisdiction of the State or any city, county, district, authority, or public corporation, or any agency thereof. Consequently, local agencies are required to comply with PRC 5097.5 for their own activities, including construction and maintenance, as well as for permit actions (e.g., encroachment permits) undertaken by others.

Codes Governing Human Remains

The disposition of human remains is governed by Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and PRC sections 5097.94 and 5097.98 and falls within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). If human remains are discovered, the county coroner must be notified within 48 hours, and there should be no further disturbance to the site where the remains were found. If the coroner determines the remains are Native American, the coroner is responsible to contact the NAHC within 24 hours. Pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98, the NAHC will immediately notify those persons it believes to be most likely descended from the deceased Native Americans so they can inspect the burial site and make recommendations for treatment or disposal.

Would the project:

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

Comments:

A Cultural Resources Evaluation of the entire site was prepared by William Roop, professional archaeologist, on February 1, 2019. The methods used to complete the survey included a record search and review of documentation available at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC), a review of historic references to assess the potential for buried archaeological resources within the project site, a Native American Sacred Lands inventory, and a field survey of the project site. No historical resource were identified within the project site. The structures on the site associated with the former resort use established in 1903 had been demolished or destroyed.

Significance Level: No Impact

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

Comment:
On November 6, 2019, Permit Sonoma staff referred the project application to Native American Tribes within Sonoma County to request consultation under SB-18 and AB-52 (the request for consultation period ended February 19, 2020). On November 8, 2019 a representative for the Graton Rancheria Tribe requested consultation and additional information for this project. No other requests for consultation were received.

As noted above, a Cultural Resources Evaluation of the site was prepared on February 1, 2019. Due to the presence of known cultural resources in the vicinity of the site, Permit Sonoma staff directed the applicant to prepare a subsurface investigation. The subsurface investigation was conducted by

ESA in March of 2020. The investigation methods included a field survey, and fourteen small test pits excavated up to a depth of three feet. Two obsidian flakes of less than 5 millimeters were identified in one test pit. No other archeological materials were identified that would indicate Native American occupation in the project area.

There are no known archaeological resources on the site, but the project could uncover such materials during construction. Consultation with Graton Rancheria Tribe concluded August 17, 2020, when both parties agreed to construction monitoring Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, which are also included as a Condition of Approval of the project. The following measure will reduce the impact to less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:

Mitigation Measure CUL-1:
Conduct Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Sensitivity and Awareness Training Program. Prior to ground-disturbing activities, the project applicant/contractor shall ensure that an archaeological resources and tribal cultural resources sensitivity and awareness training program, Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP), is provided for all personnel involved in project construction, including field consultants and construction workers. The WEAP will be developed in coordination with a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archeology, as well as culturally affiliated local Tribe's Tribal Heritage Preservation Officer or designated representative for Cultural Monitoring.

The WEAP shall be conducted before any project-related construction activities begin in the project area. The WEAP will include relevant information regarding sensitive cultural resources and tribal cultural resources, including applicable regulations, protocols for avoidance, and consequences of violating State laws and regulations. The WEAP will also describe appropriate avoidance and impact minimization measures for archaeological resources and tribal cultural resources that could be located at the project area and will outline what to do and who to contact if any potential archaeological resources or tribal cultural resources are encountered. The WEAP will emphasize the requirement for confidentiality and culturally appropriate treatment of any discovery of significance to Native Americans and will discuss appropriate behaviors and responsive actions, consistent with Native American tribal values.

Mitigation Measure CUL-2:
A Tribal Monitor and qualified archeologist are required to be present onsite during all grading and ground disturbance work. Prior to submittal of the application for Grading Permit or any other ground disturbing activity. The applicant shall coordinate with the Tribal Representative for Graton Rancheria Tribe to identify a Tribal Monitor and qualified archeologist to monitor ground disturbing activities, and provide contact information for the Tribal Monitor to Permit Sonoma.

Mitigation Measure CUL-3:
The unanticipated discovery protocol for archeological resources and human remains reproduced below will be required to be printed on all building and grading permits on grading or earthwork plan sheets:

"A Tribal Monitor is required to be present during all grading or other ground-disturbing work. The Tribal Monitor must be present on site before the start of any ground-disturbing work, including scraping. In the event that cultural resources are discovered at any time during grading, scraping or excavation within the property, all work should be halted in the vicinity of the find. Artifacts associated with prehistoric sites may include humanly modified stone, shell, bone or other cultural materials such as charcoal, ash and burned rock indicative of food procurement or processing activities. Prehistoric domestic resources include hearths, firepits, or house floor depressions whereas typical mortuary resources are represented by human skeletal remains. The Tribal Monitor and Permit Sonoma Project Review Staff shall be notified in the event that cultural resources are discovered. Permit

Sonoma Staff should consult with the appropriate tribal representatives from the tribes known to Permit Sonoma to have interests in the area to determine if the resources qualify as Tribal Cultural Resources (as defined in Public Resource Code § 21074). If determined to be a Tribal Cultural Resource, Permit Sonoma would further consult with the appropriate tribal representatives and project proponents in order to develop and coordinate proper protection/mitigation measures required for the discovery. Permit Sonoma shall refer the mitigation/protection plan to designated tribal representatives for review and comment. No work shall commence until a protection/mitigation plan is reviewed and approved by Permit Sonoma - Project Review Staff. Mitigations may include avoidance, removal, preservation and/or recordation in accordance with California law. Evaluation and mitigation shall be at the applicant's sole expense.

If human remains are encountered, all work must stop in the immediate vicinity of the discovered remains, and the contractor/applicant must immediately notify Permit Sonoma Staff, the Tribe's THPO or designated representative, and the County Coroner pursuant to State law so that an evaluation can be performed. If the remains are deemed to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission must be contacted by the Coroner so that a "Most Likely Descendant" can be designated and the appropriate provisions of the California Government Code and California Public Resources Code would be followed."

Mitigation Monitoring

Mitigation Monitoring CUL-1, -CUL-2, -CUL-3:
Grading and building permits shall not be approved for issuance by Permit Sonoma - Project Review Staff until the contact information for the designated Tribal Monitor is provided, and a Worker Environmental Awareness Program training has occurred and confirmed by the designated Tribal Monitor, and the above unanticipated discovery pro9tocnotes pertaining to are printed on the building, grading and improvement plans. The applicant shall provide a contact with a qualified Tribal Monitor representing the Graton Rancheria Tribe to monitor ground disturbing activities to Permit Sonoma.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

Comment:
No burial sites are known within the project boundary, and most of the project site has already been disturbed by past construction. Mitigation measure CUL-3 would reduce the impact to less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

6. ENERGY

Would the project:

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Comment:
Short-term energy demand is associated with the project construction activities. Construction energy usage would include vehicle trips for workers and vendors, and off-road construction equipment usage. Long-term, operational energy usage for the hotel would include vehicle trips of employees and guests, electricity for lighting, water conveyance and climate control, and natural gas usage. Similarly, the residential operational energy usage would include vehicle trips for residents and visitors, electricity for lighting, water conveyance and climate control, and natural gas usage.

Energy consumption for project construction would primarily be in the form of gasoline and diesel fuels. Standard conditions for minimization of idling would be applied to the project and would also reduce the overall fuel consumption (AIR-1). Due to the relatively small size of the project,

construction would not be expected to result in a significant impact for demand on Bay Area fuel suppliers. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operation of the proposed project would increase energy consumption relative to existing conditions in Sonoma County. However, this increase in energy usage would not represent a substantial increase, nor would it be inefficient because of the energy efficiency requirements required by the California Building Code and other energy efficiency features of the project, such as rooftop solar panels and energy efficient windows and doors. Impacts would be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than significant

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Comment:
The proposed project would comply with Sonoma County Ordinance 7D2-1, which pertains to energy efficiency, and Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations, Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Impacts would be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than significant

7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS:

Would the project:

a) Directly or indirectly cause 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.

Existing geologic conditions that could affect new development are considered in this analysis. Impacts of the environment on the project are analyzed as a matter of County policy and not because such analysis is required by CEQA.

Comment:
The project site is not within a fault hazard zone as defined by the Alquist-Priolo fault maps, and is approximately four miles from the nearest known fault zone.

Significance Level: No Impact

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

Comment:
All of Sonoma County is subject to seismic shaking that would result from earthquakes along the San Andreas, Healdsburg-Rodgers Creek, and other faults. By applying geotechnical evaluation techniques and appropriate engineering practices, potential injury and damage from seismic activity can be diminished, thereby exposing fewer people and less property to the effects of a major damaging earthquake. The design and construction of new structures are subject to engineering standards of the California Building Code (CBC), which take into account soil properties, seismic shaking and foundation type. Project conditions of approval require that building permits be obtained for all construction and that the project meet all standard seismic and soil test/compaction requirements. The project would therefore not expose people to substantial risk of injury from seismic shaking. The following mitigation measures will ensure that potential impacts are reduced to less

than significant levels.

Significance Level:
Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:

Mitigation Measure GEO-1
All earthwork, grading, trenching, backfilling and compaction operations shall be conducted in accordance with the County Subdivision Ordinance (Chapter 25, Sonoma County Code). All construction activities shall meet the California Building Code regulations for seismic safety. Construction plans shall be subject to review and approval of Permit Sonoma prior to the issuance of a building permit. All work shall be subject to inspection by Permit Sonoma and must conform to all applicable code requirements and approved improvement plans prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

Mitigation Monitoring GEO-1
Building/grading permits for ground disturbing activities shall not be approved for issuance by Project Review staff until the above notes are printed on applicable building, grading and improvement plans. The applicant shall be responsible for notifying construction contractors about code requirement.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Comment:
Strong ground shaking can result in liquefaction, the sudden loss of shear strength in saturated sandy material, resulting ground failure. The pr6oject site is located within a medium liquefaction hazard area according to the Sonoma County General Plan 2020 public safety element. Therefore the property has the potential to experience liquefaction and settlement during a seismic event. The geotechnical reports prepared by Rockridge Geotechnical and PJC & Associates concluded that the soils on the project site are not prone to liquefaction and the risk is low. All structures will be required to meet building permit requirements, including seismic safety standards and soil test/compaction requirements. Implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1, above would reduce any impacts to less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation Measure GEO-2
The design of all earthwork, cuts and fills, drainage, pavements, utilities, foundations and structural components shall conform with the specifications and criteria contained in the project geotechnical reports prepared by Rockridge Geotechnical and PJC & Associates. The geotechnical engineer shall submit an approval letter for the engineered grading plans prior to issuance of the grading permit. Prior to final of the grading permit the geotechnical engineer shall also inspect the construction work and shall certify to Permit Sonoma, prior to the acceptance of the improvements or issuance of a certificate of occupancy that the improvements have been constructed in accordance with the geotechnical specifications.

Mitigation Monitoring GEO-2
Permit Sonoma Plan Check staff will ensure plans are in compliance with geotechnical requirements. Permit Sonoma inspectors will ensure construction is in compliance with geotechnical requirements.

iv. Landslides?

Comment:
Steep slopes characterize much of Sonoma County, particularly the northern and eastern portion of the County. Where these areas are underlain by weak or unconsolidated earth materials landslides are a hazard. If the project includes structures located in the footprint of a mapped landslide or within a landslide hazard area building or grading could destabilize slopes resulting in slope failure. The

project would be located in a Class 0 Landslide Hazard Area according to the General Plan Public Safety Element, Figure PS-1d. This area is characterized as having no slopes and weak rocks. Therefore, the project site would not be susceptible to landslides. All structures will be required to meet building permit requirements, including seismic safety standards and soil test/compaction requirements. Implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1, above would reduce any impacts to less than significant.

Significance Level: No Impact

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

Comment:
The project includes grading, cuts and fills which require the issuance of a grading permit. Improper grading, both during and post construction, has the potential to increase the volume of runoff from a site which could have adverse downstream flooding and further erosional impacts, and increase soil erosion on and off site which could adversely impact downstream water quality.

Erosion and sediment control provisions of the Drainage and Storm Water Management Ordinance (Chapter 11, Sonoma County Code) and Building Ordinance (Chapter 7, Sonoma County Code) requires implementation of flow control best management practices to reduce runoff. The Ordinance requires treatment of runoff from the two year storm event. Required inspection by Permit Sonoma staff insures that all grading and erosion control measures are constructed according to the approved plans. These ordinance requirements and adopted best management practices are specifically designed to maintain potential water quantity impacts at a less than significant level during and post construction.

In regard to water quality impacts, County grading ordinance design requirements, adopted County grading standards and best management practices (such as silt fencing, straw wattles, construction entrances to control soil discharges, primary and secondary containment areas for petroleum products, paints, lime and other materials of concern, etc.), mandated limitations on work in wet weather, and standard grading inspection requirements, are specifically designed to maintain potential water quality impacts at a less than significant level during project construction.

For post construction water quality impacts, adopted grading permit standards and best management practices require that storm water to be detained, infiltrated, or retained for later use. Other adopted water quality best management practices include storm water treatment devices based on filtering, settling or removing pollutants. These construction standards are specifically designed to maintain potential water quality grading impacts at a less than significant level post construction.

The County adopted grading ordinances and standards and related conditions of approval which enforce them are specific, and also require compliance with all standards and regulations adopted by the State and Regional Water Quality Control Board, such as the Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) requirements, Low Impact Development and any other adopted best management practices. Therefore, no significant adverse soil erosion or related soil erosion water quality impacts are expected given the mandated conditions and standards that need to be met. See further discussion of related issues (such as maintenance of required post construction water quality facilities) refer to the Hydrology and Water Quality.

If project construction were to occur during wet weather however, it is possible that stormwater could carry soil offsite into local storm drains. This impact can be reduced to less than significant by using standard construction erosion control measures at the project site and including conditions of approval that prohibit grading when rain is in the forecast (ABAG, 1995).

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:
Mitigation Measure GEO-3

The project site will be inspected following the first heavy rain, during the middle of the rainy season and at the end of the rainy season following construction. During each visit, areas of significant erosion or erosion control device failure shall be noted and appropriate remedial actions taken.

Mitigation Measure GEO-4
The applicant shall submit an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan prepared by a registered professional engineer as an integral part of the grading plan. The Erosion and Sediment Control Plan shall be subject to review and approval of the Permit Sonoma prior to the issuance of a grading permit. The Plan shall include temporary erosion control measures to be used during construction of cut and fill slopes, excavation for foundations, and other grading operations at the site to prevent discharge of sediment and contaminants into the drainage system. The Erosion and Sediment Control Plan shall include the following measures as applicable:

a. Throughout the construction process, ground disturbance shall be minimized and existing vegetation shall be retained to the extent possible to reduce soil erosion. All construction and grading activities, including short-term needs (equipment staging areas, storage areas and field office locations) shall minimize the amount of land area disturbed. Whenever possible, existing disturbed areas shall be used for such purposes.
b. All drainage ways, wetland areas and creek channels shall be protected from silt and sediment in storm runoff through the use of silt fences, diversion berms and check dams. Fill slopes shall be compacted to stabilize. All exposed surface areas shall be mulched and reseeded and all cut and fill slopes shall be protected with hay mulch and /or erosion control blankets as appropriate.
c. All erosion control measures shall be installed according to the approved plans prior to the onset of the rainy season but no later than October 15th. Erosion control measures shall remain in place until the end of the rainy season, but may not be removed before April 15th. The applicant shall be responsible for notifying construction contractors about erosion control requirement.

Mitigation Monitoring
Mitigation Monitoring GEO-3
The project site shall be inspected by County staff after storm events that produce 1 inch of rain or greater within 24 hour period in the Santa Rosa area. During every inspection, areas of significant erosion or erosion control device failure shall be noted and appropriate remedial actions will be taken as soon as practical. If erosion control measures appear to be effective for three consecutive site inspections following 1-inch storm events, then site inspections will only be required following storm events that result in 2 inches of rain, or greater, within a 24-hour period in the Santa Rosa area.

At the end of the rainy season, County staff shall re-inspect the site and evaluate the effectiveness of the erosion control measures that were used. If there were problem areas at the site, recommendations will be made to improve methods used in subsequent projects.

Mitigation Monitoring GEO-4
Building and grading permits for ground disturbing activities shall not be approved for issuance by Project Review staff until the above notes are printed on applicable building, grading and improvement plans.

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?

Comment:
The project site is subject to seismic shaking and other geologic hazards as described in item 6.a.ii, iii, and iv, above. Refer back to appropriate mitigation measures.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:
Implement Mitigation Measures GEO-1, GEO-2, GEO-3, and GEO-4

Mitigation Monitoring:
See Mitigation Monitoring GEO-1, GEO-2, GEO-3, and GEO-4

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?

Comment:
Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code is an index of the relative expansive characteristics of soil as determined through laboratory testing. For the proposed project, soils at the site have been tested for their expansive characteristics. The geotechnical reports evaluated the site, and samples were determined to have relatively low expansion potential. With implementation of these mitigation measures, combined with conformance with standard CBC and other applicable State and local regulations (all of which shall be required as conditions of approval for the project), potential hazards from expansive soils would be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

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?

Comment: The project will be served by public sewer for disposal of wastewater.

Significance Level: No Impact

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

Comment:
Paleontological resources include fossil remains, and fossil localities and rock or soil formations that have produced fossil material. A Cultural Resources Evaluation was prepared for the project by professional archaeologists on February 1, 2019. Notifications for consultation with tribes in compliance with AB-52 were sent in November 2019 and representatives of Graton Rancheria requested consultation. Based on staff review of the evaluation and proximity to Agua Caliente Creek, a subsurface exploration report was prepared on March 26, 2020. The report and recommendations were sent to Rancheria representatives.

As part of the subsurface investigation, fourteen auger holes or shovel pits were excavated up to a depth of three feet. The subsurface investigation yielded two 5-millimeter obsidian chips. Additional auger holes were excavated near to the location of the obsidian chips to determine whether the obsidian was indicative of an archeological deposit. No additional archeological materials were found. The archeologist concluded that there was no evidence to suggest the presence of an archeological site within the project area and that the project could proceed with mitigations. The archeologist recommended training for the contractor in cultural resources awareness prior to ground-disturbing activities. The protocol for unanticipated discovery of archeological resources is also a condition of permit approval.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation

Mitigation:
Mitigation Measure GEO-5: If paleontological resources are found, all earthwork in the vicinity of the find shall cease, and Permit Sonoma staff shall be notified so that the find can be evaluated by a qualified paleontologist. When contacted, a member of Permit Sonoma project review staff and paleontologist shall visit the site to determine the extent of the resource and to develop proper mitigation measures required for the discovery. No further grading in the vicinity of the find shall commence until a mitigation plan is approved and completed subject to the review and approval of the paleontologist and project review staff.

Mitigation Monitoring:
Mitigation Monitoring GEO-5: Permit Sonoma shall be consulted if a paleontological resource is discovered onsite, and shall review and approve paleontologist-recommended measures to recover or preserve any data or paleontological resources before ground-disturbing activities may continue.

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS:

Information on the scientific and regulatory background, quantification methodologies, detailed project emissions calculations, were obtained from the technical report "Verano Hotel and Housing Greenhouse Gas Technical Report", completed by ESA in April 2021.

Regulatory Setting

Executive Order S-3-05
The Governor announced on June 1, 2005, through Executive Order S-3-05, the following GHG emission reduction targets:

- By 2010, California shall reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels;
- By 2020, California shall reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; and
- By 2050, California shall reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels.

Executive Order B-30-15
On April 29, 2015, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-30-15. Therein, the Governor directed the following:

- Established a new interim statewide reduction target to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.
- Ordered all state agencies with jurisdiction over sources of GHG emissions to implement measures to achieve reductions of GHG emissions to meet the 2030 and 2050 reduction targets.
- Directed CARB to update the Climate Change Scoping Plan to express the 2030 target in terms of million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.

California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32)
In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 32 (codified in the California Health and Safety Code [HSC], Division 25.5 – California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006),which focuses on reducing GHG emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020. HSC Division 25.5 defines GHGs as CO2, CH4, N2O, HFCs, PFCs, and SF6 and represents the first enforceable statewide program to limit emissions of these GHGs from all major industries with penalties for noncompliance. The law further requires that reduction measures be technologically feasible and cost effective. Under HSC Division 25.5, CARB has the primary responsibility for reducing GHG emissions. CARB is required to adopt rules and regulations directing state actions that would achieve GHG emissions reductions equivalent to 1990 statewide levels by 2020.

A specific requirement of AB 32 was to prepare a Climate Change Scoping Plan for achieving the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emission reduction by 2020. CARB developed and approved the initial Scoping Plan in 2008, outlining the regulations, market-based approaches, voluntary measures, policies, and other emission reduction programs that would be needed to meet the 2020 statewide GHG emission limit and initiate the transformations needed to achieve the State's long-range climate objectives.

The First Update to the Scoping Plan was approved by CARB in May 2014 and built upon the initial Scoping Plan with new strategies and recommendations. In 2014, CARB revised the target using the GWP values from the IPCC AR4 and determined that the 1990 GHG emissions inventory and 2020 GHG emissions limit is 431 MMTCO2e. CARB also updated the State's BAU 2020 emissions estimate to account for the effect of the 2007–2009 economic recession, new estimates for future fuel and energy

demand, and the reductions required by regulation that were adopted for motor vehicles and renewable energy.

Senate Bill 97
SB 97, enacted in 2007, directed OPR to develop California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (*CEQA Guidelines*) "for the mitigation of GHG emissions or the effects of GHG emissions." In December 2009, OPR adopted amendments to the *CEQA Guidelines*, Appendix G Environmental Checklist, which created a new resource section for GHG emissions and indicated criteria that may be used to establish significance of GHG emissions. Appendix F of the *CEQA Guidelines* states that, in order to ensure that energy implications are considered in project decisions, the potential energy implications of a project shall be considered in an EIR, to the extent relevant and applicable to the project. Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines further states that a project's energy consumption and proposed conservation measures may be addressed, as relevant and applicable, in the Project Description, Environmental Setting, and Impact Analysis portions of technical sections, as well as through mitigation measures and alternatives.

Senate Bill 32 and Assembly Bill 197
In 2016, Senate Bill (SB) 32 and its companion bill AB 197, amended HSC Division 25.5 and established a new climate pollution reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, while including provisions to ensure the benefits of state climate policies reach into disadvantaged communities.

2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update
In response to SB 32 and the 2030 GHG reduction target, CARB approved the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update (2017 Scoping Plan Update) in December 2017. The 2017 Scoping Plan Update outlines the proposed framework of action for achieving the 2030 GHG target of 40 percent reduction in GHG emissions relative to 1990 levels (CARB, 2017). CARB determined that the target Statewide 2030 emissions limit is 260 MMTCO2e, and that further commitments will need to be made to achieve an additional reduction of 50 MMTCO2e beyond current policies and programs. The cornerstone of the 2017 Scoping Plan Update is an expansion of the Cap-and-Trade program to meet the aggressive 2030 GHG emissions goal and ensure achievement of the 2030 limit set forth by Executive Order B-30-15.

In the Update, CARB recommends statewide targets of no more than six metric tons CO2e per capita by 2030 and no more than two metric tons CO2e per capita by 2050. CARB acknowledges that since the statewide per capita targets are based on the statewide GHG emissions inventory that includes all emissions sectors in the State, it is appropriate for local jurisdictions to derive evidence-based local per-capita goals based on local emissions sectors and growth projections. To demonstrate how a local jurisdiction can achieve their long-term GHG goals at the community plan level, CARB recommends developing a geographically-specific GHG reduction plan (i.e., climate action plan) consistent with the requirements of CEQA Section 15183.5(b). A so- called "CEQA-qualified" GHG reduction plan, once adopted, can provide local governments with a streamlining tool for project-level environmental review of GHG emissions, provided there are adequate performance metrics for determining project consistency with the plan.

Sonoma County Regional Climate Action Plan
Climate Action 2020 and Beyond (CA2020) was the regional climate action plan for Sonoma County, adopted by the Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) on July 11, 2016. CA2020 was not adopted as a qualified GHG reduction plan due to legal challenges and subsequent court decision. However, the underlying GHG emissions analysis and GHG inventory provides the basis for deriving a GHG threshold of significance.

California CEQA Guidelines
State CEQA Guidelines section 15064.4 specifically addresses the significance of GHG emissions, requiring a lead agency to make a "good-faith effort" to "describe, calculate or estimate" GHG emissions in CEQA environmental documents. Section 15064.4 further states that the analysis of GHG impacts should include consideration of (1) the extent to which the project may increase or reduce GHG emissions, (2) whether the project emissions would exceed a locally applicable threshold of significance, and (3) the extent to which the project would comply with "regulations or requirements adopted to

implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions."

The CEQA Guidelines do not require or recommend a specific analytical methodology or provide quantitative criteria for determining the significance of GHG emissions, nor do they set a numerical threshold of significance for GHG emissions. The 2009 amendments also include a new Subdivision 15064.7(c) which clarifies that in developing thresholds of significance, a lead agency may appropriately review thresholds developed by other public agencies, or recommended by other experts, provided the decision of the lead agency to adopt such thresholds is supported by substantial evidence.

The California Natural Resources Agency has also clarified that the amended CEQA Guidelines focus on the effects of GHG emissions as cumulative impacts, and that they should be analyzed in the context of CEQA's requirements for cumulative impact analysis (see Section 15064(h)(3)).

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.4(c) includes the following direction on measures to mitigate GHG emissions, when such emissions are found to be significant:

Consistent with Section 15126.4(a), lead agencies shall consider feasible means, supported by substantial evidence and subject to monitoring or reporting, of mitigating the significant effects of greenhouse gas emissions. Measures to mitigate the significant effects of greenhouse gas emissions may include, among others:

(1) Measures in an existing plan or mitigation program for the reduction of emissions that are required as part of the lead agency's decision;
(2) Reductions in emissions resulting from a project through implementation of project features, project design, or other measures;
(3) Off-site measures, including offsets that are not otherwise required, to mitigate a project's emissions;
(4) Measures that sequester greenhouse gases;

Significance Criteria

Amendments to Section 15064.4 of the State CEQA Guidelines were adopted to assist lead agencies in determining the significance of the impacts of GHG emissions. Section 15064.4 gives lead agencies the discretion to assess emissions quantitatively or qualitatively. The CEQA Guidelines do not establish a threshold of significance. Lead agencies are granted discretion to establish significance thresholds for their respective jurisdictions, including looking to thresholds developed by other public agencies or other experts, so long as any threshold chosen is supported by substantial evidence.

The BAAQMD's 2017 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines establish three potential thresholds for analyzing the GHG emissions associated with land use development projects:

- A mass emissions threshold of 1,100 MTCO2e per year, or
- A GHG efficiency threshold of 4.6 MTCO2e per service population (SP, equal to project jobs + project residents).
- Compliance with a qualified Climate Action Plan, with a goal consistent with AB 32,

The BAAQMD mass emissions threshold of 1,100 MTCO2e per year was designed for the District to meet the statewide goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 by accounting for the Bay Area's share of GHG emissions reduction beyond that achievable at the state level. It is based on the AB 32 GHG reduction goals and a "gap analysis" that attributes an appropriate share of GHG emissions reductions to new projects in BAAQMD's jurisdiction. The District has not yet developed a corresponding threshold that extends beyond 2020 to be aligned with the SB 32 target for 2030. Therefore, BAAQMD's existing GHG threshold is not appropriate for analyzing the impacts of the proposed Project without adjusting it to be consistent with SB 32.

Similarly, the BAAQMD efficiency threshold (4.6 MTCO2e) was derived by dividing the AB 32 GHG reduction target for land use development emissions in California by the estimated 2020 population and employment level. Similar to the mass emissions threshold, this efficiency threshold does not consider the statewide emissions target mandated by SB 32 for 2030, and for projects built out after 2020 must be adjusted to be consistent with the SB 32 target. As such, an adjusted efficiency threshold consistent with SB 32 is derived as 40 percent below BAAQMD's 2020 efficiency threshold, which is equivalent to 2.8 MTCO2e per service population. This is a conservative approach to the significance threshold because the proposed Project will be fully operational in 2022, which is well before 2030 the SB 32 target, and prior to when several State actions that would reduce the project's emissions will be in effect (e.g., the Advanced Clean Car initiative; electric vehicle mandates; and RPS mandates).

The underlying GHG emissions analysis in CA2020 provides the basis for deriving a threshold of significance for the project. A project efficiency threshold was derived using the County's GHG reduction goals as expressed in CA2020, and the County's land uses and growth patterns. CA2020 establishes a countywide GHG reduction target of 25 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2020. For the County's land use sector this 2020 target is equivalent to 2,631,000 MTCO2e per year, or approximately 3.6 MTCO2e/SP based on the County's population and employment figures. This efficiency metric for 2020 is more aggressive than BAAQMD's efficiency metric for 2020 of 4.6 MTCO2e/SP.

In 2016, Senate Bill (SB) 32 and its companion bill AB 197, amended HSC Division 25.5 and established a new climate pollution reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. Consistency with the 2017 Scoping Plan Update is an appropriate metric by which to determine the significance of a project's GHG emissions. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b)(3) states that a lead agency "may consider a project's consistency with the State's long-term climate goals or strategies" when determining the significance of a project's impacts. In *Newhall*, the California Supreme Court sanctioned the use of such a threshold. In *Newhall*, the Court held that assessing a project's GHG impacts based on a "consistency with a GHG emission reduction plan" threshold of significance is legally permissible under CEQA.

Using the 1990 emissions estimate presented in CA2020, and adjusting it to include land use sector only, this is equivalent to 2,104,800 MTCO2e per year, or approximately 2.7 MTCO2e/SP based on the County's population and employment figures, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7, Sonoma County GHG Efficiency Threshold Derivation

Emission Source	**2020**	**2030**
County Target Emissions – Land Use Sector Only ($MTCO_2e$) [a, b]	2,631,000	2,104,800
County Population	507,727	540,608
County Employment	230,151	238,601
County Service Population (SP)	737,878	779,209
County GHG Efficiency Metric ($MTCO_2e$ /SP)	3.6	2.7
BAAQMD Efficiency Threshold (2020 and interpolated for 2030)	4.6	2.8

The use of an efficiency metric as a project-specific threshold of significance is supported in the literature by a number of sources. OPR's 2018 *Discussion Draft: CEQA and Climate Change* states that an efficiency metric is an appropriate method to determine significance:
"A significance threshold that is based on an efficiency metric—rather than an absolute number— would allow lead agencies to compare projects of various types, sizes, and locations equally, and determine whether a project is consistent with the State's reduction goals." However, OPR also states that such an efficiency metric must be supported by substantial evidence that the metric appropriately considers the project at hand relative to the overall target used to derive the threshold and that the threshold is aligned with the methods used to develop the GHG target."

In the recent legal case, *Center for Biological Diversity v. Department of Fish & Wildlife* (2015) 62 Cal.4th at pp. 219-220 ("*Newhall*"), the California Supreme Court explained that an efficiency metric is an appropriate method to measure impacts that are global, such as GHG emissions: "For projects, like the present residential and commercial development, which are designed to accommodate long-term growth in California's population and economic activity, this fact gives rise to an argument that a certain amount of greenhouse gas emissions is as inevitable as population growth. Under this view, a significance criterion framed in terms of efficiency is superior to a simple numerical threshold because CEQA is not intended as a population control measure".

In *Golden Door Properties, LLC v County of San Diego et al.* (2018) 27 Cal.App.5th 892 ("*Golden Door*"), the California Supreme Court likewise supported the use of an efficiency metric, provided that the EIR present substantial evidence that the citywide 2030 efficiency target (whether for individual sectors or for total citywide emissions for all sectors) is appropriate at the project-level, how it accounts for variations between different types of development within the City, and how it accounts for the differences in emissions intensities for new development versus existing development within the City.

The efficiency metric of 2.7 $MTCO_2e$/SP is appropriate for the proposed Project because it is based on an emissions profile and socioeconomic/land use growth characteristics that are representative of the Project's location (i.e., specific to Sonoma County). It accounts for land use growth within the County specifically, since it is derived from CA2020's land use and GHG emissions forecasts. The 2.7 $MTCO_2e$/SP efficiency metric represents what is needed for the County to achieve a 2030 target consistent with the state's 2030 target per SB 32, based on the County's land use and emissions profile. It also considers the fair share of GHG reductions that new development must contribute toward the CA2020 targets for 2020 and 2030, and is slightly more conservative than the 2.8 $MTCO_2e$/SP efficiency threshold derived from BAAQMD's 2020 threshold (see Table 7 above). For a project built out and fully operational in 2022, such as the proposed Project, this is a conservative threshold that is well ahead of

the linear trajectory toward the statewide and County targets for 2030. It is also more specific to new development projects within the County than the adjusted BAAQMD threshold. When considered altogether, these facts address the concerns raised by the California Supreme Court in the *Newhall* and *Golden Door* decisions.

This threshold also assures that the entire emissions profile of the proposed Project would meet the efficiency standard set by the County, and accounts for different emissions intensities for each emissions sector to contribute to the overall target for all land use-related emissions. Therefore, it is an appropriate threshold by which to evaluate the environmental impact of the proposed Project's GHG emissions.

a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

1. Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Comment:
The first threshold is representative of the County's population and jobs data, its GHG emissions from local land uses, and the State's GHG emissions target as mandated by SB 32. It represents an interpolation between the County's 2020 and 2030 gross emissions targets described in CA2020.

The second threshold requires an assessment of the proposed Project's consistency with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs, including Moving Forward 2040, Plan Bay Area 2040, CARB's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update, and Executive Order S-3-05.

The following analysis of the proposed project's impact on climate change focuses on the proposed project's contribution to cumulatively significant GHG emissions.

Sonoma County Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory
The Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) has prepared a GHG emissions inventory to track the county's progress towards achieving their climate action goals. An initial baseline inventory was prepared based on 2010 data and reported a total of 3,602,000 MTCO2e. A subsequent 2015 inventory prepared by RCPA showed an 11,000 MTCO2e net increase from 2010 in countywide GHG emissions. A summary of unincorporated Sonoma County GHG emissions for 2010 and 2015 is provided in Table 8, Unincorporated Sonoma County Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

Table 8, Unincorporated Sonoma County Greenhouse Gas Inventory

	2010		2015	
Source	Emissions (MTCO2e)	% Total	Emissions (MTCO2e)	% Total
On-Road Transportation	590,970	58.70%	672,050	68.35%
Building Energy	350,995	34.86%	226,070	22.99%
Solid Waste	25,905	2.57%	41,013	4.17%
Off-Road Transportation and Equipment	26,942	2.68%	31,677	3.22%
Water and Wastewater	11,994	1.19%	12,446	1.27%
Total Unincorporated County	1,006,806		983,256	

The GHG quantification analysis relies on calculation guidance from state and regional agencies such as CARB and BAAQMD. The project's emissions from construction and operation were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) version 2016.3.2, a statewide land use emissions computer model designed to provide a uniform platform to quantify potential criteria pollutant and GHG emissions from projects.

Existing Condition Emissions
The project site, located on Verano Avenue across from Maxwell Farms Regional Park in Sonoma, CA, is made up of three undeveloped parcels. There are no existing GHG emissions sources present at the site.

As such, there are no operational GHG emissions associated with existing conditions.

Construction Emissions
Construction emissions were estimated using CalEEMod, and assumptions associated with construction activities were provided by the project applicant. The only assumptions that differed from the prior assessment were the number of units and the floor area for both the hotel and residential land uses, as updated by the Project Applicant. The results of the construction emission calculations are reported by land use in Table 9, *Construction Greenhouse Gas Emissions*.

Table 9, Construction Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Construction Year	Emissions ($MTCO_2e$)	
	Housing	Hotel
2021	95	72
2022	72	55
Total Construction Emissions	167	127

Although GHGs generated during construction are considered temporary, in that they would only occur for a few years during construction, it is important to include them when assessing the long-term GHG emissions associated with a project. Construction-related GHG emissions were amortized over 30 years, which is a commonly accepted method for including construction emissions as part of the proposed Project's average annual emissions. This approach ensures that mitigation measures will address construction GHG emissions as part of the operational GHG reduction strategies. Due to the potential persistence of GHGs in the environment, construction period impacts are not assessed independently of operational-period impacts, which are discussed in the next section.

Operational Emissions
Maximum annual net GHG emissions resulting from energy use (i.e., electricity and natural gas), transportation, area sources, water, and solid waste for full build-out Project operations in 2022 were estimated using CalEEMod and supplemented with external calculations, as discussed above. Annual operational emissions, including amortized construction emissions, without implementation of mitigation measures, are estimated to be 768 MTCO2e for the housing component and 1,201 MTCO2e for the hotel, for a Project total of 1,969 MTCO2e. A breakdown of these operational emissions is provided in Table 11, *Annual Operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions* and a derivation of the proposed Project's anticipated service population is shown in Table 10, *Project Service Population.*

Table 10, Project Service Population

Population Type	Population
Housing Residents	240
Hotel Employees – Full Time	40
Total Service Population	280

As shown in Table 11, operation of the proposed Project would exceed the significance threshold of 2.7 MTCO2e/SP by 4.3 MTCO2e/SP for a total of 7.0 MTCO2e/SP. Based on the service population of 280, the emissions allowed under the threshold are 756 MTCO2e per year, and the exceedance is equivalent to 1,213 MTCO2e per year. Therefore, the proposed Project would have a ***potentially significant*** impact with regard to GHG emissions and Mitigation Measures GHG-1a, GHG-1b, GHG-1c, and GHG-1d would be required (see below).

Table 11, Annual Operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Emission Source	Annual Emissions (MTCO2e)	
	Housing	Hotel

Area Sources	0.5	0.4
Energy	8	235
Mobile	732	925
Hotel Employees		77
Hotel Guests		840
Hotel Deliveries		8
Waste	17	33
Water	5	3
Total Operational Emissions	**762**	**1,196**
Amortized Construction Emissions	5.6	4.2
Total Annual Project Emissions	**768**	**1,201**
Percentage of Emissions by Land Use	39%	61%
Project Service Population	240	40
Project Efficiency Metric ($MTCO_2e$/SP)	**7.0**	
Threshold ($MTCO_2e$/SP)	**2.7**	
Exceeds Threshold?	***Yes***	
Emissions Allowed Under Threshold ($MTCO_2e$/year)	756	
Emissions in Exceedance of Threshold ($MTCO_2e$/year)	1,213	
Emission Reductions Needed by Land Use ($MTCO_2e$/year)	473	740

Note: Values may not add precisely to totals due to rounding.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:

Mitigation Measure GHG-1a: Solar Hot Water Heaters.
The Hotel Owner shall install a solar hot water heater system on the hotel roof. The system at minimum shall be 53 kilowatt-thermal (approximately 820 square feet) in size. This feature shall be submitted to the County for review and approval and be included on the proposed Project drawings submitted for the construction-related permit or on other documentation submitted to the County. GHG emission reductions achieved through implementation of this measure will be monitored and enforced through Mitigation Measure GHG-1d and GHG-1e below.

Mitigation Measure GHG-1b: Reduce Natural Gas Use in Hotel Kitchens.
The Hotel Owner shall install enough TurboChef electric ovens and induction cooktops at the hotel kitchens to cook approximately 75 percent of all food without the use of natural gas. This feature shall be submitted to the County for review and approval and be included on the proposed Project drawings submitted for the construction-related permit or on other documentation submitted to the County. The Hotel Owner shall use the electric cooking appliances as much as feasible and shall not exceed 2,600 therms of natural gas use in the hotel kitchens each year. The Hotel Owner shall submit their annual Pacific Gas and Electric utility bills to the County PRMD for review and approval. GHG emission reductions achieved through implementation of this measure will be monitored and enforced through Mitigation Measure GHG-1d and GHG-1e below.

Mitigation Measure GHG-1c: Partnership with Rental Car Companies to Offer Discounted Rentals to Hotel Guests for Electric Vehicles.
The Hotel Owner shall partner with at least one rental car company providing service to hotel guests in the region to offer discounted rentals for electric vehicles to hotel guests. The Hotel Owner shall clearly advertise this discount on their booking website and shall notify all potential

guests of this discount via email, phone, or other method of communication. The Hotel Owner shall keep a record of all guests who utilize this discount to rent an electric vehicle and shall submit these records to the County PRMD on an annual basis for review and approval. GHG emission reductions achieved through implementation of this measure will be monitored and enforced through Mitigation Measure GHG-1d and GHG-1e below.

Other Potential GHG Reduction Measures

In addition to implementing Mitigation Measures GHG-1a through GHG-1c, GHG reduction measures to be considered may include, but are not be limited to, those listed below. To the maximum extent possible, onsite reduction measures shall be incorporated before offsite reduction measures.

Onsite Reduction Measure (Hotel and Housing):

ERM-1: EV Car Share.
Promote the use of zero-emission vehicles by requesting that any car share program operator serving the Project Site include electric vehicles in its program.

Onsite Reduction Measures (Hotel):

ERM-2: Additional EV Charging Stations - Hotel. Install two additional EV charging stations at the hotel, beyond the two EV charging stations that are described as part of the Project in section 1.1 – Project Description.

ERM-3: Additional Rooftop Solar PV - Hotel. Install additional rooftop solar PV at the hotel, beyond the roof-mounted solar panels that are described as part of the Project in section 1.1 – Project Description.

ERM-4: Covered Parking Lot Solar PV - Hotel. Install covered parking structures with solar PV panels to generate additional renewable
electricity for the Hotel.

ERM- 5: Heat Pump for Hotel HVAC. Install an electric heat pump in the proposed Hotel to reduce natural gas for heating or cooling purposes. The heat pump would replace natural gas-fired HVAC equipment in the Hotel.

ERM-6: Use Sonoma Clean Power EverGreen for all Electricity Demands - Hotel. Utilize SCP's EverGreen (100% renewable) service for all electricity consumed by the Hotel.

Offsite Reduction Measure
ERM-7: Purchase GHG Offset Credits. The Project Applicants shall purchase valid GHG offset credits pursuant to Mitigation Measure GHG-1d in the amount required to meet the annual emissions limit of 756 MTCO2e after all other ERMs are implemented.

Mitigation Measure GHG-1d: Purchase Greenhouse Gas Offset Credits.
Prior to issuance of the building permit for each building's construction, the project applicant shall provide proof that at least 1,082 greenhouse gas (GHG) offset credits have been purchased and retired on behalf of the proposed Project. This represents the amount of credits required for the proposed Project to result in no more than 756 MTCO2e per year. The applicant shall purchase and retire 1,082 GHG offset credits annually for every year of project operations into perpetuity, unless the project Applicant can provide substantial evidence, through implementation of Mitigation Measure GHG-1e below, that the proposed Project would achieve the 756 MTCO2e annual threshold with fewer annual credit purchases.

Each year, the 1,082 purchased credits may be retired in a single tranche for the entire project, or in separate tranche by each Project applicant (i.e., the hotel owner and the housing owner) in

amounts that total 1,082.

The retired credits must have been verified by an approved registry and be consistent with the requirements for compliance offset protocols as established by California Code of Regulations, title 17, section 95972. An approved registry is an entity approved by CARB to act as an "offset project registry" to help administer parts of the Compliance Offset Program under CARB's Cap and Trade Regulation. GHG offset credits shall be real, verifiable, quantifiable, enforceable, permanent, and additional as set forth in California Health and Safety Code §38652(d)(1) and (d)(2) and as defined by California Code of Regulations, Title 17, sections 38562 and 95802. The reductions from the offset credits shall take effect in the following locations in order of priority to the extent feasible: (1) Sonoma Valley; (2) Sonoma County; and (3) the boundaries of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. If credits are not feasibly available from projects occurring within the County or Air District boundaries, then credits may be obtained for reduction measures in the State of California. All offset credits shall be verified by a third party accredited by CARB. In the unlikely event that an approved registry becomes no longer approved by CARB and the offset credits cannot be transferred to another approved registry, the Project applicants shall comply with the rules and procedures for retiring and/or replacing offset credits in the manner specified by the applicable Protocol, Standard or Methodology, including (to the extent required) by purchasing an equivalent number of credits to recoup the loss.

Contracts for purchase of credits for the first year of project operation shall be entered into prior to issuance of the building permit for each building's construction, and the Applicant shall provide the third-party verification report concerning those credits, and the unique serial numbers of those credits showing that they have been retired prior to issuance of the building permit for each building's construction. The County shall confirm receipt of verification reports and serial numbers prior to permit issuance.

For each subsequent year of project operations, the Project applicants shall jointly or individually, on a pro-rata basis, purchase and retire the 1,082 GHG offset credits. The project applicants shall, on an annual basis no later than June 30 of each year, provide the third-party verification report concerning those credits, and the unique serial numbers of those credits showing that they have been retired. The County shall confirm receipt of verification reports and serial numbers. The verification report shall be approved by the County PRMD.

Mitigation Measure GHG-1e: Optional GHG Reduction Plan and Annual Report
At any time during the life of the Project, the Project Applicants can reduce the annual carbon offsets obligation of 1,082 GHG offset credits per year if they can demonstrate Project emissions are being adequately reduced by other means. To do so, the Project applicants (i.e., the hotel owner and the housing owner) shall retain a qualified air quality consultant to develop a GHG Reduction Plan (Plan) in accordance with the requirements of this mitigation measure for County review and approval and shall implement the approved GHG Reduction Plan. The applicants (housing and hotel) may do this jointly or separately.

The combined or separate GHG Reduction Plan(s) shall demonstrate how each applicant shall mitigate its pro-rata share of GHG emissions for the proposed Project, so that the Project will result in no more than 756 MTCO2e per year on average, including emissions from employee transportation, over the life of the Project. The hotel construction and operations are estimated to produce 61 percent of the Project's GHG emissions and the housing construction and operations are estimated to produce 39 percent of the Project's GHG emissions. Based on current estimates, this means that the hotel owner must mitigate 61 percent of the estimated 1,213 MTCO2e per year in needed reductions (including reductions from Mitigation Measures GHG1-a through GHG1-c), or 740 MTCO2e per year, and the housing operator must mitigate 39 percent of 1,213 MTCO2e per year, or 473 MTCO2e per year. Each GHG Reduction Plan shall, at a minimum, include all of the following items:

a. a detailed GHG emissions inventory for the portion of the proposed Project (i.e., the housing or the hotel use) under a "business-as-usual" scenario absent implementation of GHG reduction measures as set forth below,
b. an "adjusted" GHG emissions inventory for the Project, documenting the anticipated GHG reductions resulting from implementation of the GHG reduction measures,
c. requirements for ongoing monitoring and reporting to demonstrate that the GHG reduction measures under the approved Plan have been implemented and the amount of resulting reductions, and
d. requirements to demonstrate that at all GHG reductions are achieved in the State of California. The Plan must be approved by the County's Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD), also known as "Permit Sonoma."

The Project's GHG estimates presented in the Plan(s) must be based upon final design and shall include all sources of Project emissions consistent with all categories of sources identified in this report. The emission factors for electricity and transportation will be based on those commonly used at the time the Plan is completed, along with the incorporation of vehicle emission standards and building energy standards in effect at the time. Any construction emissions still remaining from the 30-year amortization period considered herein shall be included.

As with this GHG Technical Report, the GHG Reduction Plan will determine the annual incremental GHG emissions that must be mitigated by the proposed Project to meet the requisite County GHG threshold of 2.7 MTCO2e/SP, equivalent to 756 MTCO2e per year based on the Project's service population of 280.

County Approval
In order for the proposed Project's annual mitigation obligation to be adjusted (i.e., fewer GHG offset credits required), the Project Applicants' GHG Reduction Plan(s) must be reviewed and approved by the County PRMD.

Implementation and Reporting
Subsequent to the GHG Reduction Plan(s) being approved by PRMD, the Project Applicants shall jointly or individually, on a pro-rata basis, implement the GHG Reduction Plan and, on an annual basis no later than June 30 of each year, shall prepare an Annual GHG Report summarizing how the Plan has been implemented. If GHG offset credits are being used for mitigation, the Annual GHG Report will incorporate the annual reporting required under Mitigation Measure GHG 1-e, providing the third-party verification report concerning the offset credits, and the unique serial numbers of those credits showing that they have been retired. The County shall confirm receipt of verification reports and serial numbers. The verification report shall be approved by the County PRMD.

The GHG Reduction Plan shall be considered fully attained when the County PRMD makes the determination, based on substantial evidence, that the proposed Project is unlikely to exceed the 756 MTCO2e/year threshold at any time in the future, without the use of carbon GHG offset credits.

Timeline Discretion and Summary
PRMD shall have the discretion to reasonably modify the timing of reporting, with reasonable notice and opportunity to comment by the applicants, to coincide with other related monitoring and reporting required for the proposed Project.

Mitigation Measure Effectiveness
Each mitigation measure is described below, along with its GHG reduction potential and the methods used to estimate it.

Mitigation Measure GHG-1a (Solar Hot Water Heaters) will replace natural gas used for heating water with direct thermal heat from the sun, and will reduce annual hotel emissions associated

with natural gas consumption by approximately 13 MTCO2e. This measure was modeled by estimating the potential kilowatt-thermal75 capacity based on the hotel's usable roof space. This capacity was then used to determine the natural gas consumption and associated emissions displaced by use of the solar water heaters.

Mitigation Measure GHG-1b (Reduce Natural Gas Use in Hotel Kitchens) will reduce annual hotel emissions by approximately 34 MTCO2e by replacing natural gas with electricity for cooking. This measure was modeled by determining the average proportion of hotel natural gas consumption attributed to kitchen appliances, which is 25 percent. The natural gas consumption displaced by the electric appliances was then calculated and converted to GHG emissions. GHG emissions associated with the increase in electricity use (based on SCP's CleanStart emission factors) were then estimated and subtracted from the emissions savings.

Mitigation Measure GHG-1c (Partnership with Rental Car Companies to Offer Discounted Rentals to Hotel Guests for Electric Vehicles) will replace some travel of guests by conventional gas or diesel vehicles with travel in electric vehicles, and will reduce annual hotel emissions by approximately 84 MTCO2e. This measure was modeled assuming a 10 percent participation rate and assuming the conversion of 10 percent of hotel guest conventional VMT (CVMT) to electric VMT (EVMT), thus reducing emissions associated with hotel guest transportation by 10 percent.

Mitigation Measure GHG-1d (Purchase Greenhouse Gas Offset Credits) will ensure that the proposed Project would result in no more than 756 MTCO2e per year (based on the 2.7 MTCO2e/SP threshold of significance) by purchasing 1,082 GHG offset credits on an annual basis. The 1,082 MTCO2e reduction represents the number of GHG offset credits required after implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-1a through GHG-1c (see Table 12 below).

Mitigation Measure GHG-1e (GHG Reduction Plan and Annual Report) is provided as an optional mitigation measure to allow for flexibility in how the project Applicant demonstrates that the project's GHG emissions would result in a less-than-significant impact. Individual actions associated with this measure, including additional onsite GHG reduction features and offsite GHG offset credits, were not modeled, given the uncertainty of these features and the number of offsets required. Because the proposed Project is still in its design phase and it is not possible to quantify the exact amount of GHG reductions required, either through onsite features or mitigation measures, to meet the threshold of significance level of GHG emissions; and because emissions associated with project operations are likely to decline in the future as vehicle and electricity emission rates go down as a result of State regulation, vehicle turnover, and other factors; Mitigation Measure GHG-1e allows the Applicant to prepare a GHG Reduction Plan demonstrating how the 756 MTCO2e annual emissions limit for the proposed Project is met through the purchase of fewer than 1,082 GHG offset credits.

Optional Mitigation Measure GHG-1e is justified because: 1) the proposed Project is still in design phase and the specific project features that may emit or reduce GHG emissions are not known at this time; 2) the actual energy use of the proposed Project, including electricity and natural gas, with implementation of all project design features and mitigation measures is not known at this time; 3) the exact performance of Mitigation Measures GHG-1a through GHG-1c is currently unknown; 4) actual emission rates of Project activities may change in the future based on updated modeling methods, revised emission factors, the effect of state regulations, and actual onsite activities; and 5) to allow the Project applicant some flexibility in mitigating the proposed Project's GHG emissions using a "menu of options" approach which includes the additional ERMs and valid GHG offset credits described in Mitigation Measure GHG-1d. Consequently, Mitigation Measure GHG-1e provides an option to ensure that the proposed Project would result in new GHG emissions that do not exceed the established threshold of significance.

Table 12, *Annual Mitigated Operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions* presents the proposed Project's estimated GHG emissions after implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-1a, GHG-1b, and GHG-1c.

Table 12, Annual Mitigated Operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Emission Source	Annual Emissions (MTCO2e)	
	Housing	**Hotel**
Area Sources	0.5	0.4
Energy	8	189
Mobile	732	841
Hotel Employees		77
Hotel Guests		756
Hotel Deliveries		8
Waste	17	33
Water	5	3
Total Operational Emissions	**762**	**1,066**
Amortized Construction Emissions	5.6	4.2
Total Annual Project Emissions	**768**	**1,070**
Percentage of Emissions by Land Use	39%	61%
Project Service Population	240	40
Project Efficiency Metric ($MTCO_2e$/SP)	**6.4**	
Threshold ($MTCO_2e$/SP)	**2.7**	
Exceeds Threshold?	***Yes***	
Emissions Allowed Under Threshold ($MTCO_2e$/year)	756	
Emissions in Exceedance of Threshold ($MTCO_2e$/year)	1,082	
Emission Reductions Needed by Land Use ($MTCO_2e$/year)	473	609

Note: Values may not add precisely to totals due to rounding.

As shown in Table 12, the proposed Project, with implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-1a, GHG-1b, and GHG-1c, would result in approximately 1,838 MTCO2e per year at buildout in 2022, which would be reduced over time due to lower CO2e intensity factors expected for electricity and mobile sources. As discussed above, with implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-1d, and potentially also Mitigation Measure GHG-1e, the proposed Project would result in no more than 756 MTCO2e per year over its life. Mitigation Measure GHG-1d requires the purchase of GHG offset credits. Optional Mitigation Measure GHG-1e provides a menu of potential on-site and off-site GHG reduction measures, including GHG offset credits. With the monitoring and reporting program described in both Mitigation Measure GHG-1d and potentially with Mitigation Measure GHG-1e, the County's PRMD will be actively managing compliance with mitigation, and the Project's emissions would be reduced to below the 2.7 MTCO2e/SP threshold of significance.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

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

Comment:
The County does not have an adopted Climate Action Plan but has established GHG reduction goals. The project, by implementing current county codes and mitigation measures would be consistent with local or state plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

9. 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?

Comment:

Construction of the project, as well as ongoing maintenance over time, may involve the intermittent transport, use and disposal of potentially hazardous materials, including fuels and lubricants, paints, solvents, and other materials commonly used in construction and maintenance. During construction activities, any on-site hazardous materials that may be used, stored, or transported would be required to follow standard protocols (as determined by the U.S. EPA, California Department of Health and Safety, and Sonoma County) for maintaining health and safety.

Construction of project roads and infrastructure may involve short-term transport, storage, and use of hazardous materials, but the roads and infrastructure do not propose any long-term operations that would require routine or ongoing transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials beyond periodic maintenance needs. These normal activities would be subject to applicable local, State, and federal regulations.

Operational use of any hazardous substances that may be generated, stored, transported, used, or disposed would be subject to applicable local, State, and federal regulations. These operational activities would be unlikely to involve routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, or result in hazardous emissions. With existing General Plan policies and federal, State and local regulation and oversight of hazardous materials, the potential threat to public health and safety or the environment from hazardous materials transport, use or disposal would represent a less than significant impact.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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?

Comment:
During construction there could be spills of hazardous materials. See Item 8.a. above.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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

Comment:
The project site is located within 0.25 miles of an existing or proposed school. The nearest school (New Song School) is a private K-12 school located 0.19 miles from the site. El Verano Elementary School is located about 0.27 miles to the northwest of the project site. However, the project represents minimal risk from accidental emission of hazardous materials or waste. Hazardous materials stored and used onsite are not substantially different from those used in residential, hospitality, or school settings, such as cleaning products, small quantities of fuel or chemicals for landscape maintenance, etc. No deliveries of toxic or hazardous materials beyond those noted above in small quantities would visit the site as part of regular operation. Therefore, potential of hazardous

materials being emitted from the residential or hotel properties and reaching the schools noted above is considered extremely low.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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?

Comment:
There are no known hazardous materials sites within or adjacent to the project limits, based on a review of the following databases on May 20, 2020.

1. The State Water Resources Control Board Geotracker database,
2. The Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor database, and
3. The California Integrated Waste Management Board Solid Waste Information System (SWIS).

A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment report (EBA, July 26, 2018) found no evidence of the use, storage or disposal of hazardous materials or waste on the project site.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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 or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

Comment:
The site is not within the Airport Referral Area as designated by the Sonoma County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan.

Significance Level: No Impact

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Comment:
The project would not impair implementation of, or physically interfere with the County's adopted emergency operations plan. There is no separate emergency evacuation plan for the County. The project would not change existing circulation patterns significantly, and would have no effect on emergency response routes.

Significance Level: No Impact

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

Comment:
Existing wildland fire conditions that could affect new development are considered in this analysis. Impacts of the environment on the proposed project are analyzed as a matter of County policy, not because such analysis is required by CEQA.

According to the Wildland Fire Hazard Area map (Figure PS-1g) in the Sonoma County General Plan, the project site is located in a Local Responsibility Area, and is not designated as a Fire Hazard Severity Zone. It is near to a pocket of a Moderate Severity Zone to the west. A Moderate and High Severity are also located approximately 500 feet to the northeast of the site on the east side of Highway 12. Moderate Severity Zones are generally located in grasslands and valleys, away from significant forested or chaparral wildland vegetation. Projects located in High and Very High Fire

Severity Zones are required by state and county code to have a detailed vegetation management plan developed and reviewed by the Sonoma County Fire Prevention Division before a building permit can be issued. This requirement does not apply to projects located in an urban unclassified Zone, such as the project site.

In addition, project construction activities could increase risk of wildland fire to existing residents near the project site. The construction of the hotel project could expose people or structures to increased fire hazards due to project construction activities and conversion of the presently undeveloped area to an area with increased human activity, with increased possibility of starting a fire.

As a project condition of approval, construction on the project site must comply with the Fire Safe Standards within the Sonoma County Fire Safety Ordinance No. 6184 (Sonoma County Code Chapter 13), including but not limited to, fire sprinklers, emergency vehicle access, and water supply on-site. The project proposes 6 additional hydrants on-site and all project areas meet fire emergency vehicle access and turnaround requirements. Refer to section 16.e Transportation and Traffic for discussion of emergency access. The proposed project is not located in a High or Very High Wildland Fire Hazard Area and would comply with all Fire Safe Standards. Therefore, the project would not be likely to expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires and the impact from risk of wildland fire less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY:

Would the project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

Comment:
The project is within the Sonoma Valley Urban Service Area and the project will connect to the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District. Wastewater is treated by the District wastewater treatment plant. This facility has adequate capacity for the project and operates in compliance with Conditions of Waste Discharge issued by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Sonoma County requires the project applicant to prepare a grading and drainage plan (Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control Plan) in conformance with Chapter 11 (Construction Grading and Drainage Ordinance) and Chapter 11A (Storm Water Quality Ordinance) of the Sonoma County Code and the Sonoma County Storm Water Low Impact Development Guide, all of which include performance standards and Best Management Practices for pre-construction, construction, and post-construction to prevent and/or minimize the discharge of pollutants, including sediment, from the project site. A final Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) shall be submitted with the grading permit application, and be subject to review and approval by the Grading & Storm Water Section of Permit Sonoma prior to the issuance of any grading or building permits. SUSMP features must be installed per approved plans and specifications, and working properly prior to finaling the grading permit and associated building permits. Required inspections by Permit Sonoma staff ensure that all grading and erosion control measures are constructed according to the approved plans.

All of the above ordinance requirements and adopted best management practices are specifically designed to maintain potential water quality impacts at a less than significant level during and post construction.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Comment:
Groundwater usage is not proposed as part of the project. Water to the project will be supplied by the Valley of the Moon Water District, which issued a will-serve letter to the project on August 19, 2019. The District obtains water from the Russian River under contract with Sonoma County Water Agency and local groundwater production. Therefore, the project will not have a significant impact on groundwater supplies in the project vicinity.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

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 substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

i. would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Comment:
The Agua Caliente creek traverses the property along the northern property boundary. However, the highest point on the site is a few feet south of the riparian corridor buffer. Drainage to the majority of the site is via sheet flow southward to existing storm drain system along Verano Avenue. No grading is proposed within the riparian corridor, and drainage from developed areas will continue to flow southward to the street.

Construction of the proposed project involves minor cuts, fills, and other grading. Unregulated grading during construction has the potential to increase soil erosion from a site, which could cause downstream flooding and further erosion, which could adversely impact downstream water quality. Construction grading activities shall be in compliance with performance standards in the Sonoma County Grading and Drainage Ordinance. The ordinance and adopted construction site Best Management Practices (BMPs) require installation of adequate erosion prevention and sediment control management practices. These ordinance requirements and BMPs are specifically designed to maintain water quantity and ensure erosion and siltation impacts are less than significant level during and post construction.

Construction activities associated with the proposed project will not alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area in a way that would result in downstream erosion and/or sedimentation. Impacts would less than significant with application or standards.

Significance Level: Less than significant

ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;

Comment:
The project would result in an increase in the amount of impervious surface area on the project site. Post-construction storm water best management practices would be utilized to maintain current storm water run-off. Standard conditions of approval require compliance with Sonoma County Low Impact Development (LID) regulations and preparation of a Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan prior to issuance of grading permits. Application of these standards will reduce impacts from increased surface runoff to a less than significant level.

Significance Level: Less than significant

iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or

Comment:
As discussed in 10(ii), above, the proposed project has been designed and conditioned to maintain the current rate of storm water run-off from the site.

Permit Sonoma requires that any construction be designed and conducted so as to prevent or minimize the discharge of pollutants or waste from the project site. Best management practices (BMPs) to be used to accomplish this goal include measures such as silt fencing, straw wattles, and soils discharge controls at construction site entrances. Storm water BMPs may also include primary and secondary containment for petroleum products, paints, lime and other hazardous materials of concern.

Low Impact Development BMPs, as required by the Grading & Storm Water Section of Permit Sonoma, will prevent or minimize post-construction pollutants and waste. Prior to grading or building permit issuance, construction details for all post-construction storm water BMPs shall be submitted for review and approval by the Grading & Storm Water staff, pursuant to the adopted Sonoma County Best Management Practice Guide. The construction plans shall be in substantial conformance with the conceptual plan reviewed at the planning permit stage.

Significance Level: Less than significant

iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?

Comment:
The floodplain on the site is contained within the banks of Agua Caliente Creek, as determined by the Sonoma County Water Agency and topographic mapping. No structures are located within a flood hazard area and therefore no development would impede or redirect flood flows.

Significance Level: Less than Significant

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Comment:
The project site is not located in an area subject to seiche or tsunami. Seiche is a wave in a lake triggered by an earthquake. According to Figure PS-1e of the General Plan, the project site is outside of the 100-year Flood Hazard Area. Although Agua Caliente Creek traverses the site along the northern property boundary, the floodplain is contained within the creek, and no structures are located within 50 feet of the creek bank.

Existing flood hazards that could affect new development are considered in this analysis. Impacts of the environment on the proposed project are analyzed as a matter of County policy, not because such analysis is required by CEQA.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Comment:
Storm water treatment Best Management Practices (BMPs) discussed above would address potential water quality impacts and also address storm water run-off. Storm water treatment BMPs would be

required to be designed to treat storm events and associated runoff to the 85-percentile storm event in accordance with County Standards. Therefore, it would not obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan.

As discussed above, the project will be provided municipal water service by the Valley of the Moon Water District, and would not have a significant impact on groundwater supplies in the project vicinity.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING:

Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

Comment:
The project would not physically divide a community. The project development does not involve construction of a physical structure (such as a major transportation facility) or removal of a primary access route (such as a road or bridge) that would impair mobility within an established community or between a community and outlying areas.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Comment:
The project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, including in the Sonoma County General Plan and zoning ordinance.

The parcel's General Plan land use designation of Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial allows the 120-room hotel use. The proposed General Plan Amendment on the northern portion of the property will allow the multifamily residential component of the project under the UR8 General Plan Designation. The proposed rezoning on the residential portion of the property will allow the multifamily development under the R3 zoning designation. The project includes a density bonus for affordable housing for a total of 72 dwelling units.

The project site is located in the Sonoma Valley Urban Service Area. Under Government Code 65915, the State density bonus law, the County finds this increased density consistent with their General Plans.

The proposed project implements several Housing Element policies related to affordable and multi-family housing because it is an affordable infill project, on an underutilized site within an urban service area:

Policy HE-3j: Continue to encourage affordable "infill" projects on underutilized sites within Urban Service Areas by allowing flexibility in development standards pursuant to state density bonus law (Government Code 65915).

Significance Level: No Impact

12. MINERAL RESOURCES:

Would the project:

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

Comment:
The project site is not located within a known mineral resource deposit area (Sonoma County Aggregate Resources Management Plan, as amended 2010). Sonoma County has adopted the Aggregate Resources Management Plan that identifies aggregate resources of statewide or regional significance (areas classified as MRZ-2 by the State Geologist). Consult California Geologic Survey Special Report 205, Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the North San Francisco Bay Production-consumption region, Sonoma, Napa, Marin, and Southwestern Solano Counties, California (California Geolgocial Survey, 2013).

Significance Level: No Impact

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?

Comment:
The project site is not located within an area of locally-important mineral resource recovery site and the site is not zoned MR (Mineral Resources) (Sonoma County Aggregate Resources Management Plan, as amended 2010 and Sonoma County Zoning Code). No locally-important mineral resources are known to occur at the site.

Significance Level: No Impact

13. NOISE:

Background
Information on the potential operational noise levels that could be generated by the project was obtained from the technical report *"Verano Family Housing and Hotel Project Environmental Noise Assessment"* (Illingworth and Rodkin 2019), prepared for the Applicant by Illingworth and Rodkin.

Noise may be defined as loud, unpleasant, or unwanted sound. The frequency (pitch), amplitude (intensity or loudness), and duration of noise all contribute to the effect on a listener, or receptor, and whether the receptor perceives the noise as objectionable, disturbing, or annoying. The decibel scale (dB) is a unit of measurement that indicates the relative amplitude of a sound. Sound levels in dB are calculated on a logarithmic basis. An increase of 10 dB represents a tenfold increase in acoustic energy, while 20 dBs is 100 times more intense, 30 dBs is 1,000 more intense, and so on. In general, there is a relationship between the subjective noisiness, or loudness of a sound, and its amplitude, or intensity, with each 10 dB increase in sound level perceived as approximately a doubling of loudness. There are several methods of characterizing sound. The most common method is the "A-weighted sound level," or dBA. This scale gives greater weight to the frequencies of sound to which the human ear is typically most sensitive. Thus, most environmental measurements are reported in dBA, meaning decibels on the A-scale.

The energy contained in a sound pressure wave dissipates and is absorbed by the surrounding environment as the sound wave spreads out and travels away from the noise generating source. Theoretically, the sound level of a point source attenuates, or decreases, by 6 dB with each doubling of distance from a point, or stationary, source of sound, and 3 dB for each doubling of distance from a mobile source of sound. Sound levels are also affected by certain environmental factors, such as ground cover (asphalt vs. grass or trees), atmospheric absorption, and attenuation by barriers. When more than one-point source contributes to the sound pressure level at a receiver point, the overall

sound level is determined by combining the contributions of each source. Decibels, however, are logarithmic units and cannot be directly added or subtracted together. Under the dB scale, a doubling of sound energy corresponds to a 3 dB increase in noise levels. For example, if one noise source produces a sound power level of 70 dB, two of the same sources would not produce 140 dB – rather, they would combine to produce 73 dB.

The applicant's technical report includes information on existing ambient noise levels at the proposed project. Noise levels in the project area were monitored between Wednesday, August 14, 2019 and Tuesday, August 20, 2019. Figure 1 shows the noise monitoring locations (LT-1, LT-2, ST-1, and ST-2). Noise levels were measured.

Existing ambient day-night average noise levels at Site LT-1 ranged from 59 to 61 dBA Ldn. Existing ambient day-night average noise levels at site LT-2 ranged from 49 to 53 dBA Ldn. Short-term measurement sites ST-1 and ST-2 were located along the western and eastern property lines, respectively, and took place on Tuesday, August 20, 2019. The primary noise source at these locations was vehicular traffic from Verano Avenue. The average noise levels at ST-1, measured between 1:40 p.m. and 1:50 p.m., and ST-2, measured between 2:00 p.m. and 2:10 p.m., were 44 dBA Leq.

Figure 1: Noise Measurement Locations

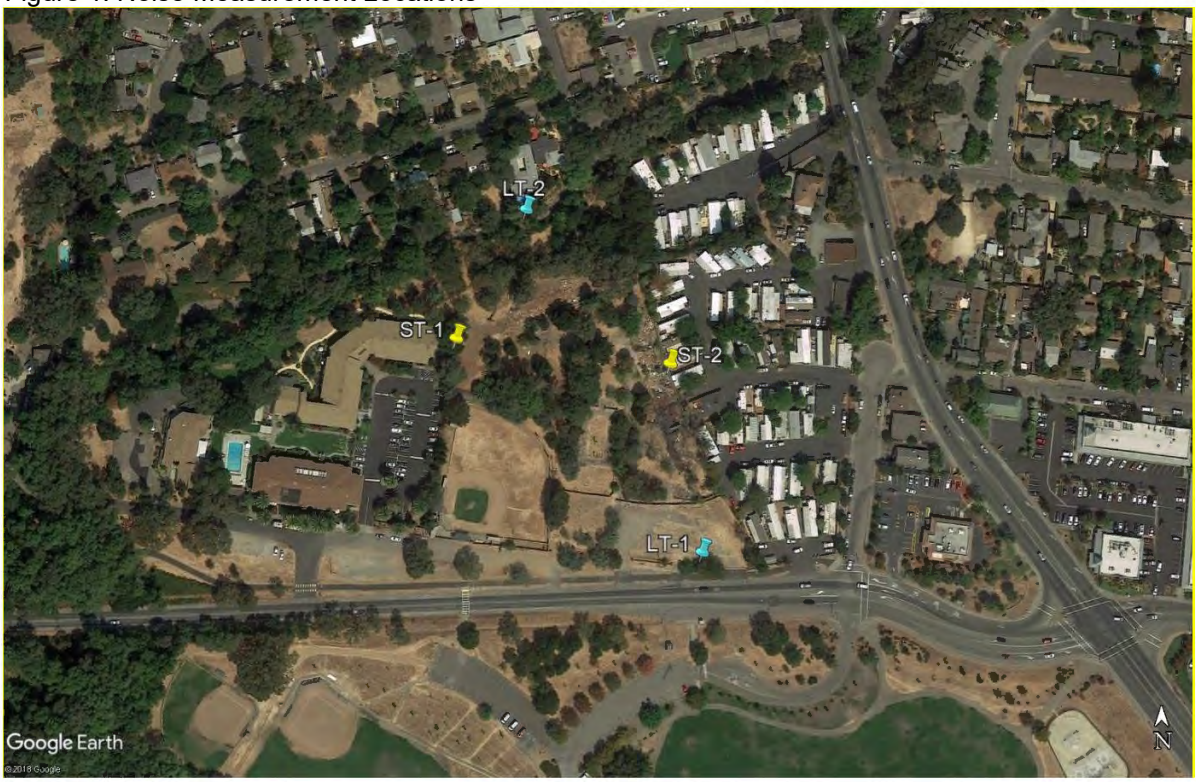

Table 13, Summary of Long-term Noise Monitoring Results

Measurement Site	Time Period	Average Hourly Noise Level, dBA				
		L_{02}	L_{08}	L_{25}	L_{50}	L_{eq}
LT-1	Daytime	63	60	57	51	56
	Nighttime	56	45	37	35	45
LT-2	Daytime	48	46	45	44	44
	Nighttime	43	40	37	36	37

Source: Illingworth and Rodkin, 2019

The County's General Plan, Table NE-2, establishes maximum allowable exterior noise exposures for non-transportation noise sources, which are presented below in Table 14.

Table 14, Maximum Allowable Exterior Noise Exposures for Non-transportation Noise Sources(A)

Hourly Noise Metric, dBA(B)	Daytime (7 AM to 10 PM)	Nighttime (10 PM to 7 AM)
L50 (30 minutes in any hour)	50	45
L25 (15 minutes in any hour)	55	50
L08 (4 minutes 48 seconds in any hour)	60	55
L02 (72 seconds in any hour)	65	60

Source: Sonoma County General Plan Noise Element Table NE-2

(A) Pursuant to General Plan Policy NE-1C, the noise standards apply at the exterior property line of any adjacent noise sensitive land use.

(B) The sound level exceeded n% of the time in any hour. For example, L50 is the value exceeded 50% of the time or 30 minutes in any hour; this is the median noise level.

Would the project:

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Comment:

The technical noise report prepared for the proposed project by Illingworth and Rodkin evaluated the ambient noise levels at the site against the County's General Plan land use compatibility standards for the proposed hotel land use, which are 60 dBA Ldn exterior and 45 dBA Ldn interior.

The technical report also evaluated and compared the proposed project's noise sources against the County's standards listed in Table 13. The findings of the technical report are summarized below. Noise originating from the project would be generated by additional vehicle trips, parking lot activities, and mechanical equipment.

The project is expected to generate 96 weekday a.m. peak hour trips, 119 weekday p.m. peak hour trips, and 146 weekend peak hour trips. Calculated noise increases due to project generated traffic would be less than or equal to 1 dBA L_{eq} during weekday and weekend peak hour conditions. When averaged on a 24-hour basis to calculate L_{dn}, noise increases would be even lower. This increase would not be considered significant and would not typically be measurable or noticeable. Therefore, the impact from traffic-generated noise would be less than significant.

The project proposes to provide 138 parking spaces surrounding the Verano Hotel and 95 parking spaces for Verano Family Housing located south of the residences. Regular parking lot activities are calculated to generate noise levels in the range of 38 to 49 dBA L_{08} at residences located nearest the noise centers of the parking lots. Parking lot activities are not anticipated to exceed the L_{08} noise thresholds at these residences. Therefore, the impact from parking lot generated noise would be less than significant.

The hotel would include various mechanical equipment such as air conditioners, exhaust fans, and air handling equipment. The most substantial noise-generating equipment would likely be a boiler and a HVAC system which are proposed to be located on the rooftop. Rooftop plans provided indicate three locations for HVAC equipment. There is equivalent noise-generating equipment proposed for the Verano Family Housing component. Mechanical equipment would be anticipated to generate noise levels of 30 to 36 dBA L_{50} at nearby affected residences, which would be well below the nighttime L_{50} noise threshold of 45 dBA. Therefore, the impact from mechanical equipment noise would be less than significant.

Temporary construction noise impacts depend on the noise generated by various pieces of construction equipment, the timing and duration of noise-generating activities, the distance between construction noise sources and noise-sensitive receptors, any shielding provided by intervening structures or terrain, and ambient noise levels. Site grading and excavation activities would also generate high noise levels as these phases often require the simultaneous use of multiple pieces of heavy equipment. Construction noise impacts typically occur during noise-sensitive times of the day (early morning, evening, or nighttime hours), when construction occurs in areas immediately adjoining noise-sensitive land uses, or when construction durations last over extended periods of time.

Project construction activities will take place between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. The total duration of construction activities will last over fourteen months. Sources of noise will change location throughout the construction phases. At times there will be construction activity occurring along the property lines shared with the Lazzarotto Mobile Home Park and FAHA Manor. Table 14 summarizes the assessment of noise produced by heavy periods of construction compared to Sonoma County daytime noise thresholds. As construction activities are not proposed to take place at night, a comparison against nighttime limits is unnecessary.

Table 15, Construction Noise Levels

Noise Level Exceeded 30 Minutes in any Hour (L_{50})	**Daytime**			
Receptor	R6 20 feet	R7 35 feet	R8 50 feet	R9 75 feet
Unadjusted Table NE-2 Limit	50			
Ambient Noise Levels	48	44	44	45
Construction Noise Level	83 – 94	78 – 89	75 – 86	71 - 82
NE-2 Adjustment	-5	-5	-5	-5
Adjusted Table NE-2 Limit	45			
Operations Exceed NE-2?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Noise levels from heavy construction activities are anticipated to exceed daytime thresholds at sensitive receptors in the area.

Modification, placement, and operation of construction equipment are possible means for minimizing the impact of construction noise on existing sensitive receptors. Construction equipment should be well-maintained and used judiciously to be as quiet as possible. The County requires construction activities for the proposed project should include the following best management measures to reduce noise from construction activities at nearby noise-sensitive uses as feasible:

- Limit hours of construction to avoid the early morning and evening hours.
- Limit work to non-motorized equipment on Sundays and holidays.
- Use sound blankets for loud operations, air compressors, or mechanical equipment.
- Site construction staging areas as far as practical from nearby sensitive receptors.
- Require street legal mufflers on all construction equipment.

Additionally, the following measures would further mitigate noise from construction at nearby noise-sensitive uses:

- Locate stationary noise-generating equipment, such as air compressors or portable power generators, as far as possible from nearby receptors. If they must be located near receptors, adequate muffling (with enclosures where feasible and appropriate) shall be used to reduce noise levels at nearby receptors. Any enclosure openings or venting shall face away from receptors.

- Equip impact tools with shrouds or shields.

- Utilize "quiet" air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists.

- Neighbors located adjacent to the construction site shall be notified of the construction schedule in writing.

- Control noise from construction workers' radios to a point where they are not audible at existing residences bordering the project site.

- Designate a "disturbance coordinator" who would be responsible for responding to any complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator will determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., bad muffler, etc.) and will require that reasonable measures be implemented to correct the problem. Conspicuously post a telephone number for the disturbance coordinator at the construction site and include in it the notice sent to neighbors regarding the construction schedule.

- Prohibit all unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines.

Implementation of the above best management practices would reduce construction noise levels emanating from the site and minimize disruption and annoyance. With the implementation of these measures, noise generated by temporary construction activities would be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:
Mitigation Measure NOISE-1:

All plans and specifications or construction plans shall include the following notes:

a) All internal combustion engines used during construction of this project will be operated with mufflers that meet the requirements of the State Resources Code, and, where applicable, the Vehicle Code. Equipment shall be properly maintained and turned off when not in use.

b) Except for actions taken to prevent an emergency, or to deal with an existing emergency, all construction activities shall be restricted to the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. and motorized equipment shall be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. All construction activities shall be restricted to the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays. Construction activities shall be limited to non-motorized activities on Sundays and holidays, and motorized equipment shall be limited to the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. If work outside the times specified above becomes necessary, the applicant shall notify the PRMD Project Review Division as soon as practical.

c) There will be no start up of machines nor equipment prior to 7:00 a.m, Monday through Friday, or 9:00 am on Saturdays; no delivery of materials or equipment prior to 7:00 a.m nor past 5:00 p.m, Monday through Friday or prior to 9:00 a.m. nor past 5:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays and no servicing of equipment past 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or weekends and holidays. A sign(s) shall be posted on the site regarding the allowable hours of construction, and including the developer- and contractors mobile phone number for public contact 24 hours a day or during the hours outside of the restricted hours.

d) Pile driving activities shall be limited to 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays.

e) Construction maintenance, storage and staging areas for construction equipment shall avoid proximity to residential areas to the maximum extent practicable. Stationary construction

equipment, such as compressors, mixers, etc., shall be placed away from residential areas and/or provided with acoustical shielding. Quiet construction equipment shall be used when possible.

f) Utilize reduced noise air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists. Sound blankets, shrouds, shields, or mufflers shall be used for loud operations, air compressors, or mechanical equipment wherever feasible. Construction workers' radios volume will be reduced to a point where they are not audible at existing residences bordering the project site.

g) The developer shall designate a Project Manager with authority to implement the mitigation prior to issuance of a building/grading permit. The Project Manager will notify neighbors located adjacent to the construction site of the construction schedule in writing. The Project Managers 24-hour mobile phone number shall be conspicuously posted at the construction site. The Project Manager shall determine the cause of noise complaints (e.g. starting too early, faulty muffler, etc.) and shall take prompt action to correct the problem.

Mitigation Monitoring:

Mitigation Monitoring NOISE-1:

PRMD Project Review Division staff shall ensure that the measures are listed on all site alteration, grading, building or improvement plans, prior to issuance of grading or building permits. PRMD staff shall inspect the site prior to construction to assure that the signs are in place and the applicable phone numbers are correct. Any noise complaints will be investigated by PRMD staff.

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Comment:
Construction would be located 15 feet or further from structures along the eastern site boundary. Pile driving is not proposed as a method of construction. At a distance of 15 feet, groundborne vibration from construction is anticipated to generate vibration levels in the range of 0.005 to 0.156 in/sec PPV, except for clam shovel drops and use of vibratory rollers which could reach 0.368 in/sec PPV. The California Department of Transportation recommends a 0.3 in/sec PPV vibration limit for buildings that are found to be structurally sound but where structural damage is a major concern. Construction located 18 feet or further from structures would generate vibration levels below 0.3 in/sec PPV and would not be anticipated to cause architectural of structural damage. However, construction located within 18 feet of structures to the east (within 3 feet of the shared property line) could result in vibration levels exceeding 0.3 in/sec PPV. Standard mitigation to minimize groundborne vibration will be applied to the project. herefore, the impact from groundborne vibration would be less than significant with standard mitigation measures.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:
Mitigation Measure NOISE-2:

Construction activities for this project shall be restricted as follows:
All plans and specifications or construction plans shall include the following notes:

a) Place operating equipment on the construction site as far as possible from vibration sensitive receptors.

b) Use smaller equipment to minimize vibration levels below the limits.

c) Minimize use of vibrating rollers. Avoid using vibratory rollers and tampers near sensitive areas.

d) Modify/design or identify alternative construction methods to reduce vibration levels below the limits.

e) Avoid dropping heavy objects or materials near shared property lines.

Mitigation Monitoring:
Same as Noise-1 above.

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or 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?

Comment:
The site is not within an airport land use plan as designated by Sonoma County.

Significance Level: No Impact

14. POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Would the project:

a) **Induce substantial unplanned 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)?**

Comment:
The project will include 72 additional units of housing, which can be expected to add 170 new persons at build-out (72 new housing units x 2.36 persons per household). The project is within the projected population growth of the county's General Plan and is therefore less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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

Comment:
No housing will be displaced by the project and no replacement housing is proposed to be constructed.

Significance Level: No Impact

15. PUBLIC SERVICES:

Would the project:

a) 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 rations, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Comment:
Construction of the project would not involve substantial adverse physical impacts associated with provision of public facilities or services and the impact would be less than significant. The project will

include 72 additional units of housing, which can be expected to add 170 new persons at build-out (72 new housing units x 2.36 persons per household). The project would employ a total of approximately 59 full time employees (with four of these employed at the apartment complex), and 15 part time employees. The project is within the projected population growth of the County's General Plan and would not require or facilitate construction of new public facilities.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

i. Fire protection?

Comment:
The Sonoma Valley Fire Rescue Authority will continue to serve this area. There will be no increased need for fire protection resulting from the project.

The project will include 72 additional units of housing, which can be expected to add 170 new persons at build-out (72 new housing units x 2.36 persons per household). The project would employ approximately 59 full time employees and 15 part time employees. The project is within the projected population growth of the County's General Plan and would not require or facilitate construction of new public facilities

Sonoma County Code requires that all new development meet Fire Safe Standards (Chapter 13). The County Fire Marshal reviewed the project description and requires that the expansion comply with Fire Safe Standards, including fire protection methods such as sprinklers in buildings, new fire hydrants, alarm systems, extinguishers, vegetation management, hazardous materials management and management of flammable or combustible liquids and gases. This is a standard condition of approval and required by county code and impacts would be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

ii. Police?

Comment:
The Sonoma County Sheriff will continue to serve this area. The project will include 72 additional units of housing, which can be expected to add 170 new persons at build-out (72 new housing units x 2.36 persons per household). The project would employ approximately 59 full time employees and 15 part time employees. The project is within the projected population growth of the County's General Plan and would not require or facilitate construction of new public facilities.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

iii. Schools, parks, or other public facilities?

Comment:
As discussed in 15(a)(i) above, the project is within the projected population growth of the County's General Plan and would not require or facilitate construction of new public facilities. Development fees to offset potential impacts to public services, including school impact mitigation fees, are required by Sonoma County code and State law for new residential developments. No new schools are reasonably foreseeable as a result of this development.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

iv. Parks?

Comment:
Sonoma County Code, Chapter 23 requires payment of parkland mitigation fees for all new residential development for acquisition and development of added parklands to meeting General Plan Objective OSRC-17.1 to "provide for adequate parkland and trails primarily in locations that are convenient to

urban areas to meet the outdoor recreation needs of the population…" Development fees collected by Sonoma County are used to offset potential impacts to public services, including park mitigation fees. The project will not result in the need for any new park facilities, and demand for parks in general is addressed through fees.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

v. Other public facilities?

Comment:
Connection fees for sewer and water services offset potential impacts to these service facilities within their respective spheres of influence. For projects propose land uses that are consistent with the General Plan. Ongoing development and maintenance costs for services are provided in the form of fees or parcel tax. Existing sewer and water facilities are adequate. The project proposes new and resized pipelines, but expanded treatment facilities are not currently reasonably foreseeable.

As discussed in 15(a)(i) above, the project is within the projected population growth of the County's General Plan and would not require or facilitate construction of new public facilities.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

16. RECREATION:

Would the project:

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?

Comment:
The project is adding approximately 170 new residents to a location abutting the Maxwell Farms regional park. As a result, a slight increase in park usage is anticipated. However, the residential project is subject to park impact fees that offset increased usage from new residents. Therefore, the project will have no impact on the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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?

Comment:
The project includes passive recreational features for both the hotel and the residential components. The hotel project features a private pool only for use by guests. The residential component features a community courtyard, a community room, and pedestrian paths through wooded areas. Grading and hardscape within the dripline of preserved oaks will be conducted according to the procedures and precautions provided by the project arborist. The hotel project also includes the landscaping and maintenance of an undeveloped right-of-way and county remainder parcel.

The applicant will develop and maintain a public parklet in conjunction with Sonoma County Regional Parks on the Sonoma County Parks' land directly in front of the site and extending west to the driveway at the entrance to the Finnish American Home (FAHA) facility. The parklet will have a meandering path that connects to the existing bike/pedestrian trail just west of the hotel's main entrance. The parklet will be landscaped with drought resistant native grasses and groundcovers as well as a variety of small shrubs, perennials and trees. Existing trees in healthy condition will be preserved and incorporated into the overall design of the site.

Amenities will include benches, drinking fountain with pet drinking fountain, dog waste bag station, bicycle repair station and historical and education markers, or similar items, celebrating the history of the site and the Springs area.

All improvements will minimize tree removal in compliance with the County Tree Ordinance and Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3 and BIO-4. Therefore, the impacts of project recreational facilities will have a less than significant impact.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

17. TRANSPORTATION:

Would the project:

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Comment:
A traffic impact study was completed by TJKM on April 16, 2021. The study area included intersections of Verano Avenue and Main Street, Verano Avenue and Sonoma Highway, Verano Avenue and Old Maple Avenue, and Verano Avenue and Arnold Drive.

The study intersections currently operate acceptably at Levels of Service (LOS) C or better during peak hours. The intersections would continue operating at the same LOS upon the addition of project-related traffic, with the single exception of Verano Avenue and Old Maple Avenue as shown in Table 16. This intersection would drop from LOS B to LOS C, at the weekend midday peak hour, with the addition of one second to the average delay at the intersection of Verano Avenue and Old Maple Avenue.

Table 16, Intersection LOS Analysis – Existing Conditions & Conditions Plus Project

Study Intersections	Control	Peak Period	Existing Conditions		Existing Plus Project	
			Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
Verano Avenue & SR 12	Signalized	Weekday AM	12.2	B	12.7	B
		Weekday PM	15.6	B	16.9	B
		Weekend MD	12.8	B	13.6	B
Verano Avenue & Main Street	Two-Way Stop	Weekday AM	17.3	C	18.7	C
		Weekday PM	18.6	C	22.3	C
		Weekend MD	15.3	C	16.7	C
Verano Avenue & Old Maple Avenue	One-Way Stop	Weekday AM	0.0	A	0.0	A
		Weekday PM	0.0	A	0.0	A
		Weekend MD	14.2	B	15.1	C
Verano Avenue & Arnold Drive	Signalized	Weekday AM	10.1	B	10.4	B
		Weekday PM	22.5	C	27.9	C
		Weekend MD	15.7	B	16.6	B

The study intersections were also analyzed under a cumulative future 2040 scenario, using forecasted traffic levels. The intersections are expected to operate at the same LOS levels in the future scenario as the current LOS without the project. Under future conditions, the additional project-related traffic would have no effect, and the intersections would operate at the same levels during peak hours as they currently do without the project.

Table 17, Intersection LOS Analysis – Cumulative Conditions (2040) & Cumulative Conditions Plus Project

Study Intersections	Control	Peak Period	Cumulative Conditions (2040)		Cumulative Conditions Plus Project	
			Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
Verano Avenue & SR 12	Signalized	Weekday AM	12.4	B	12.9	B
		Weekday PM	16.0	B	16.7	B
		Weekend MD	13.0	B	13.7	B
Verano Avenue & Main Street	Two-Way Stop	Weekday AM	17.8	C	19.2	C
		Weekday PM	19.1	C	20.8	C
		Weekend MD	15.6	C	16.9	C
Verano Avenue & Old Maple Avenue	One-Way Stop	Weekday AM	0.0	A	0.0	A
		Weekday PM	0.0	A	0.0	A
		Weekend MD	14.3	B	14.7	B
Verano Avenue & Arnold Drive	Signalized	Weekday AM	10.3	B	10.6	B
		Weekday PM	24.9	C	26.1	C
		Weekend MD	16.7	B	17.3	B

Pedestrian facilities serving the project site would be adequate. In the project vicinity, there are intermittent sidewalks along Verano Avenue and adjacent cross streets. Sidewalks are connected via a network of curb ramps and crosswalks at intersections and driveways. Street lighting is continuously provided along SR 12 and at the majority of the study intersections. All study intersections have crosswalks with curb ramps on two or more approach legs, except for the intersection at Verano Avenue and Old Maple Avenue. The project is fronted by a Class I multi-use path. An uncontrolled, mid-segment crosswalk is provided on Verano Avenue, approximately 150 feet west of Old Maple Avenue. The crosswalk provides street lighting, curb ramps, and high-visibility, ladder-style striping. It serves as a connection between the multi-use pathway on Verano Avenue and Maxwell Farms Regional Park, and is identifiable with flashing pedestrian beacons which may be activated via push buttons. The project will install new meandering paths on the parklet parcel south of Old Maple Avenue.

Bicycle facilities serving the project site are adequate. Within the project vicinity, there are Class I bikeways along Verano Avenue between Main Street and the Agua Caliente Creek overpass, and along SR 12 south of Verano Avenue. Class II bike lanes are located along Verano Avenue between Riverside Drive and Arnold Drive, and Arnold Drive north of Leveroni Road. The County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2010) depicts Class II bikeways along Verano Avenue fronting the site. The plan does not propose any other improvements along the project site. The project also includes 12 bicycle parking spaces at the hotel, which will also provide eight rental bicycles for guests. The residential component includes bicycle parking facilities for 72 bicycles.

Transit facilities serving the project site are adequate. Existing transit routes are adequate to accommodate project-generated transit trips and stops are within acceptable walking distance of the site. A Sonoma County Transit bus shelter is approximately 440 feet west of the project site served by SC Transit Routes 30, 34 and 38, and would not be adversely affected by the project.

No additional facilities are required by the project which could have a significant impact on the project.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

SB 743, which was signed into law by Governor Brown in 2013 and codified in Public Resources Code 21099, tasked OPR with establishing new criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts under CEQA. SB 743 requires the new criteria to "promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of

land uses." SB 743 changes the way that public agencies evaluate the transportation impacts of projects under CEQA, recognizing that roadway congestion, while an inconvenience to drivers, is not itself an environmental impact (see Pub. Resource Code, § 21099, subd. (b)(2)).

Vehicle miles traveled exceeding an applicable threshold of significance may indicate a significant impact. In December 2018, OPR circulated its most recent *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (OPR) that provides recommendations and describes various options for assessing VMT for transportation analysis purposes.

For residential projects, OPR recommends that VMT impacts be considered potentially significant if a residential project is expected to generate VMT per Capita (i.e., VMT per resident) at a rate that exceeds 85 percent of a regional average. OPR does not provide specific guidance on evaluating other land use types, such as hotels, except to say that other land uses could choose to use the method applicable to the land use with the most similarity to the proposed project.

Comment:
The project is an infill development that proposes to construct 72 units of affordable multi-family housing and a 120-room hotel on adjacent parcels along Verano Avenue. To reduce the rate of VMT per resident and employee, the project includes the following items to improve the local street connectivity by improving the pedestrian realm through a fair-share contribution to the mid-block crosswalk and enhancing the bus shelter on Verano Avenue. The project site is located within walking and bicycle distance to many community destinations and there are adjacent bicycle and transit facilities.

As noted by OPR's Technical Advisory, the residential portion of the proposed project is unlikely to result in significant impacts since the provision of affordable housing in infill locations improves the local balance of jobs and housing, and improves the local balance of jobs and housing, thus shortening commutes to/from employment locations and reducing VMT. VMT impacts generated by the proposed 72 units of affordable, multi-family infill housing will be less than significant.

Based on the OPR recommendations, VMT impacts attributable to the proposal hotel may be considered potentially significant if:

- home-based VMT per hotel employee exceeds 85 percent of the average rate for Sonoma County, or
- VMT attributable to hotel guests results in a significant net increase in total VMT.

The Sonoma County Travel Demand Model was utilized to estimate the rate of home-based work VMT attributable to hotel employees. The model estimates the existing rate of home-based work VMT to and from jobs in Sonoma County to be 22.8 daily miles per employee (round-trip). VMT impacts attributable to hotel employees would be considered significant home-based work VMT to and from the hotel exceeds 19.4 daily miles per employee (round-trip), equal to 85 percent of the countywide rate of 22.8 daily miles per employee.

Table 18 below shows the forecasted net change in daily home-based VMT resulting from the proposed hotel, based on the Sonoma County Travel Demand Model estimates for baseline conditions with and without the hotel. The model predicts a total of 120 work trips to and from the hotel, which would thus equate to a presumption of 60 hotel employees based on the underlying rates used by the model. The model predicts a net increase of 1,086 home-based work VMT attributable to the hotel, which would thus equate to 18.1 miles per employee based on the model presumption of 60 employees. The threshold of 19.4 daily miles per employee for employee trips would not be exceed, and this impact would be less than significant.

Table 18, Net Change in Employment VMT to Hotel Zone

	Model Baseline Conditions	Model Baseline plus Hotel Conditions	Net Change with Hotel
Employment (number of jobs)	36	96	+60

Home-based Work VMT (miles)	454	1,541	+1,086

Home-based Work VMT per Employee (Hotel Project)	**18.1 miles per employee (round-trip)**
Impact Threshold	**19.4 miles per employee (round-trip)**
Exceed Threshold	*No*

Source: Sonoma County Travel Model Baseline (Year 2015)

VMT attributable to hotel guests would be considered significant if it resulted in a net increase in total countywide VMT, consistent with the recommended method of evaluating VMT for customer-serving retail uses.

The proposed hotel is not a destination/resort type hotel, and would provide regionally desirable lodging to tourists that visit other destinations within the County. Hotel guests will consist of visitors to Sonoma that, without the project, would stay at another hotel in the City or County of Sonoma. If local mid-priced hotels were full, these guests would stay at hotels located in nearby cities and counties such as Petaluma, Santa Rosa, Solano and Marin Counties and then drive to Sonoma Valley.

The analysis of net VMT takes into account that hotels attract guests already visiting Sonoma County that would otherwise stay at another hotel, or vacation rental in the County, as well as “day trippers” visiting the area that would not stay overnight. Over 70 percent of visitors to Sonoma County are “day trippers”. Day-trippers are potentially more likely to travel on Sonoma County roads during peak hours especially in the summer months, while hotel guests tend to arrive and depart outside of peak traffic hours. San Francisco Bay Area residents are frequent day-trippers, while overnight guests staying at hotels or other accommodations located in other cities in the region such as Healdsburg, Windsor, Petaluma, Santa Rosa, and Napa currently travel on area roads, including Highway 12

Within a two mile radius of the project site, there are five similar priced hotels that would serve as an alternative to this hotel. There are destinations within close proximity to the project site that are walkable, bikeable, or with easy access to transit such as recreation and shopping centers. Downtown Sonoma is less than two miles from the project site as well.

Taking these factors into account, the VMT generated by hotel guests is unlikely to result in an increase in the number of visitors to Sonoma County, and therefore unlikely to result in a net increase in total countywide VMT. Therefore, VMT impacts generated by hotel guests are anticipated to be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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

Comment:
The project would not increase hazards, since it maintains the existing alignment of the roadway. However, hazards to drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians could occur during construction operations. This temporary construction-related impact will cease upon project completion, and the following mitigation will reduce the impact to a level of insignificance.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation:
Mitigation Measure TRAF-1:
Traffic safety guidelines compatible with Section 12 of the Caltrans Standard Specifications, “Construction Area Traffic Control Devices” shall be followed during construction. Project plans and specifications shall also require that adequate signing and other precautions for public safety be provided during project construction.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Comment:
Development on the site must comply with all emergency access requirements of the Sonoma County Fire Safety Code (Sonoma County Code Chapter 13), including emergency vehicle access requirements. Project development plans are required to be reviewed by a Department of Fire and Emergency services Fire Inspector during the building permit process to ensure compliance with emergency access issues. Refer to discussion in item 16(d), above.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES:

Would the project:

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California native American tribe, and that is:

i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5030.1(k), or

Comment:
As discussed in Section 5, Cultural Resources, above, a subsurface investigation identified no significant cultural resources within the project site. Permit Sonoma staff referred the project application to Native American Tribes within Sonoma County. A representative for the Graton Rancheria Tribe requested consultation and additional information for this project, and requested standard construction monitoring mitigation measures (Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3 above) which are also included as Conditions of Approval of the project. No other Tribes had comments in response to the referral.

There are no known archaeological resources on the site, but the project could uncover such materials during construction. Mitigation Measure CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3 will reduce the impact to less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation: See Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3 above

ii) A resource determined by the lead agency. In its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Comment:
As discussed in 18(a)(i), above, a representative for the Graton Rancheria Tribe requested additional information for this project. Permit Sonoma staff provided a copy of the archeological studies and subsurface investigation to the Tribe, and the Tribe requested standard construction monitoring mitigation measures (Mitigation Measure CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3 above) which is also included as a Condition of Approval of the project. No other Tribes had comments in response to the referral.

Significance Level: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Mitigation: See Mitigation Measure CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3 above

Mitigation monitoring:

19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS:

Would the project:

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Comment:
The project site is located in an urbanized area and served by existing utilities. As such, the project would not result in the relocation or construction of new electric, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities.

Domestic wastewater disposal would be provided by the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District. Wastewater generated by the proposed project would be conveyed to the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District Wastewater Treatment Plant, located south of the Sonoma Skypark Airport. The treatment plant has a dry weather design capacity of 2,700,000 gallons per day, and the proposed project would generate about 23,520 gallons per day, or about 0.009% of total design capacity of the treatment plant. Moreover, the proposed project would need to comply with standard sanitation conditions of approval.

The project would incorporate bioretention facilities to capture and treat storm water runoff resulting from creation of new impervious surfaces. The design of these project features would be permitted after County review and approval of project storm water provisions.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

Comment:
The project will use water supplied from the Valley of the Moon Water District. The district issued a will-serve letter (dated August 19, 2019) to provide water service to the project subject to district fees and requirements.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater 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?

Comment:
Refer to response for 17a, above.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Comment:
Sonoma County has an existing solid waste management program that provides solid waste collection and disposal services for the entire County. The program can accommodate the permitted collection and disposal of the waste that would result from the proposed project.

However, to further reduce the solid waste disposal footprint, as a condition of approval, the applicant would be required to provide to Permit Sonoma staff a solid waste management plan.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Comment:
Sonoma County has access to adequate permitted landfill capacity to serve the proposed project. As discussed above, a solid waste management plan will be required as a condition of approval to ensure compliance with all federal, State, and local regulations related to solid waste.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

20. WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire severity zones, would the project:

According to the Sonoma County General Plan (Figure PS-1g, Wildland Fire Hazard Areas), the parcel is located in a Sonoma County Local Fire Protection Response Area (LRA) that is not a designated fire hazard severity zone and is not adjacent to a State Fire Protection Response Area.

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Comment: There is no separate emergency evacuation plan for the County. The proposed project would not result in a significant change in existing circulation patterns and would have no effect on emergency response routes.

Significance Level: No Impact

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Comment: The project is located within a flat topographic area with no heightened wildfire risk and would not expose project occupants to elevated pollutant concentrations from wildfire or exacerbate the spread of wildfire.

Significance Level: Less Than Significant Impact

c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk of that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Comment:

As discussed in subsection (g) of the Hazard section above, the proposed project is not located in or near a state responsibility area, or land classified as very high fire severity zone. The project meets access requirements for emergency vehicles, and is connected to a municipal water supply, with six hydrants for fire suppression. The project would utilize existing roads and power lines. The new buildings and structures would need to be connected to existing utilities. The project is not located on sloping land or include project components that would exacerbate fire risk. Therefore wildfire risk impacts would be less than significant.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

21. 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?

Comment:
Potential project impacts on special status plant and fish/wildlife species and habitat are addressed in Section 4. Implementation of the required mitigation measures (Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, and BIO-4) would reduce these potential impacts to a less-than-significant level. Potential adverse project impacts to cultural resources are addressed in section 5. Implementation of the required mitigation measures (Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3) would reduce these potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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)?

Comment:
No project impacts have been identified in this Initial Study that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. The project would contribute to impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gases, hydrology and water quality, noise, traffic, and tribal cultural resources, which may be cumulative off-site, but mitigations would reduce project impacts to less-than-significant levels.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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

Comment:
Proposed project operations have the potential to cause substantial adverse impacts on human beings, both directly and indirectly. However, all potential impact and adverse effects on human beings (resulting from air quality, noise, traffic, aesthetics) were analyzed, and would be less than significant with the mitigations identified in the Initial Study incorporated into the project.

Significance Level: Less than Significant Impact

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