



Coachella Civic Center, Hearing Room  
53-462 Enterprise Way, Coachella, California  
(760) 398-3502 ♦ [www.coachella.org](http://www.coachella.org)

# AGENDA

OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE  
CITY OF COACHELLA  
PLANNING COMMISSION

**May 05, 2021**  
6:00 PM

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Pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20, this meeting will be conducted by teleconference and there will be no in-person public access to the meeting location.

You may submit your public comments to the Planning Commission electronically. Material may be emailed to [llopez@coachella.org](mailto:llopez@coachella.org) and [ybecerril@coachella.org](mailto:ybecerril@coachella.org).

Transmittal prior to the start of the meeting is required. Any correspondence received during or after the meeting will be distributed to the Planning Commission and retained for the official record.

You may provide telephonic comments by calling the Planning Department at (760)-398-3102 **no later than 4:00 p.m.** the day of this meeting to be added to the public comment queue. At the appropriate time, you will be called so that you may provide your public testimony to the Planning Commission.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88900660100?pwd=c1UwVjB0SVpkK3NtWWNqNEFac214Zz09>

Passcode: 674336

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +16699006833,,88900660100#,,,,\*674336# or +12532158782,,88900660100#,,,,\*674336#

Webinar ID: 889 0066 0100

Passcode: 674336

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**ROLL CALL:**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

“At this time the Commission may announce any items being pulled from the agenda or continued to another date or request the moving of an item on the agenda.”

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of March 17, 2021, of the Coachella Planning Commission.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA ITEMS):**

“The public may address the Commission on any item of interest to the public that is not on the agenda, but is within the subject matter jurisdiction thereof. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.”

**REPORTS AND REQUESTS:**

**NON-HEARING ITEMS:**

**PUBLIC HEARING CALENDAR (QUASI-JUDICIAL):**

2. B-4 Ranch Change of Zone Project
  - a) Environmental Assessment (EA 2-04) recommending the adoption of a Negative Declaration pursuant to the environmental review guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.
  - b) Change of Zone (CZ 20-07) to change the zoning from R-S (Single Family Residential) and R-M (Multiple Family Residential) to R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), R-M General (20-25 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N) on approximately 56.9 acres of vacant, agricultural land located on the north side of Avenue 52, east and west of Education Way (APN: 763-060-048). City-Initiated.

**INFORMATIONAL:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*Complete Agenda Packets are available for public inspection in the Planning Department at 53-990 Enterprise Way, Coachella, California, and on the City's website [www.coachella.org](http://www.coachella.org).*

THIS MEETING IS ACCESSIBLE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



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**MINUTES**  
OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE  
CITY OF COACHELLA  
PLANNING COMMISSION

**March 17, 2021**  
6:00 PM

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Coachella was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Chair Virgen.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Vice Chair Navarrete led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Commissioner Figueroa, Commissioner Gonzalez, Vice Chair Navarrete, and Chair Virgen.

Absent: Alternate Commissioner Leal, and Commissioner Huazano.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

There were no modifications to the agenda.

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

Made by: Commissioner Figueroa

Seconded by: Vice Chair Navarrete

Approved: 4-0, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Commissioner Figueroa, Commissioner Gonzalez, Vice Chair Navarrete, and Chair Virgen.

NOES: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Huazano.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

*The order of the following two items were switched, resulting in the items being renumbered:*

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2021, of the Coachella Planning Commission.

Motion: To approve the minutes as presented

Made by: Commissioner Gonzalez

Seconded by: Commissioner Navarrete

Approved: 4-0, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Commissioner Gonzalez, Vice Chair Navarrete, and Chair Virgen.

NOES: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Figueroa.

ABSENT: Commissioner Huazano.

2. Regular Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2021, of the Coachella Planning Commission.

Motion: To approve the minutes as presented

Made by: Commissioner Navarrete

Seconded by: Commissioner Figueroa

Approved: 4-0, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Commissioner Figueroa, Commissioner Gonzalez, Vice Chair Navarrete, and Chair Virgen.

NOES: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Huazano.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

An email regarding an LA Times article was received and forwarded to the Commissioners.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA ITEMS):**

None.

**REPORTS AND REQUESTS:**

The Housing Element consultant will be brought forth to the Commission at the next meeting.

**NON-HEARING ITEMS:**

3. Acceptance of Public Art Piece to be donated by Billy Stinberg, titled Coachella Valley Harvest Mural, painted by Laurence Neufield (1979), to be placed inside the City Library located at 1500 Sixth Street.

Motion: To approve per staff recommendation and recognize the artist with their name to be placed on a plaque next to the mural.

Made by: Commissioner Figueroa

Seconded by: Commissioner Gonzalez

Approved: 4-0, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Commissioner Figueroa, Commissioner Gonzalez, Vice Chair Navarrete, and Chair Virgen.

NOES: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Huazano.

*(With Ordinance No. 1172, the City Council created a new “Culture and Arts Commission” that will take the place of the Planning Commission for reviewing public art. New members are expected to be appointed in April 2021. This item is expected to be the last public art review to be bought before the Planning Commission.)*

4. Approval of a 12-month Time Extension for Conditional Use Permits (CUP 299 and CUP 300) to allow a 1,839 square foot retail cannabis business and a 1,432 square foot bar/pub with on-site alcohol sales at 1694 6th Street.

Since the approval of the project by the City Council, the owners reconsidered the project and now plan to utilize the ground floor as the dispensary that will now occupy a larger floor area. The second floor will be utilized for the pub with more windows with added steel reinforcement creating an industrial look, and creating a third floor deck for the pub. The envisioned changes will significantly impact the structural design of the remodel.

The owners have submitted plans and obtained building permits for a partial demolition of the existing building in order to do additional engineering investigative work for the structural integrity of the building. The anticipated major renovations and structural elements of the building that had to be re-designed are the justification for the delays.

Public Comments: John Greenwood (applicant)  
Carlos Bishop (applicant)

Motion: To approve the 12-month time period extension and add the Pueblo Viejo look to the final design

Made by: Commissioner Gonzalez

Seconded by: Vice Chair Navarrete

Approved: 4-0, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Commissioner Figueroa, Commissioner Gonzalez, Vice Chair Navarrete, and Chair Virgen.  
 NOES: None.  
 ABSTAIN: None.  
 ABSENT: Commissioner Huazano.

**PUBLIC HEARING CALENDAR (QUASI-JUDICIAL):**

5. Coachella Greenery Project

- a) Resolution No. PC-2021-01, approving Conditional Use Permit 334 proposes to establish an 1100 square foot cannabis dispensary within units 1 and 3 of the existing industrial building located at 84-801 Avenue 48.
- b) Conditional Use Permit 293, (Modification), proposes to modify the phasing plan in order to convert what was approved as an interim facility into an 1100 square foot retail cannabis business and in the future remove the existing building that will contain the dispensary and relocate the dispensary within Phase 1 of the cannabis cultivation project that was previously approved as part of CUP No. 293.

Chair Virgen opened the Public Hearing for Item 5 at 6:50 p.m.

Public Comments: Antonio Santamaria  
Naomi Morales

Chair Virgen closed the Public Hearing for Item 5 at 6:53 p.m.

Motion: To approve Conditional Use Permit No. 334 and Conditional Use Permit 293 (Modification) with the findings and conditions of approval, and add conditions of a bike rack, pedestrian friendly, and add parking lot landscaping

Made by: Commissioner Gonzalez  
 Seconded by: Commissioner Figueroa  
 Approved: 4-0, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Commissioner Figueroa, Commissioner Gonzalez, Vice Chair Navarrete, and Chair Virgen.  
 NOES: None.  
 ABSTAIN: None.  
 ABSENT: Commissioner Huazano.

**INFORMATIONAL:**

All Planning Commissioners and the Alternate are registered with the League of California Cities' Planning Commissioners Academy, Virtual Academy (March 25, 26, 31, and April 1). Development Services Director Luis Lopez met with new Planning Commissioner Figueroa and is open to all members to providing additional training.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Virgen adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m., followed by a motion from Commissioner Gonzalez, second by Vice Chair Navarrete, and a 5-0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Andrea J. Carranza, MMC  
Deputy City Clerk



**STAFF REPORT**  
**5/5/2021**

**TO:** Planning Commission Chair and Commissioners

**FROM:** Luis Lopez, Development Services Director

**SUBJECT:** B-4 Ranch Change of Zone Project

- a) Environmental Assessment (EA 2-04) recommending the adoption of a Negative Declaration pursuant to the environmental review guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.
- b) Change of Zone (CZ 20-07) to change the zoning from R-S (Single Family Residential) and R-M (Multiple Family Residential) to R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), R-M General (20-25 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N) on approximately 56.9 acres of vacant, agricultural land located on the north side of Avenue 52, east and west of Education Way (APN: 763-060-048). City-Initiated.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the attached Resolution No. PC 2021-04 recommending the adoption of a Negative Declaration approval of

**BACKGROUND:**

The B-4 Ranch Change of Zone project (“Project”) is located on approximately 56.9 acres north of Avenue 52, and west and east of Education Way (APN: 763-060-048). The City initiated effort is proposing a Change of Zone from the existing Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) designations to R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), R-M General (20-25 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The Change of Zone will help create adequate zoning capacity to meet the City’s 5th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), consistent with the adopted Housing Element and General Plan. It will also allow a mixture of housing types available to all residents including market rate housing and affordable housing. The Project proposes a Change of Zone only, no development plans are proposed at this time for the property.





**DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:**

The City of Coachella initiated Change of Zone No. 20-07 at the request of the State of California – Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) pursuant to a mandatory re-zoning effort called out in the City’s Housing Element. The Change of Zone’s main purpose is to create additional “development ready” multifamily residential zoning to accommodate the City’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) from the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle carryover which is required to be completed as part of the City’s 2013-2021 Housing Element. Communities use the RHNA in land use planning, prioritizing local resource allocation, and in deciding how to address identified existing and future housing needs resulting from population, employment, and household growth. The rezoning is anticipated to allow for the development of approximately 1,314 dwelling units as shown below in Table 4, Potential Project Units. The project would help create adequate zoning capacity to meet the City’s 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA Allocation consistent with the adopted Housing Element and General Plan.

The Change of Zone will re-designate the property as shown below in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 3 Proposed Change of Zone:

**Table 1: Current and Proposed Zoning**

|   |
|---|
| <b>Current Zoning</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential Single Family (R-S)</li> <li>• Residential Multiple Family (R-M)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Proposed Zoning</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential Multiple Family (R-M) - General: 20-25 Du./Ac.</li> <li>• Residential Multiple Family (R-M) - Urban: 20-38 Du./Ac.</li> <li>• Neighborhood Commercial (C-N)</li> </ul> |

The proposed Change of Zone will allow for Multi-Family Residential and Commercial Neighborhood uses. The R-M and C-N zones are intended to provide for the establishment and expansion of multiple family residential development areas at various medium and high population densities, including market rate housing, and related community services. The proposed zones are consistent with the project’s land use designations of Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center, established by the Coachella General Plan Update (CGPU) and therefore a General Plan Amendment is not needed for this project.

Land Use and Proposed Zoning Breakdown:

The project site is approximately 56.9 acres. The project proposes R-M General (20-25 du/ac) on approximately 29.3 acres of the site, R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac) on approximately 22.6 acres of the site, and C-N on approximately 4.1 acres of the site as illustrated in Figure 3 below. R-M General land uses permits 20 to 25 dwelling units per acre; therefore, the R-M General portion of the project site may include an average of 659 dwelling units. The R-M Urban land use permits 20 to 38 du/ac; therefore, this portion of the site could accommodate an average of 655 dwelling units. The project site in total could accommodate an average of approximately 1,314 dwelling units. This is shown in Table 3, Potential Project Units.

The current General Plan Land Use category acreages, the Zoning District acreages, and the total dwelling unit yield for the project site are as shown below:

**Table 2 Existing GP Land Use Designations**

| Land Use            | Acres     |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Urban Neighborhood  | 51.9      |
| Neighborhood Center | 4.1       |
| <b>Total*</b>       | <b>56</b> |

\*Approximate value

**Table 3 Proposed Zoning**

| Proposed Zoning           | Acres     |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| R-M General (20-25 du/ac) | 29.3      |
| R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac)   | 22.6      |
| Neighborhood Commercial   | 4.1       |
| <b>Total*</b>             | <b>56</b> |

\*Approximate value

**Table 4 Potential Project Units**

| Proposed Zone | Acres | Allowed DU  | Mid Density | Total DU/AC  |
|---------------|-------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| R-M General   | 29.3  | 20-25 du/ac | 22.5 du/ac  | 659          |
| R-M Urban     | 22.6  | 20-38 du/ac | 29 du/ac    | 655          |
| <b>Total</b>  |       |             |             | <b>1,314</b> |

Currently, the site has a split-zone (R-S and R-M) consisting of R-S (Residential Single-Family) on the west side of Education Way (north of the IID Powerline Easement) and R-M (Multifamily Residential) zoning on the south of the IID Powerline easement. The territory on the east side of Education Way and the area north of the Valle Del Sol Elementary School consists of R-S zoning, except for the southerly 215 feet of the land which has R-M zoning.

The proposed Change of Zone Exhibit will change the zoning to C-N (Neighborhood Commercial) for the southerly 4.1 acres located west of Education Way. The northerly 3.9 acres west of Education Way will have R-M General (20-25 du/ac) zoning. Similarly the area west of Education Way and north of the elementary school will have R-M Urban (25-38 du/ac) zoning for the southerly 25.6 acres, and R-M General (20-25 du/ac) zoning for the northerly 25.4 acres. These more specific R-M districts with “minimum density” requirements, will allow further development of the sites without the need for additional discretionary actions, and are consistent with State Laws regarding the low and moderate income categories of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation.

The Change of Zone Exhibit is shown below:

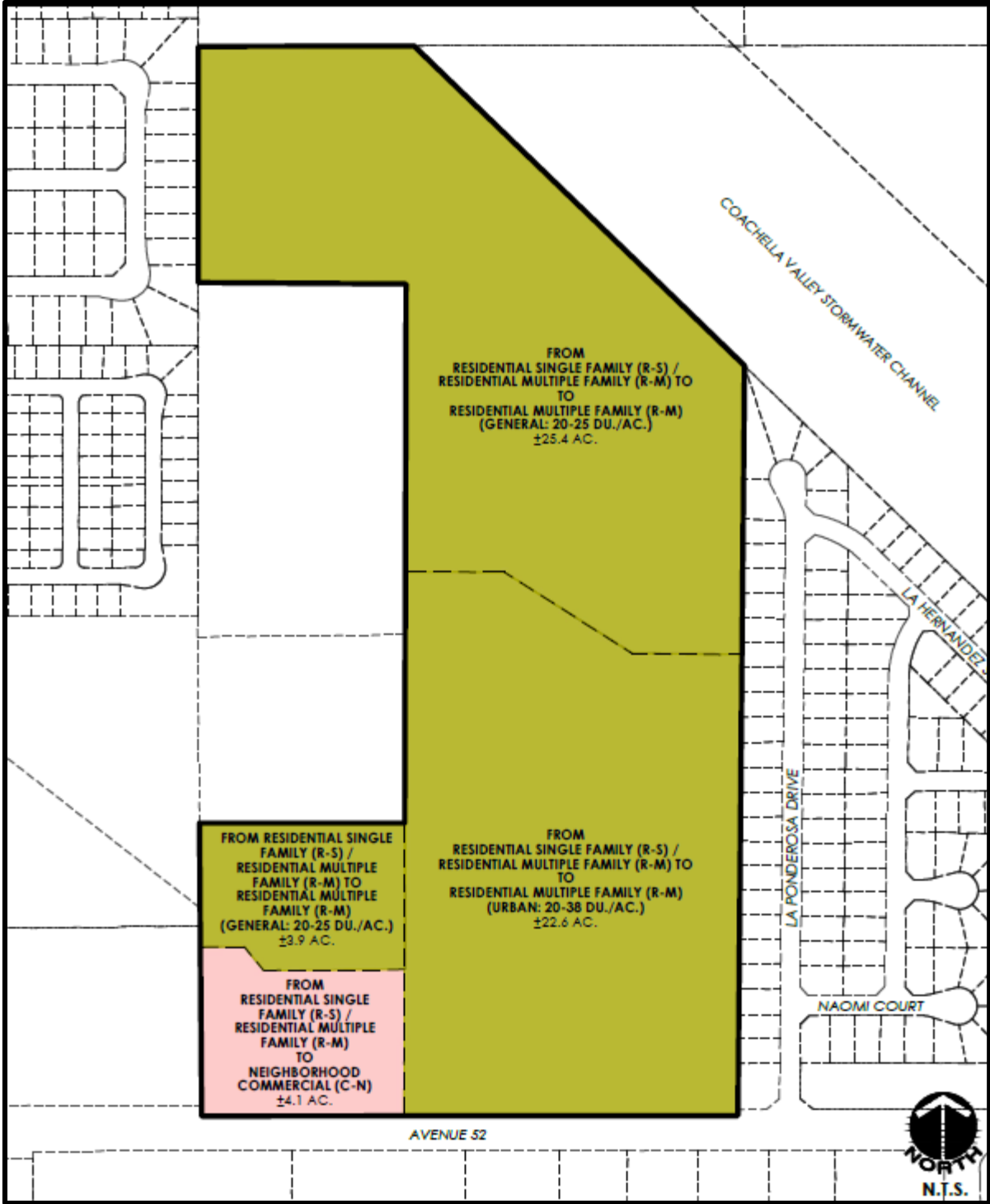


Figure 3: Proposed Change of Zone

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

The City of Coachella as the lead agency for this project prepared an Initial Study pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This Initial Study has been prepared in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(c) to provide a preliminary analysis of the proposed project's actions and to determine if the project, as proposed, may have a significant effect upon the environment. Staff undertook review of the proposed rezoning and determined the project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and subsequently a NEGATIVE DECLARATION has been prepared.

Attached to this staff report is a copy of the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration and the Initial Study/Negative Declaration document. The Planning Commission must find adequacy with the environmental documents, in making a recommendation to the City Council for approval of the Change of Zone.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Recommend to City Council adoption of a Negative Declaration (EA 20-04) and approval of Change of Zone (CZ 20-07).  
Recommend to City Council adoption of a Negative Declaration (EA 20-04) and approval of Change of Zone (CZ 20-07) with minor modifications to the zoning district boundaries.
2. Take no action.
3. Continue this item and provide staff with direction.

**RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):**

Staff recommends Alternative #1 as noted above.

Attachment: Resolution No. PC2021-04  
Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration  
CEQA Initial Study/ Negative Declaration

**RESOLUTION NO. PC 2021-04**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF COACHELLA PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF A NEGATIVE DECLARATION (ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. 20-04) FOR THE B-4 RANCH CHANGE OF ZONE PROJECT, AND RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF A CHANGE OF ZONE (CZ 20-07) FOR THE B-4 RANCH CHANGE OF ZONE PROJECT FROM R-S (RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY) AND R-M (MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) TO R-M URBAN (MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, 20-38 DU/AC), R-M GENERAL (MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, 20-25 DU/AC), AND C-N (NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL) ON APPROXIMATELY 56.9 ACRES OF VACANT, AGRICULTURAL LAND LOCATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF AVENUE 52, EAST AND WEST OF EDUCATION WAY (APN: 763-060-048). PETER RABBIT FARMS, OWNER.**

**WHEREAS**, the Proposed Project, as set forth in Environmental Assessment (EA 20-04) and Change of Zone (CZ 20-07) consists of the above-referenced application on approximately 56.9 acres of vacant agricultural land located on the north side of Avenue 52, east and west of Education Way; and the Project seeks to bring the properties into compliance with the General Plan’s “Land Use and Community Character Element”; and,

**WHEREAS**, the General Plan Land Use Map and Sub-Area 1 policies, call for the subject property to include medium to high-density residential uses in close proximity to commercial uses, and to create an urban pattern that includes short blocks with good street connectivity and pedestrian amenities; and,

**WHEREAS**, Prior to the approval of this Change of Zone (CZ 18-10), the project site contains only two zoning districts: R-S (Residential Single-Family) and R-M (Multiple-Family Residential). Neither of these two zones provides the proper density and variety of housing types envisioned by the General Plan; and,

**WHEREAS**, to bring the site into compliance with the General Plan, and to comply with the City’s Housing Element re-zoning requirements, the City of Coachella Development Services with the consent of the Property Owner proposes to create the following Zoning Districts:

- R-M General (Multiple-Family Residential, 20 – 25 DU/AC)
- R-M Urban (Multiple-Family Residential, 25-38 DU/AC)
- C-N (Neighborhood Commercial); and,

**WHEREAS**, the City completed Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA 20-04) for the Proposed Project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, as amended; and,

**WHEREAS**, based on this Environmental Assessment/Initial Study the City has made a determination that the Project will not have a significant impact on the environment and has prepared a Negative Declaration for this Project; and,

**WHEREAS**, a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration was posted with

the County Clerk and the proposed Mitigated Negative was made available for a 20-day public review period commencing on March 25, 2021 and ending on April 13, 2021; and,

**WHEREAS**, interested and concerned individuals and public agencies had the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed Negative Declaration; and,

**WHEREAS**, findings of the Initial Study indicated that the Proposed Project would not create any significant impacts to the environment; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Proposed Project would not be detrimental to the general health, safety and welfare of the community.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COACHELLA DOES HEREBY FIND, DETERMINE AND RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.**      Recitals. The Planning Commission hereby finds that the foregoing recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein as substantive findings of this Resolution.

**SECTION 2.**      Compliance with the Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”). As the advisory body for the Project, the Planning Commission has reviewed and considered the information contained in the Negative Declaration, Initial Study, comments received, and other documents contained in the administrative record for the Project. The Planning Commission recommends that the City Council find that the Negative Declaration, Initial Study and administrative record contain a complete and accurate reporting of the environmental impacts associated with the Project. The Planning Commission further recommends that the City Council find that the Negative Declaration and the Initial Study have been completed in compliance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, and the City of Coachella’s Local CEQA Guidelines.

**SECTION 3.**      Findings on Environmental Impacts. Based on the whole record before it, including the Negative Declaration, Initial Study, the administrative record and all other written and oral evidence presented to the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission recommends that the City Council find that all environmental impacts of the Project are insignificant as outlined in the Negative Declaration and Initial Study. The Planning Commission further recommends that the City Council find that there is no substantial evidence in the administrative record supporting a fair argument that the Project may result in any significant environmental impacts. The Planning Commission recommends that the City Council find that the Negative Declaration contains a complete, objective, and accurate reporting of the environmental impacts associated with the Project and reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Planning Commission.

**SECTION 4.**      Wildlife Resources. Pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 711.4(c), all project applicants and public agencies subject to CEQA shall pay a filing fee for each Proposed Project, as specified in subdivision 711.4(d) for any adverse effect on wildlife resources or the habitat upon which wildlife depends unless a “no effect” finding is made by the California Department of Fish and Game. This fee is due and payable as a

condition precedent to the County Clerk's filing of a Notice of Determination.

**SECTION 5.** Recommendation Regarding Adoption of the Negative Declaration. The Planning Commission hereby finds adequacy in the environmental review documents and recommends that the City Council adopt the Negative Declaration.

**SECTION 6.** Findings for Change of Zone 20-07. The Planning Commission does hereby recommend to the City Council approval of Change of Zone (CZ 20-07) with the findings listed below:

**Findings for Change of Zone 18-10:**

1. The Project is consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures of the Coachella General Plan 2035. The site has a General Neighborhood land use designation and is part of the Subarea 1 – West Coachella Neighborhoods policies, that allows for the proposed development. The proposed change of zone is in keeping with the policies of the General Neighborhood land use classification and the Project is internally consistent with other General Plan policies for this type of development.
2. The Project complies with the applicable land use regulations and development standards of the City's Zoning Code. The Project complies with applicable sections of the General Plan and Section 17.80 of the City of Coachella Municipal Code in that the subject property is vacant land that will be developed in accordance with the R-M, General (Multiple-Family Residential, 20-25 DU/AC), R-M, Urban (Multiple-Family Residential, 25-38 DU/AC) and C-N (Neighborhood Commercial) zoning development standards and the site has conforming width and depth, is generally flat, and can accommodate intensive urban development as anticipated in the future.
3. Every use, development of land and application of architectural guidelines and development standards shall be considered on the basis of the suitability of the site for a particular use or development intended, and the total development, including the prescribed development standards, shall be so arranged as to avoid traffic congestion, ensure the protection of public health, safety and general welfare, prevent adverse effects on neighboring property and shall be in accord with all elements of the general plan. The proposed change of zone is compatible with existing surrounding land uses that include a variety of residential, institutional, and light industrial uses. There is access to Avenue 52, which is a major arterial roadway that can accommodate the future traffic/circulation needs of the site.
4. The Project will be compatible with neighboring properties with respect to land development patterns and application of architectural treatments. Surrounding properties to the project site include multiple-family residential, an elementary school and light industrial uses. As such, the Project will be in keeping with the scale, massing, and aesthetic appeal of the existing area and future development.
5. The Project will not create any significant impacts to the environment based upon a complete and accurate reporting of the environmental impacts associated with the Project



contained in the Negative Declaration, Initial Study, and administrative record. The Negative Declaration and the Initial Study have been completed in compliance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, and the City of Coachella’s Local CEQA Guidelines.

**SECTION 7.** Location and Custodian of Records. The documents and materials that constitute the record of proceedings on which these findings are based are located at Coachella City Hall. The Development Services Director is the custodian of the record of proceedings.

**SECTION 8.** Execution of Resolution. The Chairman shall sign this Resolution and the City Clerk shall attest and certify to the passage and adoption thereof.

**PASSED APPROVED AND ADOPTED** this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May by the following vote:

ROLL CALL:           Ayes:  
                              Noes:  
                              Absent:  
                              Abstaining:

CITY OF COACHELLA  
PLANNING COMMISSION

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Stephanie Virgen, Chairperson

ATTEST:

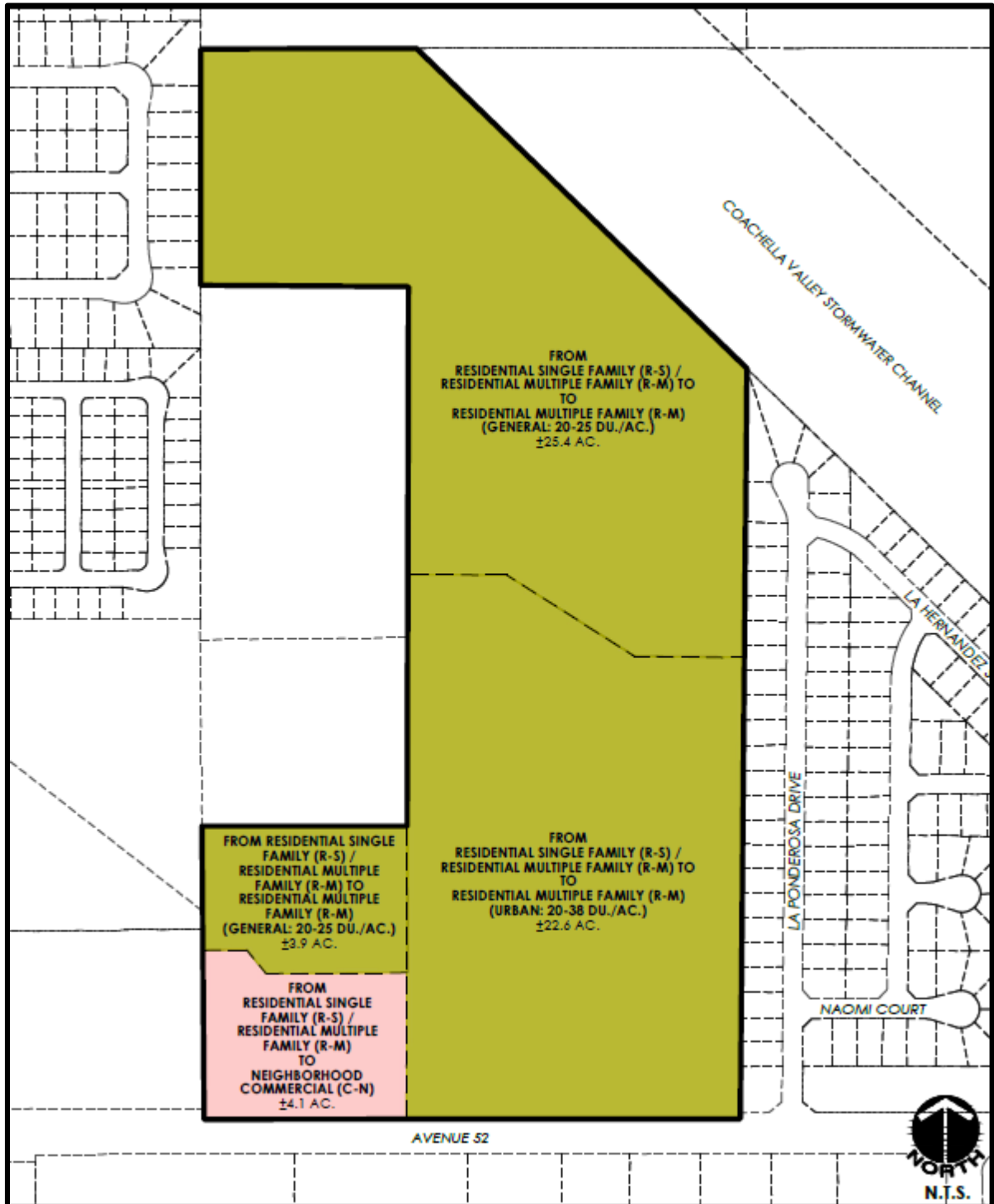
APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Yesenia Becerril  
Planning Commission Secretary

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Carlos Campos  
City Attorney

### EXHIBIT A

### B-4 RANCH CHANGE OF ZONE PROJECT – CHANGE OF ZONE EXHIBIT



# CITY OF COACHELLA

## Development Services Department



53-990 Enterprise Way  
Coachella CA 92236  
(760) 398-3102

### NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Project Title/Location: **B-4 Ranch Re-Zone Project**  
North Side of Avenue 52, east and west of Education Way, the City of Coachella, CA

Project Description:

Change of Zone No. 20-07 proposes a Change of Zone from the existing Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) zones to R-M General (20-25 dwelling units per acre (du/ac)), R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The proposed zones are consistent with the City of Coachella's General Plan land use designations of Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. The subject site is approximately 56.9 acres of land north of Avenue 52, and west and east of Education Way.

An Environmental Initial Study recommending the adoption of a Negative Declaration for EA 18-04 has been prepared and distributed to responsible agencies for review and comment pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A 20-day review period for the Negative Declaration will commence on March 25, 2021 and will end on April 13, 2021 for interested and concerned individuals and public agencies to submit written comments on the Initial Study. Any written comments on the proposed Negative Declaration must be received within the public review period. Below is the weblink to the City Webpage containing the Initial Study and Negative Declaration for the B-4 Ranch Re-Zone Project.

<https://www.coachella.org/departments/development-services/environmental-reviews>

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider the proposed project on April 21, 2021 to review the CEQA Draft documents for adequacy.

Copies of the proposed Negative Declaration and all environmental documents are available for review at the City of Coachella - Development Services Department located at 53-990 Enterprise Way, Coachella, CA 92236 Monday through Thursday, from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., by appointment.

Comments on the proposed Negative Declaration should be sent to Luis Lopez, Development Services Director at the above referenced address or by e-mail to [LLopez@Coachella.org](mailto:LLopez@Coachella.org).

The proposed project site is not contained on the lists compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code.

**Initial Study / Negative Declaration for**

**Peter Rabbit Re-Zone**

**Site ID: 24**

**LEAD AGENCY:**

City of Coachella  
Development Services Department  
1515 Sixth Street  
Coachella, CA 92236



**APPLICANT:**

City of Coachella  
c/o Luis Lopez, Development Services Director  
53990 Enterprise Way  
Coachella, CA 92236

**PREPARED BY:**



MSA Consulting, Inc.  
34200 Bob Hope Drive  
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Overview

The Peter Rabbit Re-Zoning project (“project”) is located on approximately 56.9 acres in the City of Coachella. The site is formed by a parcel (APN 763-060-048) north of 52nd Avenue, and west and east of Education Way. The City of Coachella (the Applicant) is proposing a Change of Zone from the existing Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) to R-M Urban, R-M General, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). Future development of the site is intended to include a multi-family housing community with a variety of pricing options and with commercial uses on the 56.9-acre property.

The project site has been disturbed due to its previous use as an agricultural operation. Based on historical aerial imagery, the site was intermittently utilized as agricultural fields, being harvested, cleared and graded, since before 1953. However, onsite agricultural operations have ceased, and the property is currently fallow. The property’s southern boundary is met by 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue; the eastern boundary is met by single family dwelling units; the northern boundary is met by the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel, and the western boundary is met by residential dwelling units and Valle Del Sol Elementary School.

The project site is currently located within the City of Coachella’s General Plan Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations. Urban Neighborhood land use designations are established for predominantly multi-family housing types with very good non-motorized access to a wide range of civic and commercial amenities located at the edges and/or within the mixed-use fabric of the neighborhood. Neighborhood Center land use designations are intended to provide for a concentration of neighborhood-serving commercial businesses and civic amenities – often mixed with multi-family housing – within convenient walking or biking distance of nearby neighborhoods.

As previously stated, the existing zoning designations for the project site includes Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M). R-S zones are intended to provide areas within the City where development is limited to low-density concentrations of single-family dwellings, and to stabilize and protect the residential character of such areas. R-M zones are intended to provide for the establishment and expansion of multiple-family residential development areas at various medium and high population densities and related community services.

The project is proposing a Change of Zone from R-S and R-M to R-M General, 20-25 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), R-M Urban, 20-38 du/ac, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The proposed zones are consistent with the existing General Plan land use designations; therefore, the only entitlement required for this project includes a Change of Zone. However, additional entitlements, such as Architecture Review and Tentative Parcel Maps, would be required if future development of the 56.9-acre site is proposed. The Change of Zone will create adequate zoning capacity to meet the City’s 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), consistent with the adopted Housing Element. It will also allow a mixture of housing types available to all residents including market rate housing and affordable housing.

### 1.2 Authority

The City of Coachella is the lead agency for the proposed Peter Rabbit Re-Zone project. The City undertook the review of the applicant’s submittal, and determined that it is a project, as defined by the

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Since the project includes a discretionary action, the City concluded that an Initial Study should be prepared. This Initial Study/Negative Declaration has been prepared in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21000 et. seq.

### 1.3 Scope of Environmental Review

This Initial Study evaluates the proposed project's potential environmental effects on the following topics as contained in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, as follows:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Significance of Findings

### 1.4 Impact Assessment Terminology

The Environmental Checklist identifies impacts using four levels of significance as follows:

No Impact: When the analysis finds that the project would not affect the environment.

Less than Significant: When the analysis finds that a project would not substantially impact the environment and no mitigation is required to reduce the impact to less than significant.

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated: When the analysis finds that project would result in substantial impact on the environment, but feasible mitigation measures can be successfully implemented to reduce levels to less than significant.

Potentially Significant: When the analysis finds that a project would result in substantial impact on the environment and no mitigation measures can implemented to reduce the impacts to less than significant.

### 1.5 Organization of the Initial Study

This Initial Study has been completed in the following format:

*City of Coachella  
January 2021*

*Peter Rabbit Re-Zone  
Initial Study/Negative Declaration*



Chapter 1 Introduction: This chapter provides a brief summary of the proposed project and describes the regulatory framework for the preparation of an Initial Study under CEQA.

Chapter 2 Project Description: This chapter provides a comprehensive description of the applicant's proposal for the project, the General Plan and Zoning for the project and the surrounding land uses.

Chapter 3 Environmental Checklist: This chapter contains the analysis of each topic identified in CEQA Appendix G, and includes a discussion of the environmental setting, the project's impacts, the determination of significance, and mitigation measures where necessary.

Chapter 4 References: This chapter identifies the documents and technical reports used for this Initial Study.

## 1.6 Documents Incorporated by Reference

In addition to the documents listed in Chapter 4, the City of Coachella's General Plan, General Plan EIR, and Municipal Code were used as part of the evaluation of the proposed project. These documents are available on the City's website at [www.coachella.org](http://www.coachella.org) and at the Development Services Department, located at 1515 Sixth Street.

## Chapter 2 Project Description

### 2.1 Project Description

The Peter Rabbit Re-Zoning project is proposing to change the existing zone of the property from Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) to R-M General (20-25 dwelling units per acre (du/ac)), R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The project is currently located on approximately 56.9 acres of land, north of 52nd Avenue and west and east of Education Way. The Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) for the site is 763-060-048. The project property previously operated as agricultural land since at least 1953; however, the site is currently vacant. The proposed zones are consistent with the project's land use designations of Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center, established by the Coachella General Plan Update (CGPU). Development of the site would also include landscaping, street improvements, and parking. Vehicular access to the project will be provided from 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Education Way.

The project site is currently vacant, with evidence of prior disturbance, due to the development of the surrounding land uses, and the previous agricultural operation that took place onsite. The project's northern boundary is delineated by the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel. The eastern boundary is met by a residential community with single family dwellings. 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue delineates the property's southern boundary, and a residential community with single family and multiple family homes, as well as Valle Del Sol Elementary School borders the property's western boundary. Distribution and transmission power poles are located at the property's southern boundary. South of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue are industrial land uses. The land use designations for the surrounding area includes Suburban Neighborhood to the east, Industrial District to the south, Suburban Neighborhood, General Neighborhood, and School to the west.

R-M and C-N zones are intended to provide for the establishment and expansion of multiple family residential development areas at various medium and high population densities and related community services, all located in conformance with the general plan. The project proposes to provide housing in compliance with the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The RHNA is mandated by State Housing Law as part of the periodic process of updating local housing elements of the General Plan. The RHNA quantifies the need for housing within each jurisdiction during specified planning periods. Communities use the RHNA in land use planning, prioritizing local resource allocation, and in deciding how to address identified existing and future housing needs resulting from population, employment, and household growth. The project would create adequate zoning capacity to meet the City's 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA Allocation consistent with the adopted Housing Element. The project includes a mixture of housing types available to all residents including market rate housing.

The project site is approximately 56.9 acres. The project proposes R-M General on approximately 29.3 acres of the site, R-M Urban on approximately 22.6 acres of the site, and C-N on approximately 4.1 acres of the site. R-M General land uses permits 20 to 25 dwelling units per acre; therefore, the R-M General portion of the project site may include an average of 659 dwelling units. The R-M Urban land use permits 20 to 38 du/ac; therefore, this portion of the site could accommodate an average of 655 dwelling units. The project site could accommodate an average of approximately 1,314 dwelling units. This is shown in Table 3, Potential Project Units.

Development of the site would also include landscaping, street improvements, and parking areas constructed in compliance with the standards established for Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood

Center land use designations. Approval of the Change of Zone will render the project in full compliance with City regulations.

## 2.2 Proposed Land Use and Zoning Breakdown

The proposed breakdown for the project is as follows:

**Table 1 Existing Land Use**

| Land Use            | Acres     |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Urban Neighborhood  | 51.9      |
| Neighborhood Center | 4.1       |
| <b>Total*</b>       | <b>56</b> |

\*Approximate value

**Table 1 Proposed Zoning**

| Proposed Zoning         | Acres     |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| R-M General             | 29.3      |
| R-M Urban               | 22.6      |
| Neighborhood Commercial | 4.1       |
| <b>Total*</b>           | <b>56</b> |

\*Approximate value

**Table 3 Potential Project Units**

| Proposed Zone | Acres | Allowed DU  | Mid Density | Total DU/AC  |
|---------------|-------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| R-M General   | 29.3  | 20-25 du/ac | 22.5 du/ac  | 659          |
| R-M Urban     | 22.6  | 20-38 du/ac | 29 du/ac    | 655          |
| <b>Total</b>  |       |             |             | <b>1,314</b> |

|               | R-M General | R-M Urban | Total Potential DU |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|
| <b>Min DU</b> | 586         | 452       | 1,038              |
| <b>Mid DU</b> | 659         | 655       | 1,314              |
| <b>Max DU</b> | 733         | 859       | 1,592              |

## 2.3 General Plan and Zoning Designation

The existing General Plan Land Use designation for the project site is Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. The existing zoning designation is Residential Single Family (R-S), and Residential Multiple Family (R-M).

## 2.4 Environmental Setting and Surrounding Land Uses

The proposed project site is located in the central portion of the City of Coachella, within the General Plan's Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use. Urban Neighborhood land uses are characterized predominantly (although not exclusively) by multi-family housing types with very good non-motorized access to a wide range of civic and commercial amenities located at the edges and/or within the mixed-use fabric of the neighborhood. The site has been disturbed and previously graded. Surrounding land uses include:

North: Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel

South: 52nd Avenue and Industrial District

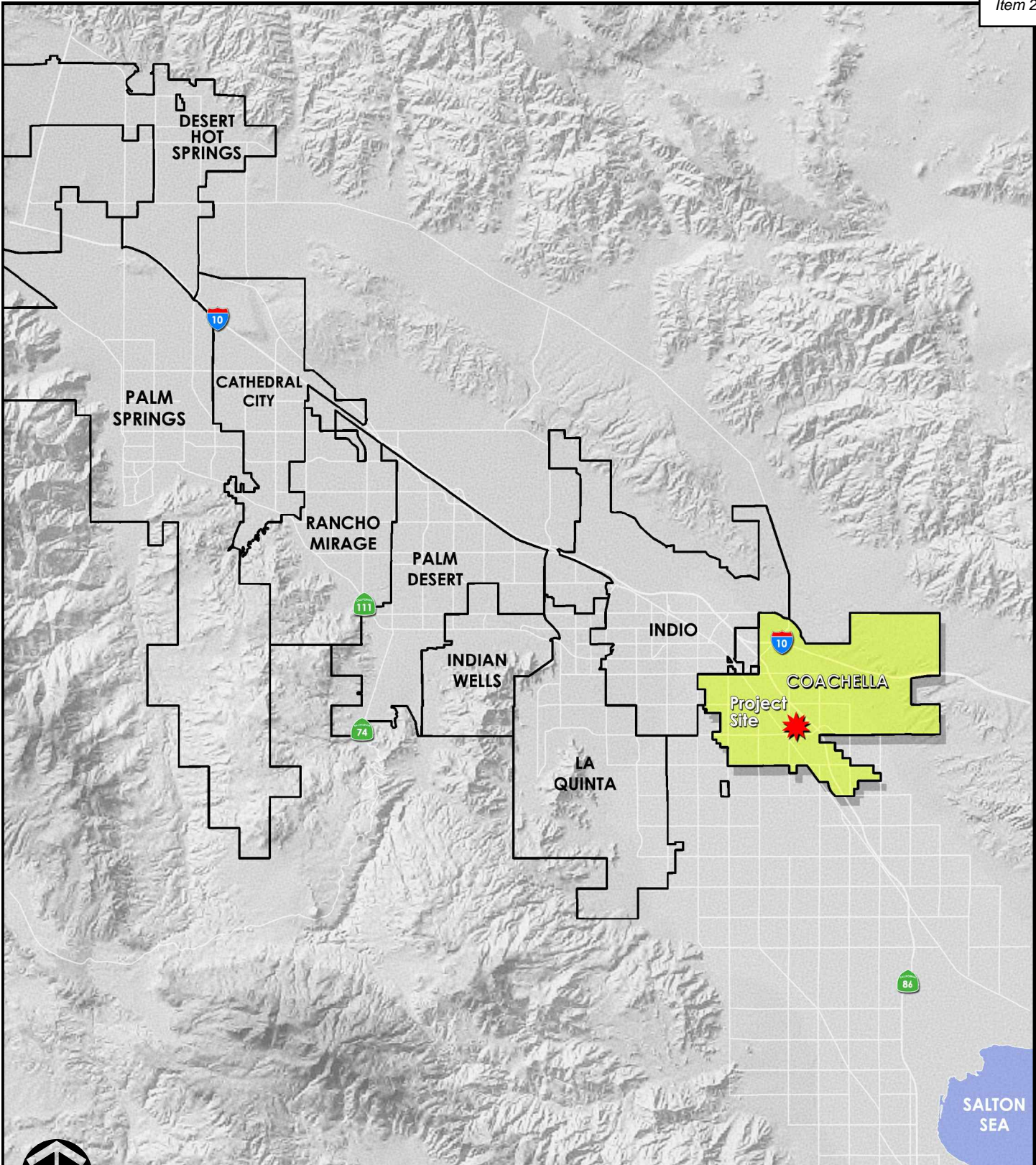
East: Residential neighborhood

West: Valle Del Sol Elementary School and Residential neighborhood

#### 2.5 Permits/Approvals required from other public agencies:

State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB)

South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)



**MSA CONSULTING, INC.**  
 > PLANNING > CIVIL ENGINEERING > LAND SURVEYING  
 34200 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270  
 760.320.9811 [msaconsultinginc.com](http://msaconsultinginc.com)

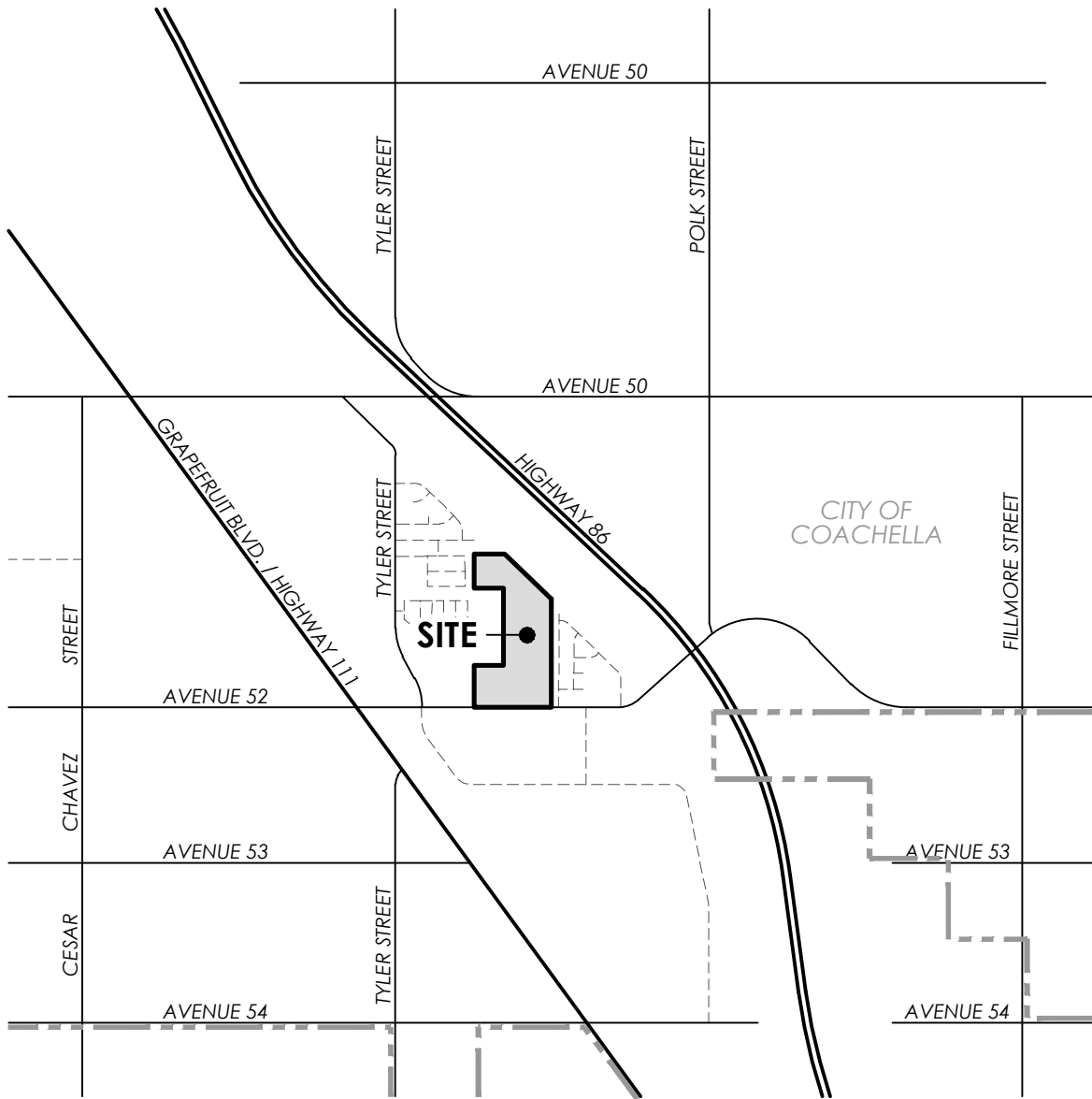


**REGIONAL LOCATION MAP**

**PETER RABBIT FARMS**  
 INITIAL STUDY

EXHIBIT

1



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**PROJECT VICINITY MAP**

**PETER RABBIT FARMS**  
 INITIAL STUDY

EXHIBIT

2



**PROJECT SITE**  
 APN: 763-060-048



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 760.320.9811 [msaconsultinginc.com](http://msaconsultinginc.com)

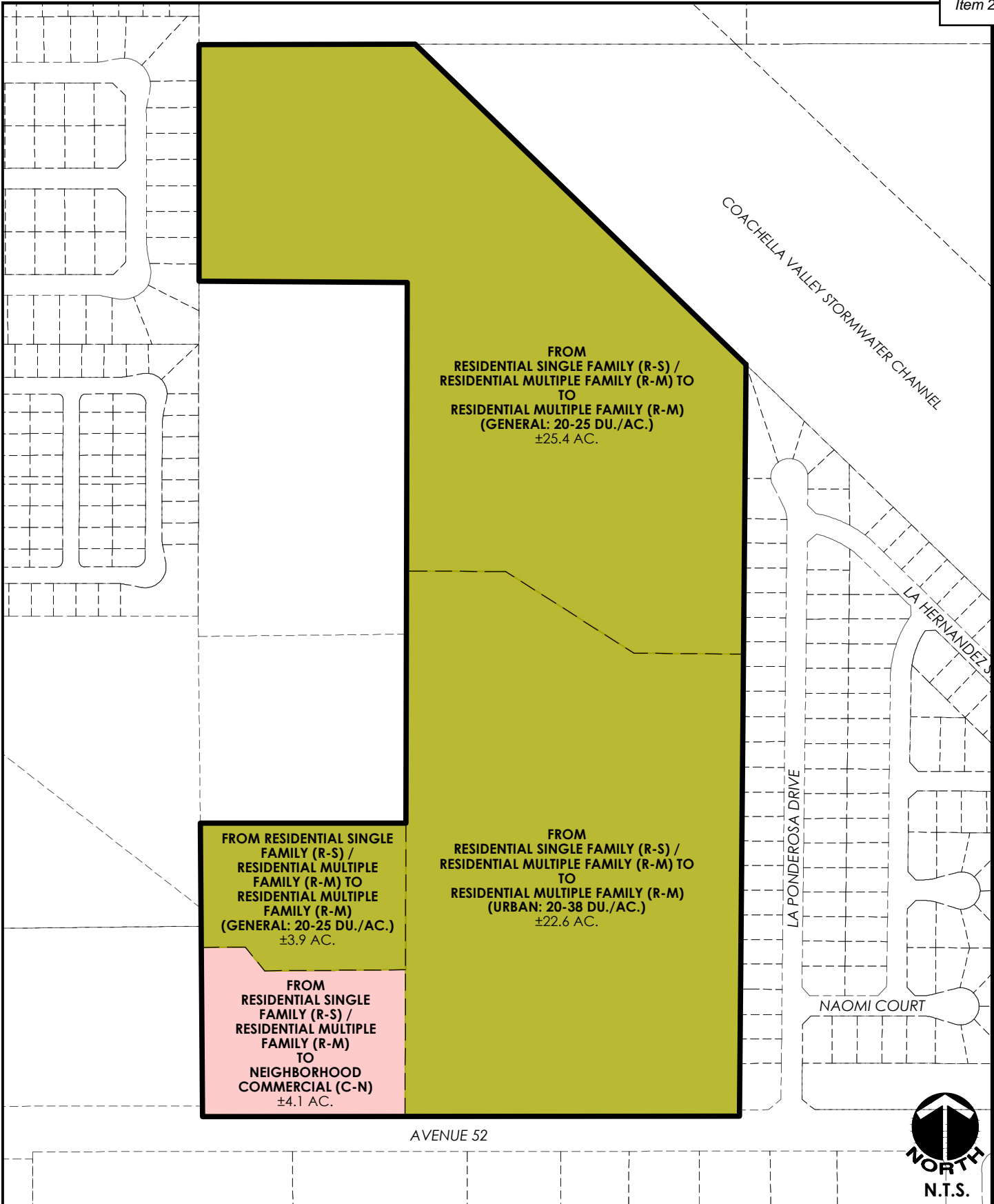


**AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH**

**PETER RABBIT FARMS**  
 INITIAL STUDY

EXHIBIT

3



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**PROJECT SITE PLAN**


**PETER RABBIT FARMS**  
 INITIAL STUDY

EXHIBIT

4



Environmental Impact Analysis

|   |  |
|---|--|
|  | <p><b>INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION</b></p> |
|---|--|

|                                     |  |   |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Project Title:                      | Peter Rabbit Re-Zoning   |   |
| Case No.                            | Environmental Assessment – EA #20-04<br>Change of Zone – CZ #20-07                               |   |
| Assessor’s Parcel No.               | 763-060-048  |   |
| Project Location:                   | North of 52nd Avenue & East and West of Education Way<br>Coachella, CA 92236<br>Riverside County |   |
| Project Sponsor’s Name and Address: | Cardinal Distributing Co. Inc. / Peter Rabbit Farms  | 85810 Grapefruit Boulevard<br>Coachella, CA 92236 |
| General Plan Designation(s):        | Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center   |   |
| Zoning:                             | Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M)                            |   |
| Lead Agency Name and Address:       | City of Coachella – Planning Division<br>1515 Sixth Street<br>Coachella, California 92236        |   |
| Lead Agency Contact Person:         | Luis Lopez,<br>Community Development Director  |   |
| Phone Number:                       | (760) 398-3502   |   |
| Date Prepared:                      | January 2021   |   |

**Environmental Factors Potentially Affected:**

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, as indicated by the checklist and corresponding discussion on the following pages.

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

**DETERMINATION:** The City of Coachella Planning Department

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Luis Lopez  
Director of Community Development

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## PURPOSE OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study has been prepared in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(c) to provide a preliminary analysis of a proposed project's actions and to determine if the project, as proposed, may have a significant effect upon the environment. The findings determined from the preliminary analysis are presented in the form of the Initial Study, which will be used in support of the preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

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

**I. AESTHETICS**

| Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: "California Scenic Highway Mapping System," 2019; 2035 Coachella General Plan Update, 2015; Coachella Municipal Code.)

**Setting**

The Coachella Valley is defined as a low and relatively flat desert basin bounded by mountainous terrain. The surrounding mountain ranges specifically include the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north and northeast, the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south, and the San Jacinto Mountains to the west. The topographic variety in the Coachella Valley establishes elevations from 1,000 feet in the Mecca Hills to the east, to approximately 160 feet below sea level south of Thermal. Although the elevation varies widely, the City of Coachella is relatively flat, with a gentle slope from northwest to southeast. The project site is located in the southeast portion of the City, surrounded by developed properties to the west, south, and east.

The approximately 56.9-acre project site is currently disturbed, due to its previous operation as agricultural land. Historical imagery shows the project site was previously occupied by agricultural and residential uses prior to 1953. However, the project is disturbed with scattered vegetation according to historical imagery from 1972. Between the years 1986 to present, the site has been used intermittently for agricultural purposes, showing evidence of harvesting and clearing of land. However, agricultural operations have ceased, and the site is currently fallow. The residential properties east of the site were developed by (at least) 1996, the residential properties west of the site were developed by 2004, and Valle Del Sol Elementary School was fully developed by 2005. The paved roadway, 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, occurs along the project's southern boundary. 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue is equipped with sidewalks and curb and gutter improvements.

The City of Coachella categorizes the different land uses into six specific designations. These six different designations include: Ranchos, Neighborhoods, Centers, Districts, Specific Plans and Public. The project

site is located in the Neighborhoods and Centers designation. Neighborhood Districts, as defined by the City, are areas that mixes a variety of residential types within a walkable network of green streets and parks, well-connected to parks, schools and neighborhood centers to serve daily shopping needs. Suburban, General and Urban are all subcategories within the Neighborhood District designation. The proposed project lies within the Urban Neighborhood subcategory in Coachella, which is characterized predominantly (although not exclusively) by multi-family housing types with very good non-motorized access to a wide range of civic and commercial amenities located at the edges and/or within the mixed-use fabric of the neighborhood. Urban Neighborhoods support retail, office, civic, and recreational uses in limited quantities. Building heights are generally two to three stories. Development intensities for Urban Neighborhood land use designations vary from 20 to 38 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), with 30 du/ac average for new projects (2035 Coachella General Plan Update).

The southwestern portion of the site is designated Neighborhood Center land use. Neighborhood Centers create a concentration of commercial businesses and civic amenities – often mixed with multi-family housing. These land uses are located within convenient walking or biking distance of nearby neighborhoods and provide gathering places for residents of surrounding neighborhoods. Neighborhood Centers are intended to be ideal locations for high-quality transit stops. Uses allowed within Neighborhood Centers primarily includes neighborhood-serving retail and services, permitting residential uses on the upper floors and mixed-use buildings and in multi-family buildings at the edge of the center where it transitions to the adjoining neighborhood. Development intensities permitted within this land use includes 15 to 40 du/ac, and a floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.5 – 1.5.

The proposed project site is also located in Coachella’s Single Family Residential (R-S) and Residential Multiple Family (R-M) zoning designations. R-S zones are intended to provide areas within the City where development is limited to low-density concentrations of single-family dwellings, and to stabilize and protect the residential character of such areas (Coachella Municipal Code 17.16). R-M zones are intended to provide for the establishment and expansion of multiple-family residential development areas at various medium and high population densities and related community services, all located in conformance with the General Plan (Coachella Municipal Code 17.20).

The project proposes a Change of Zone from the R-S and R-M zones to R-M General (20-25 du/ac), R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The increased densities would permit more housing that is needed in the City of Coachella. The proposed zones are consistent with the property’s existing land use designations of Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center (discussed further in the Land Use and Planning Section of this document). The existing land use designations and proposed zoning designations establish standards and guidelines that contribute to the visual character and scenic quality of the City. They also establish guidelines that maintain the existing natural landscaping and scenic vistas in the City. The project does not currently propose development on the 56.9-acre property and a site plan does not currently exist. However, analysis of future development on aesthetics and aesthetic resources are provided in this discussion. The City of Coachella’s General Plan Update was used to determine the aesthetic resources in the City, as well as development regulations, guidelines, and standards for the proposed uses.

### Discussion of Impacts

- a) **No Impact.** The City of Coachella lists various aspects of scenic beauty in the City’s General Plan Update (CGPU). These include views of the mountains, the rural and agricultural character, as well as parks and open space areas. According to the City, the natural topography of the hills,

the existing agricultural uses and the views of the surrounding mountains should be maintained and preserved for its scenic quality. The value of scenery can be highly subjective due to personal preference and opinion and is generally affected by the presence and intensity of neighboring man-made improvements, such as structures, overhead utilities, and landscape, to name a few. Certain man-made features can either add to or obstruct a scenic vista, depending on viewpoint and perspective.

The project site is located in the southeast portion of the City of Coachella, in the City's West Coachella Neighborhood General Plan Subarea. The zoning designations within the project site includes Residential Single Family (R-S) and Residential Multiple Family (R-M) zones. The project site is surrounded by the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel to the north, single-family residential properties to the east, 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to the south, and single family residential, multiple family residential and Valle Del Sol Elementary School to the west. The residential properties west and east of the project site are separated from the project by fencing or block wall perimeters.

According to the CGPU, hillsides and mountains in the Coachella Valley are considered visual resources to the City. From the project site, views of the San Jacinto Mountains to the west, Santa Rosa Mountains to the southwest, and Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north and northeast are present. However, views of these mountain ranges are distant and partially obstructed by existing manmade structures and landscaping. The Little San Bernardino Mountains are located north and east of the project and can be viewed from a distance. Due to the location of the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel, abutting the property's northern boundary, and the agricultural uses north of the site, views of the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north are unobstructed. However, the views of the Little San Bernardino Mountains (when viewed from the project) to the east are largely obstructed by the existing residential community immediately adjacent to the project's eastern boundary.

The project proposes to change the current zoning designations of R-S and R-M to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The project, located in the City's Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations, will comply with the requirements of properties within these designations. The project will avoid larger blocks, lots and buildings that would be incompatible with the scale and character of Coachella's Neighborhoods and Centers. Per the CGPU, buildings within this land use designation are not to exceed three stories.

Future development may partially obstruct the views of the San Jacinto Mountains to the single-story residences immediately east of the site. Future development may also partially obstruct the views of the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the east, when viewed at the existing residential properties west of the project site. However, as established previously, these views are already distant and obstructed. Building heights within future development will not exceed 3 stories, per the CGPU. Future buildings will also be separated from the existing residential communities east of the project by setbacks established for Multifamily Residential zones (R-M), per the Coachella Municipal Code Chapter 17.20, *R-M Multiple-Family Residential Zone*. Industrial and agricultural uses, including packing houses, electrical substation, and date farm is located south of the project, separated from the project by 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Future construction of the proposed project may partially obstruct the views of the Little San Bernardino Mountains from the south-lying properties, however, the properties to the south do not include

opportunities to view the Mountains, compared to a residential community. For example, scenic vistas may be viewed from residential building windows, front or back yards, or driveways, and neighborhood streets and sidewalks, where vistas can be viewed at leisure. In contrast, the industrial properties to the south do not include building windows or yards where the mountains can be viewed. Additionally, the proposed project will abide by building, and setback standards established for R-M and C-N zones.

The proposed project is not expected to obstruct the views of the surrounding scenic vistas. Future proposed building height, setbacks and design standards will comply with the guidelines established in the City's Municipal Code for R-M and C-N zones, as well as design standards outlined in the CGPU for Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Centers land use designations. The distant views of the various mountain ranges will remain visible to the surrounding residences and residents after the construction of the project. Future development may partially obstruct the views, depending on location and viewpoint; however, the project will comply with the standards established in the City Municipal Code and General Plan regulating building heights and setbacks to ensure scenic vistas continue to be visible. No development is proposed at this time, therefore, no impacts to the scenic vistas are anticipated.

- b) **No Impact.** The approximately 56.9-acre project property lies on previously disturbed land in the central portion of Coachella. Prior land uses of the site included farmland operations. Historical aerial imagery (dating back to 1953) residents that the property was used for agriculture uses, since at least 1953. No buildings or structures were developed onsite, according to the historical images. Though, grading of the site as well as the growing and clearing of crops has occurred onsite from at least 1953 to recent years.

Scenic resources, including trees, rock outcroppings, and scenic highways within the viewsheds of State Scenic Highways provide aesthetic and visual appeal for residents and visitors of the City's Planning Area. Similarly, scenic routes provide valuable visual relief to travelers. The State Scenic Highway Program was established to preserve and enhance the natural beauty of California. It not only adds to the pleasure of the residents, but also encourages the growth of the recreation and tourism in the State. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages the State Scenic Highway Program. To be listed as a Scenic Highway, the road must traverse an area of outstanding scenic quality, containing striking views, flora, geology, or other unique natural attributes. There are three officially designated State Scenic Highways in Riverside County. They include Highway 273, 62 and the closest, Highway 74, which is approximately 13.60 miles northwest of the project site. The northern section Highway 111 (Palm Springs to Palm Desert) and the southern section (Mecca to the Salton Sea) is categorized as an eligible State Scenic Highway, but it is not officially designated.

There are no designated, or eligible, State Scenic Highways within the Planning Area. According to the Coachella General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (EIR), certain sections of Old Highway 99 (now Dillon Road between Grapefruit Boulevard and Interstate 10), Old Highway 86 (Harrison Street south of Grapefruit Boulevard), Old Highway 111 (Grapefruit Boulevard), and Highway 86-S Expressway (south of Interstate 10) represent visual corridors and serve as an aesthetic resource for the City. The project lies approximately 0.20 miles southwest of the closest City designated visual corridor, Highway 86-S. Due to the distance from the project to Highway 86-S, the project will not obstruct the scenic resources viewed by motorists driving along the roadway.

Conclusively, the proposed project is not located adjacent to a designated Scenic Highway, as identified by Caltrans or the City. Additionally, there are no significant trees, rock outcroppings, or historical buildings due to the cleared and disturbed character of the site. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in adverse impacts to scenic resources adjacent to or near a State Scenic Highway. No impact.

- c) **No Impact.** According to the CGPU Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the City has a unique visual characteristic in its scenic geographical location, agricultural and rancho history, and quality architecture of historic buildings. Although the alteration of the existing landscape is unavoidable due to future development, the views of the mountains, rural, agricultural character should be respected, maintained, and preserved.

The Draft EIR presents policies to help preserve the existing visual character of the City where it is deemed valuable, or direct future development to either enhance the existing visual character in the City or create a new, complementary visual character. Specifically, these policies direct new development to maintain the existing small-town character and cultural diversity of Coachella, preventing development not compatible with the existing character from being constructed. The policies identify specific urban design practices, such as the development of complete neighborhoods, preservation of agriculture and open space, pedestrian-oriented design, and sustainable development practices, as methods of achieving the preservation of this character. Further, the policies specify that the City's natural resources should be retained to help preserve visual character, which will further preserve the existing character. Finally, the policies require high-quality and long-lasting building materials and quality architecture, which will also ensure quality visual character in the community by preventing the construction of bland, poor quality buildings.

The project site is currently characterized by disturbed land previously utilized for agricultural operations. Historical imagery dating from 1953, shows the property graded and operating as agricultural land. The properties west, south, and east of the project were also utilized as agricultural land in 1953. Between 1953 to the recent years, the project site has been harvested and cleared of agriculture intermittently. No buildings occur on the project site throughout this time. By at least 2005, the properties west and east of the project ceased their agricultural operations and were developed into residential communities and a public facility (elementary school). By 1986, the industrial business south of the project property were developed. The surrounding developed context largely contributes to the existing scenic quality of the area.

The project proposes the development of a mixed-use community consisting of multifamily residential uses and neighborhood commercial uses on approximately 56.9 acres. The City's Zoning Code will regulate the developmental standards for the proposed project. The City's Zoning Code establishes permitted uses and property development standards for the zones within the City.

Currently, the project is designated as Residential Single Family (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) as established by the City's Zoning Map. R-S zones are intended to provide areas within the city where development is limited to low density concentrations of single-family dwellings, and to stabilize and protect the residential character of such areas. R-M zones are intended to provide for the establishment and expansion of multiple family residential



development areas at various medium and high population densities and related community services, all located in conformance with the general plan.

The project proposes a Change of Zone from the R-S and R-M designations, to R-M (Urban), R-M (General), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). C-N zones are intended to provide for every day, convenience shopping intended to serve residential neighborhoods, consistent with the environmental requirements of such neighborhoods. The project proposes an increased residential density and use within the project area. The Coachella Municipal Code establishes property development standards for the various zones within the City. These standards include density and lot size requirements, yard requirements, height limits, distances between buildings, usable open space, off-street parking standards, and minimum dwelling unit sizes. The project will be required to comply with the standards and requirements listed in the Coachella Municipal Code for the proposed R-M and C-N zones.

In addition to the City's Municipal Code, the 2035 General Plan Update provides guidance on the type of buildings that should be constructed in order to create the form and character envisioned by the City. The project site is located in Subarea 1, West Coachella Neighborhoods. The vision for the West Coachella Neighborhoods is to create a block and street network that links existing and new development into a coherent town. This subarea will provide housing that ranges from single-family houses to house-scale multi-family buildings. New development will occur as infill development and streets will be pedestrian friendly with on-street parking, sidewalks shaded by trees and safe crosswalks.

The project is also located within the City's Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations established in the General Plan. The intended physical character of Urban Neighborhoods is to create high intensity, walkable, transit ready neighborhood with a variety of types of housing – predominantly multi-family of various types. Urban Neighborhoods should be located in close proximity to high quantities of commercial, civic, and recreational uses. Per the General Plan Update, urban form guidelines for Urban Neighborhoods include the following:

1. Lot coverage generally does not exceed 60 percent.
2. Buildings should generally have front and rear yards.
3. Desired building types are rowhouse/townhouse, garden apartment and urban apartment.
4. The main entrance to each building should be located within the front façade, accessed directly from the street and designed to welcome visitors.
5. Building heights are generally two to three stories.
6. Vehicular access should be provided through an alley at the rear of the lot or a driveway connecting to the street. Driveways from the street, when necessary, should be as narrow as practical – and not more than 18 feet wide.

Neighborhood Center land use designations are intended to create a concentration of commercial businesses and civic amenities (often mixed with multi-family housing) within convenient walking or biking distance of nearby neighborhoods. The intended physical character of Neighborhood Centers is to provide convenient access and parking to motorists and pedestrians. Buildings face public streets (either the primary roadway or new internal streets) with attractive shopfronts designed to display merchandise, dining rooms, patios, and signage to passersby. Streets connect the center to adjacent neighborhoods and to the urban corridor(s), providing convenient access on foot or by bike from residences to retail amenities and to transit.

Per the General Plan Update, urban form guidelines for Urban Neighborhoods include the following:

1. A variety of building types are allowed, ranging from rowhouse/townhouse to main street/mixed-use.
2. Building entrances are direct from the sidewalk, generally via shopfronts.
3. Building heights are generally one to three stories.
4. Vehicular access is provided to parking lots via common drives detailed as small streets and by alleys. Services and trash should be located behind buildings in alleys.

Future development shall comply with the City's standards for projects in Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use areas in order to achieve the intended physical character and scenic quality of these land uses.

In addition to the design standards outlined in the General Plan, the City's Zoning Code will also regulate the standards for the proposed project. The City's Zoning Code establishes permitted uses and property development standards for the zones within the City. Currently the project is designated as Residential Single Family (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M). R-S zones are intended to provide areas within the city where development is limited to low density concentrations of single-family dwellings, and to stabilize and protect the residential character of such areas. R-M zones are intended to provide for the establishment and expansion of multiple family residential development areas at various medium and high population densities and related community services, all located in conformance with the general plan.

The project proposes a Change of Zone from the R-S and R-M designations, to R-M (Urban), R-M (General), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). C-N zones are intended to provide for every day, convenience shopping intended to serve residential neighborhoods, consistent with the environmental requirements of such neighborhoods. The project proposes an increased residential density and use within the project area. The Coachella Municipal Code establishes property development standards for the various zones within the City. These standards include density and lot size requirements, yard requirements, height limits, distances between buildings, usable open space, off-street parking standards, and minimum dwelling unit sizes. The project will be required to comply with the standards and requirements listed in the Coachella Municipal Code for the proposed R-M and C-N zones.

Future development shall follow the City of Coachella's standards for buildings in R-M and C-N zones and Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations. Additionally, in order to ensure that the project will properly comply with the architectural guidelines of the City and the provisions of development standards, the project is subject to Architectural Review. The change of zone project is not expected to degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; thus, no impacts are expected.

- d) No Impact.** As stated in the previous discussions, the project site is located in the Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations in the City of Coachella. The existing zoning designations for the project is R-S and R-M. The project proposes a Change of Zone from the R-S and R-M zones, to R-M General, R-M Urban, and C-N. The proposed zones are consistent with the General Plan land use designations. The project site is currently vacant, however, prior use of the site included both vacant land and agricultural operations. Due to the

vacant character of the project site, the property does not currently contribute to the ambient lighting in the area.

Sources of fixed nighttime lighting in the areas surrounding the project can be attributed to the existing homes west and east of the project, Valle Del Sol Elementary School located immediately west of the project, and the industrial uses south of the project. The individual home lighting typically consists of low-intensity, wall-mounted, downward-oriented fixtures in the patio, side and front yards of homes. Nighttime lighting from the school also includes low-intensity, wall-mounted, downward-oriented fixtures on the buildings and entrances, as well as lighting in parking and outdoor recreational areas. Nighttime lighting from the industrial uses typically includes exterior lighting systems to provide adequate security. Non-fixed sources of daytime or nighttime lighting are attributed to vehicular traffic in the surrounding area.

Future development is expected to consist of residential and commercial uses on the 56.9-acre site. Buildout of the proposed project can be expected to generate increased levels of light and glare from interior and exterior building lighting, safety and security lighting, landscape lighting, and vehicles accessing the site. Stationary lighting in the residential portion of the project will be consistent with exterior and interior lighting typical for residential communities in Coachella. These typically consist of low-intensity, wall-mounted, downward-oriented fixtures, which avoid spilling onto adjacent properties.

Chapter 17.54.010 (K) (off-street parking and loading: lighting) of the Coachella Municipal Code, states that parking area lighting is not always required; however, if lighted parking areas are required parking areas, such lighting fixtures shall be located, with hoods provided and adjusted, so as to preclude the direct glare of the light from shining onto property or streets. Future development shall comply with Chapter 17.54.010 (K) in order to provide lighting for cars and pedestrians without generating excess light and spillage.

As stated previously, future development is anticipated to generate increased levels of light compared to the existing use as fallow agricultural land. Although the land use density will increase, the lighting levels are not expected to exceed typical levels within the surrounding environment and levels inconsistent with Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations and R-M and C-N zones.

Pertaining to glare, the project would not introduce buildings with large reflective surfaces that would generate substantial glare. Building surfaces and materials used would be subject to review by the City of Coachella and Architectural Review to ensure that the project site is consistent with the development standards in the City's Municipal Code and aligns with the intended physical character of the associated land use designations.

No impacts pertaining to project-generated light and glare are anticipated relative to the Change of Zone.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

| <b>II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES</b> |  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact        | No Impact                           |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project:</b>         |  |                                |  |                                     |                                     |
| 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?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| b)                                | Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c)                                | Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526) or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d)                                | Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

(Sources: 2035 Coachella General Plan, Figure 3-6, 2015; “Riverside County Important Farmland 2014 Map,” sheet 2 of 3, California Department of Conservation, updated November 2016.)

**Setting**

As a part of Riverside County, the City of Coachella’s agricultural lands are a key aspect of the County and its character. Agricultural land covers approximately 40 percent of the City’s General Plan area. Though, most of the agricultural land is located in and around the unincorporated areas of Coachella, with the more centralized areas being converted into or being used for urban or industrial use.

The California Land Conservation Act, also known as the Williamson Act, was adopted in 1965 in order to encourage the preservation of the State’s agricultural lands and to prevent its premature conversion to urban uses. The Williamson Act creates an arrangement whereby private landowners’ contract with counties and cities to voluntarily restrict land to agricultural and open space uses. Under the Williamson Act, an agricultural preserve must consist of no less than 100 acres, any development on the property must be related to the primary use of the land for agricultural purposes, and development must be in compliance with local uniform rules or ordinances. Williamson Act contracts are estimated to save agricultural landowners from 20 to 75 percent in property taxes each year.

The vehicle for these agreements is a rolling-term, 10-year contract (i.e., unless either party files a “notice of nonrenewal,” the contract is automatically renewed annually for an additional year). In return, restricted parcels are assessed for property tax purposes at a rate consistent with their actual use, rather than potential market value (California Department of Conservation, 2006). If a “notice of nonrenewal” is filed by a landowner, a nine-year nonrenewal period commences. Over this period of

time, the annual tax assessment gradually increases. At the end of the nine-year nonrenewal period, the contract is terminated. Only the landowner can petition to cancel a Williamson Act contract.

### Discussion of Impacts

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** Preservation of agriculture is considered integral to the City's future. Agricultural land is one of several predominant land uses within Coachella, covering approximately 29 percent (11,139 acres) of the City's planning area. Approximately 5,112 acres of the total agricultural land within the Planning Area is located within the City's incorporated area. Most of the agricultural land is located in the unincorporated areas (6,058 acres). Of this agricultural land, much of it is Important Farmland as defined by the State.

The project property's land use designations are determined as Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center in the Coachella General Plan 2035. The entire property is disturbed, including clearing and grading. Approximately 49 acres of the site operated as an agricultural farmland. Based on historical aerial imagery, the property operated as farmland prior to 1953. According to the most recent Riverside County Important Farmland Map, the entire property is designated as Farmland of Local Importance. Farmland of Local Importance is defined by the Department of Conservation as farmland that is important to the local economy. In the County of Riverside, Farmland of Local Importance includes (1) land where the soils would be classified as Prime or Statewide Farmland, but lack available irrigation water; (2) lands producing major crops for the County but are not listed as unique crops; (3) dairylands including corrals, pasture, milking facilities, hay and manure storage areas if accompanied with permanent pasture or hayland of 10 acres or more; or (4) lands identified by the city or county ordinance as agricultural zones or contracts.

Historical aerial imagery reveals that by 1953 the project site, and the surrounding area, operated as agricultural land. However, the surrounding areas became more urbanized, constructing residential communities by 2002, and the elementary school by 2005. The project property was used intermittently as agricultural field. The site currently lies within an urbanized area of Coachella. The project is also located within Subarea 1, West Coachella Neighborhoods, of the Coachella General Plan. The West Coachella Neighborhoods area includes predominantly single-family homes but also contains various types of retail uses, apartments, schools, and parks. The vision for the West Coachella Neighborhood subarea includes residential housing, ranging from single family to multi-family buildings, and new development located in infill lots.

Additionally, the land use designations, which the project site is located within is identified as Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center, established by the City of Coachella. Urban Neighborhoods are designated for multi-family housing types with very good non-motorized access to a wide range of civic and commercial amenities located at the edges and/or within the mixed-use (retail, office, civic, and recreational) fabric of the neighborhood. Neighborhood Centers provides for a concentration of neighborhood-serving commercial businesses and civic amenities, often mixed with multi-family housing, within convenient walking or biking distance of nearby neighborhoods.

Although the site is designated as Farmland of Local Importance, the City designated land uses established for the site intends for the development of residential dwellings and commercial uses. Additionally, the project site is surrounded by developed uses including residential

communities and a public elementary school. The project is located in Coachella General Plan's Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land uses, which emphasize the development of residential communities in close proximity to commercial and retail areas. The project is not designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance by the California Department of Conservation. The project is not in use as Farmland of Local Importance and is not planned for such use in the General Plan. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

- b) No Impact.** Review of agricultural maps indicates that there are 994 acres of agricultural land covered by Williamson Act contracts within the Coachella Planning Area and 1,480 acres of agricultural land covered by Williamson Act contracts that have filed for non-renewal. Existing Agricultural Uses summarizes the agricultural lands within Planning Area that are and are not covered by Williamson Act contracts. General information about the Williamson Act can be found on page 4.2-7 of the City of Coachella General Plan Update. There are no lands with a Williamson Act contract in the immediate project vicinity. The closest farmland properties lie approximately 1.20 miles northwest of the project and approximately 1.60 miles southwest of the project. Additionally, the project does not lie in an area zone for agriculture. The zoning designations for the site includes Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M). The project proposes a Change of Zone from R-S and R-M to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). These zones are consistent with the existing land use designations at the property: Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Commercial. Therefore, the project will have no impact on zoning for agricultural use or Williamson Act contract.
- c) No Impact.** The project property is not currently zoned as forest land, timberland, or timberland production. Development of project will not result in the re-zoning of forest land, timberland or timberland zoned for timberland production. No impacts are anticipated.
- d) No Impact.** The proposed project is zoned for Residential Single Family (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) uses. The project proposes a Change of Zone to update the zoning to R-M General (20-25 dwelling units per acre), Urban (20-38 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). No forest land, timberland or Timberland Production zoning occurs on the project site or in the surrounding area because forest vegetation is not characteristic of the Coachella Valley desert environment. No impacts are anticipated.
- e) Less than Significant Impact.** As previously described, the project site and vicinity are designated by the City of Coachella Zoning Map as Residential Single Family (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M). The project proposes a Change of Zone from the current R-S and R-M designations to R-M General (20-25 du/ac), R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The proposed residential community will not result in conversion of any forest land because no forest land is situated within or adjacent to the project.

The project site previously operated as agricultural field. Development of the proposed project will convert farmland to non-farmland uses. The project property is located within an urbanized area of Coachella, surrounded by developed communities and includes residential to the west and east, an elementary school to the west, and industrial uses to the south. As stated in discussion a), the project site is located within Subarea 1, West Coachella Neighborhood. This subarea predominantly includes single-family homes, however, mixed use operations including retail, apartments, schools, and parks are permitted within Subarea 1. The vision for the West

Coachella Neighborhood subarea includes residential housing, ranging from single family to multi-family buildings, and new development located in infill lots.

In addition to the project's location within Subarea 1 of the City, the land use designations for the project area is Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center, as established by the Coachella General Plan. Urban Neighborhoods allows multifamily residential homes with access to civic and commercial amenities. Neighborhood Centers allows commercial retail areas in close proximity to residential areas.

The project proposes the development of a residential community and commercial uses. The project is consistent with the vision of Subarea 1 and the land use designations of Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. Although the project will convert land previously utilized as farmland to non-farmland uses, the project proposes needed affordable housing in a land use designation that permits residential and commercial developments. Less than significant impacts are required.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**III. AIR QUALITY**

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

|   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: Coachella 2035 General Plan, 2015, CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2)

**Setting**

The project site and the Coachella Valley are located in the northern region of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), within the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The regional climate, as well as the temperature, wind, humidity, precipitation, and amount of sunshine significantly influence the air quality in the SSAB. Climate in the Coachella Valley is considered a continental, desert-type climate, with hot summers, mild winters, and very little annual rainfall. Precipitation is less than six inches annually and occurs mostly in the winter months from active frontal systems and in the late summer months from thunderstorms. The Coachella Valley is exposed to frequent gusty winds. The flat terrain of the valley and strong temperature differentials, created by intense solar heating, produce moderate winds and deep thermal convection. Higher wind speeds occur most frequently in the months of April and May. As subsequently discussed, SCAQMD has established Rules 403 and 403.1 to prevent wind erosion and fugitive dust impacts, particularly during land disturbance and earth moving activities associated with construction.

Existing air quality is measured at established SCAQMD air quality monitoring stations. Monitored air quality is evaluated in the context of ambient air quality standards. These standards are the levels of air quality that are considered safe, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect the public health and welfare. Monitoring stations are located in Indio, Palm Springs and Mecca. To maintain compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), SCAQMD has adopted a series of Air Quality Management Plans (AQMPs). AQMPs are updated regularly in order to more effectively reduce emissions, accommodate growth, and to minimize any negative fiscal impacts of air pollution control on the economy.

In March of 2017, SCAQMD released the most current Final Air Quality Management Plan (2016 AQMP), which is a regional blueprint for achieving the federal air quality standards. The 2016 AQMP is the most recently adopted air quality plan, which includes both stationary and mobile source strategies to ensure



that the approaching attainment deadlines are met and public health is protected to the maximum extent feasible. As with every AQMP, a comprehensive analysis of emissions, meteorology, atmospheric chemistry, regional growth projections, and the impact of existing control measures is updated with the latest data and methods. Land use designation adopted by local jurisdictions are important considerations in the AQMP development. The 2016 AQMP provides local guidance for the State Implementation Plans (SIP), which establishes the framework for the air quality basins to achieve attainment of the state and the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

### Discussion of Impacts

- a) **No Impact.** Site the project is not proposing development at the time of writing, future development of the site has been evaluated for consistency with the local air quality management plans, which links local planning and individual projects to the regional plans developed to meet the ambient air quality standards and the most recently accepted air quality plans. The assessment takes into consideration whether the project forms part of the expected conditions identified in local plans (General Plan Land Use and Zoning) and whether the project adheres to the City's air quality goals, policies, and local development assumptions factored into the regional 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (2016 AQMP) by SCAQMD. Air emissions associated with the short- term construction activities and long-term operations were analyzed for this purpose.

As discussed in the land use and planning section of this Initial Study, the existing General Plan land use designation for the project site is Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. Urban Neighborhood land use designations are established for predominantly multi-family housing types with very good non-motorized access to a wide range of civic and commercial amenities located at the edges and/or within the mixed-use fabric of the neighborhood. Neighborhood Center land use designations are intended to provide for a concentration of neighborhood-serving commercial businesses and civic amenities – often mixed with multi-family housing – within convenient walking or biking distance of nearby neighborhoods. The allowable development intensity for Urban Neighborhood designation ranges from 20 to 38 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), with 30 du/ac being the average density for new projects. As part of the proposed entitlement process, the project will result in a Change of Zone (CZ) from the existing Residential Single Family (R-S) and Multiple-Family Residential (R-M) zoning designations to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). For the analysis of future development, the residential density was estimated at a mid-density of 22.5 du/ac for the R-M General zone and 29 du/ac for the R-M Urban zone. These densities are within the allowable range intended under the General Plan designation and assumptions.

Based on the 2019-2020 California Department of Finance population and housing estimates, the City of Coachella's current total population is approximately 47,186 with an average household size of 4.65. Future development is estimated to support a tenant population of 6,110 persons, which represents approximately 13 percent of the current City population. It is anticipated that some of the project tenants served by the project will be existing residents from within the City of Coachella and/or from neighboring incorporated and unincorporated areas. The net population increase resulting from the project is expected to be less than 13 percent. Therefore, the proposed development and associated tenant population are not expected to conflict with the City's land use composition, zoning, housing diversity, or other regulatory policies factored into the local and regional air quality objectives for complying with the

applicable air quality standards. The project is expected to meet the General Plan objective for Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center designations by contributing to the housing diversity within a walkable environment.

An impact is potentially significant if concentration of emissions exceed the State or Federal Ambient Air Quality Standards. Based on Table 2-4 of the Final 2016 AQMP, the two primary pollutants of concern in the Coachella Valley including the City of Coachella are ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>). The project site is located within the Salton Sea Air Basin, which has been designated by the California Air Resources Board as a nonattainment area for ozone (8-hour standard) and PM<sub>10</sub>. Violations of the air quality standards for ozone are impacted by pollutant transport from the South Coast Air Basin.

Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) is described in the Final 2016 AQMP as being formed when byproducts of combustion react in the presence of ultraviolet sunlight. This process occurs in the atmosphere where oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) combine with reactive organic gases (ROG), such as hydrocarbons, in the presence of sunlight. Ozone is a pungent, colorless, toxic gas, and a common component of photochemical smog. Although also produced within the Coachella Valley, most ozone pollutants affecting the Valley are transported by coastal air mass from the Los Angeles and Riverside/San Bernardino air basins, thereby contributing to occasionally high local ozone concentrations.

Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) is described in the Final 2016 AQMP as consisting of fine suspended particles of ten microns or smaller in diameter, and are the byproducts of road dust, sand, diesel soot, windstorms, and the abrasion of tires and brakes. The elderly, children, and adults with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular disease are most susceptible to the effects of PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

To assist lead agencies in determining the significance of air quality impacts, SCAQMD has established suggested short-term construction-related and long-term operational impact significance thresholds for direct and indirect impacts on air quality. Table III-1 displays the established construction and operational daily significance thresholds, which are recommended for use by lead agencies in considering potential impacts on air quality. Future development effects would be considered potentially significant if the emissions exceed these thresholds.

**Table III-1**  
**SCAQMD's Air Quality Significance Thresholds (Pounds/Day)**

| Emission Source           | CO  | VOC | NO <sub>x</sub> | SO <sub>x</sub> | PM <sub>10</sub> | PM <sub>2.5</sub> |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Construction or Operation | 550 | 75  | 100             | 150             | 150              | 55                |

Source: Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook, Chapter 5.

Prepared by the South Coast Air Quality Management District. [www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/hndbk.html](http://www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/hndbk.html)

In November of 2017, the SCAQMD in conjunction with the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) and other California air districts, released the latest version of the California Emissions Estimator Model™ (CalEEMod™) Version 2016.3.2. CalEEMod serves as an adopted platform to calculate both construction emissions and operational emissions from a land use project. The purpose of this model is to calculate construction-source and operational-source criteria pollutant (NO<sub>x</sub>, VOC, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, and CO) and greenhouse gas (GHG)

emissions from direct and indirect sources; and quantify applicable air quality and GHG reductions achieved from mitigation measures. CalEEMod utilizes widely accepted methodologies for estimating emissions combined with default data that can be used when site-specific information is not available. Sources of these methodologies and default data include but are not limited to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) AP-42 emission factors, California Air Resources Board (CARB) vehicle emission models, studies commissioned by California agencies such as the California Energy Commission (CEC) and CalRecycle. In addition, some local air districts provided customized values for their default data and existing regulation methodologies for use for projects located in their jurisdictions.

CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2 was utilized to estimate the short-term construction-related and long-term operational emissions of criteria air pollutants and greenhouse gases associated with future development on the project site. Short-term construction-related emissions are calculated for site preparation, grading (earth movement), vertical construction, paving, and architectural coating. Long-term operational emissions are attributed to mobile sources (vehicle trips, vehicle emissions, fleet mix and road dust), land use area sources, energy use, solid waste disposal, and water use.

The SCAQMD requires any emission reductions resulting from existing rules or ordinances to be included as part of the unmitigated project emissions. Those measures that are mandated and therefore required of all developments by applicable ordinances, rules, and regulations are not considered mitigation. The previously cited Coachella Code of Ordinances (Chapter 8.20 – Fugitive Dust Control) and SCAQMD Rule 403 and 403.1 outline the minimum requirements for construction activities to reduce man-made fugitive dust and corresponding PM10 emissions. The City will require the preparation of a Fugitive Dust Control Plan identifying the fugitive dust sources at the site and the work practices and control measures proposed to meet the minimum performance standards and Coachella Valley Best Available Control Measures (CVBACM). Being surrounded primarily by existing residential uses, the required dust control plan must be coordinated with the construction logistics plan to identify the appropriate temporary construction access point that results in the least amount of disturbance to existing nearby residents. The plan must also call for appropriate temporary fencing with screening along perimeter segments without an existing solid block wall. Moreover, the proper soil stabilization measures must be implemented to control visible dust. Therefore, the implementation of fugitive dust control measures are a requirement and not deemed mitigation.

Based on the emissions modeling results shown in Table III-2, construction related emissions resulting from site preparation, grading, utilities/building construction, paving, architectural coating, and construction workers commuting would not exceed the applicable SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance for any criteria pollutants, including PM10 and Ozone precursors. Thus, a less than significant impact would occur for future development-related construction-source emissions and no additional mitigation is required.

**Table III-2  
Short-Term Air Pollutant Emissions Associated with Projected  
Construction at Mid-Density Development Scenario (Pounds/Day)**

| Emission Source   | ROG/VOC   | NOx       | CO        | SO2       | PM10      | PM2.5     |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Maximum Daily Emissions Resulting from Site Preparation, Grading, Building Construction, Paving, and Architectural Coating Activities | 60.2452   | 46.4431   | 45.6059   | 0.1397    | 6.6711    | 4.4134    |
| SCAQMD Threshold  | 75        | 100       | 550       | 150       | 150       | 55        |
| <b>Threshold Exceeded</b>   | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> |

*Note: The PM10 and PM2.5 emissions are based on compliance with Chapter 8.20 (Fugitive Dust Control) in the City's Code of Ordinances and the local standard requirement to implement SCAQMD Rule 403 and 403.1 to control fugitive dust. VOC and ROGs are summed in the CalEEMod report under the header ROG.*

**Table III-3  
Long-Term Operational Air Pollutant Emissions  
Associated with Mid-Density Development Scenario (Pounds/Day)**

| Emission Source                                | ROG/VOC   | NOx       | CO        | SO2       | PM10      | PM2.5     |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total Area Sources, Energy Use, Mobile Sources | 50.2970   | 98.2724   | 270.1071  | 0.7110    | 50.167    | 14.4695   |
| SCAQMD Threshold                               | 75        | 100       | 550       | 150       | 150       | 55        |
| <b>Threshold Exceeded</b>                      | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> |

*Note: VOC and ROGs are summed in the CalEEMod report under the header ROG.*

Furthermore, CalEEMod was utilized to estimate the long-term operational air pollutant emissions that would result from operation of future development of the project site. Operational emissions are ongoing emissions that will occur during the life of the future uses. These sources include energy demand and vehicular emissions. As shown in Table III-3, the future development-related emissions of criteria pollutants are not projected to exceed any of the SCAQMD recommended significance threshold criteria for operational impacts.

In summary, future development is not expected to result in growth or land use changes which would interfere with the City or region's ability to comply with the most current air quality plans. Moreover, the future development's short-term construction and long-term operational emissions would not exceed the established regional thresholds. Pertaining to the obstruction of an applicable air quality plan, less than significant impacts are anticipated for the future development. No impacts are anticipated for the Change of Zone.

- b) No Impact.** Riverside County portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) is designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a "Severe-15" ozone nonattainment area for the 1997 8-hour federal ozone standard (0.080 ppm) and the more stringent 2008 standard (0.075

ppm). Violations of the ambient air quality standards for ozone in the Coachella Valley are primarily due to pollutant transport from the neighboring SCAB. Ozone is formed on sunny days from ozone precursors in the lower atmosphere that are emitted upwind of the Coachella Valley, in the coastal and central Los Angeles County areas of the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB). Pollutant transport through the Banning Pass, from the SCAB to the Salton Sea Air Basin, is the primary cause of the high ozone concentrations experienced in the Coachella Valley in the late afternoon and early evening. The attainment date for the 1997 8-hour ozone standard is June 15, 2019.

Based on reference publications by SCAMQD, ozone is a pungent, colorless toxic gas produced in the troposphere by the photochemical process. In the Coachella Valley, peak ozone concentrations occur in the late afternoon and early evening hours. The attainment date for the 2008 8-hour ozone standard is July 20, 2027. The 2016 AQMP is addressing the Clean Air Act planning requirements for ozone in the SCAB and the Coachella Valley portion of the SSAB. As demonstrated in tables III-3 and III-4, future development-related short-term construction and long-term operational emissions are not expected to exceed the daily thresholds of significance established by SCAQMD for ozone precursors, such as NO<sub>x</sub> and ROG/VOC. By complying with the adopted thresholds, the future development is also complying with the overall attainment strategies reflected in the 2016 AQMP.

Furthermore, the Coachella Valley is currently designated as a serious nonattainment area for PM<sub>10</sub> (particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less). In the Coachella Valley, there are two primary sources of PM<sub>10</sub>: natural sources consisting of sea salts, volcanic ash, and pollens, and man-made or anthropogenic sources. Man-made sources originate from direct emissions, such as industrial facilities, fugitive dust sources (e.g., construction sites) and paved and unpaved road dust. The U.S. EPA-approved 2002 Coachella Valley PM<sub>10</sub> State Implementation Plan (2002 CVSIP) includes an attainment strategy for meeting the PM<sub>10</sub> standards. Some of the existing measures include the requirement of detailed dust control plans from builders that specify the use of more aggressive and frequent watering, soil stabilization, wind screens, and phased development to minimize fugitive dust. Appropriate air quality measures to prevent fugitive dust are required by the City's fugitive dust control policies, which is consistent with SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1 that apply to the Coachella Valley strategy for reducing fugitive dust emissions.

Relative to the PM<sub>10</sub> emissions threshold, construction activities associated with future development will be required to adhere to the City's Fugitive Dust and Erosion Control policies and ordinance to minimize potential temporary construction related emissions. An approved Fugitive Dust (PM<sub>10</sub>) Control Plan will be required prior to issuance of a grading permit. Implementation of the Fugitive Dust Control Plan is required to occur under the supervision of an individual with training on Dust Control in the Coachella Valley (Rule 403 and 403.1). The plan will include methods to prevent sediment track-out onto public roads, prevent visible dust emissions from exceeding a 20-percent opacity, and prevent visible dust emissions from extending more than 100 feet (vertically or horizontally from the origin of a source) or crossing any property line. The most widely used measures include proper construction phasing, proper maintenance/cleaning of construction equipment, soil stabilization, installation of track-out prevention devices, and wind fencing. Since emissions related to future development would be consistent with the Air Quality Management Plan, the Coachella Valley PM<sub>10</sub> SIP, and all SCAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds, long-term operational air quality impacts

associated with future development should not be considered cumulatively considerable. No impacts are anticipated relative to the Change of Zone.

- b) No Impact.** A sensitive receptor is a person in the population who is particularly susceptible (i.e. more susceptible than the population at large) to health effects due to exposure to an air contaminant. Sensitive receptors and the facilities that house them are of particular concern if they are located in close proximity to localized sources of carbon monoxide, toxic air contaminants, or odors. Land uses considered by the SCAQMD to be sensitive receptors include residences, long-term health care facilities, schools, rehabilitation centers, playgrounds, convalescent centers, childcare centers, retirement homes, and athletic facilities.

As previously introduced, the vacant project property is surrounded primarily by residential uses and is within close proximity to Valle Del Sol Elementary School. During construction of future development on the project property is expected to produce temporary and localized emissions, which based on the Air Quality Study's modeling results, would not exceed the SCAQMD thresholds of significance. Implementation of the required SCAQMD rules, best available dust control measures and the City's Fugitive Dust Control policies will minimize those temporary impacts, preventing pollutants emissions from reaching any substantial concentrations. Examples of best available dust control measures include constructing a temporary fence with a wind screen to prevent propagation of dust emissions, utilizing properly maintained equipment, maintaining stabilized soil, and constructing track-out prevention devices at construction access points. These standard practices are consistent with the SCAQMD Rule 403 and 403.1 and the Coachella Valley Best Available Control Measures (CVBACM), as identified in the SCAQMD Coachella Valley Fugitive Dust Control Handbook.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) has developed and published the Final Localized Significance Threshold (LST) Methodology to identify potential impacts that could contribute or cause localized exceedances of the federal and/or state ambient air quality standards (NAAQS/CAAQS). LST methodology was developed in response to environmental justice and health concerns raised by the public regarding exposure of individuals to criteria pollutants in local communities. The purpose of analyzing LSTs is to determine whether a project may generate significant adverse localized air quality impacts in relation to the nearest exposed sensitive receptors, such as schools, churches, residences, hospitals, day care facilities, and elderly care facilities. LST thresholds represent the maximum emissions from a project that will prevent an exceedance of the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard at the nearest sensitive receptor, taking into consideration ambient concentrations in each source receptor area (SRA), project, size, and distance to the sensitive receptor. Therefore, meeting the lowest allowable emissions thresholds translates to meeting the most stringent air quality standards for a project locality.

As part of the LST methodology, SCAQMD has divided its jurisdiction into 37 source receptor areas (SRAs) which can be used to determine whether a project may generate significant adverse localized air quality impacts. The proposed development is located in SRA 30, which covers the Coachella Valley and City of Coachella. LSTs only apply to certain criteria pollutants: carbon dioxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NOx) particulate matter equal to or less than 10 microns in diameter (PM10), and particulate matter equal to or less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5).

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping analysis was used to delineate the project area and identify the nearest sensitive receptors using the distance intervals established by the LST methodology, which are 25 meters (82 feet), 50 meters (164 feet), 100 meters (328 feet), 200 meters (656 feet), and 500 meters (1,640 feet). Since the project's immediate surroundings include residential developments and an elementary school, the shortest and most conservative distance interval of 25 meters (82 feet) was used for this analysis. The shortest distance interval establishes the strictest threshold with the lowest emissions allowances needed to maintain compliance. The existing separation between the project property and existing neighboring residential units and the elementary school includes solid block walls (6-ft tall) and chain-link fencing. It is worth noting that in accordance with SCAQMD Rule 403.1 and Chapter 8.20 (Fugitive Dust Control) of the City of Coachella Code of Ordinances, the proponent of the future development is required to install and maintain a temporary wind fence during construction to contain dust emissions.

**Table III-4**  
**Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) Associated with**  
**Associated with Projected Construction at Mid-Density Development Scenario**  
**With Receptors at 25 Meters (82 Feet), 5-Acre Area Increments**  
**(In Pounds/Day)**

| Emission Source  | NOx       | CO        | PM10      | PM2.5     |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Maximum Unmitigated Emissions Resulting from Site Preparation, Grading, Building Construction, Paving and Architectural Coating (Rounded Value)  | 46.4431   | 45.6059   | 6.6711    | 4.4134    |
| SCAQMD LST Threshold for SRA 30  | 304       | 2,292     | 14        | 8         |
| <b>LST Threshold Exceeded?</b>   | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b> |
| Sources: CalEEMod Results and AQMD LST Look-Up Tables<br>Note: The PM10 and PM2.5 emissions are based on the CalEEMod mitigated results due to the local standard requirement to implement SCAQMD Rule 403 and 403.1 to control fugitive dust. |           |           |           |           |

California Emissions Estimator Model™ (CalEEMod™ Version 2016.3.2) was utilized to calculate the maximum daily on-site emissions that will occur during construction based on the largest acreage interval allowed by the LST methodology, which is 5 acres. The data provided in Table III-4 demonstrates that the construction activities would not generate emissions in excess of the site-specific LSTs; therefore, site-specific impacts during construction of future development would be less than significant. Based on the LST methodology, if the calculated emissions for the proposed construction or operational activities are below the LST emission levels. Related to the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations as a result of future development, less than significant impacts are anticipated. However, no impacts are expected related to the Change of Zone.

- d) No Impact.** As previously analyzed and disclosed, implementation of the proposed Change of Zone will not result in emissions that would exceed the South Coast AQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds pertaining to construction or operation. Moreover, the project emissions would not exceed the Localized Significance Thresholds applicable to the project setting in relation to the nearby residences or school sites.

The proposed Change of Zone will not include the types of facilities commonly known to generate odors, such as wastewater treatment plants, sanitary landfills, composting/green waste facilities, recycling facilities, petroleum refineries, chemical manufacturing plants, painting/coating operations, rendering plants, or food packaging facilities. As such, the Change of Zone is not expected to result in odor emissions adversely affecting nearby neighbors. Pertaining to other emissions adversely affecting a substantial number of people, no impacts are expected relative to the proposed Change of Zone.

**Mitigation Measures:** None Required



| IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project:</b>  |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Source: City of Coachella General Plan 2035, 2015; City of Coachella General Plan 2035 Draft Environmental Impact Report, 2015)

**Setting**

The proposed project site is comprised of approximately 56.9 gross-acres that have been previously graded and disturbed for agricultural uses. The project is located within the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan area (CVMSHCP) but is not within a Conservation Area.

**Discussion of Impacts**

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project occupies approximately 56.9 acres of vacant and fallow farmland in the City of Coachella. The project proposes a Change of Zone from the existing Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). Surrounding properties include residential to the east and west, the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel to the north, and industrial uses to the

south. The property's western and eastern boundaries are physically delineated by a combination of perimeter block wall and chain link fencing.

According to historic imagery dating back to 1953, prior uses of the site appear to consist primarily of agricultural uses. The project site has been disturbed and utilized for agricultural purposes in the past decades; however, the site currently indicates a fallow condition. Due to the property's past use as an agricultural operation, as well as the developed nature of the surrounding properties, the current state and activities of the site do not provide a condition that would support natural vegetation communities or habitats, including the presence of plant or animal species given special status by governing agencies.

Per the Coachella General Plan Draft EIR, the project site is not identified as a vegetation community or habitat plan and is not in a location where special status plant or wildlife resources have been identified. The property is within the CVMSHCP, which outlines policies for conservation of habitats and natural communities. The project site is not located within a CVMSHCP Conservation Area and there are no known significant biological resource on the project site. Therefore, the project would not have a substantial adverse impact on candidate, sensitive, or special status species. No impacts are expected to 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 (CDFW) or US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

- b) No Impact.** The project does not contain nor is it adjacent to any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California department of Fish and Wildlife, or U.S. Fish and Wildlife service. The Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel is located along the northeasterly border of the site, however, no impacts to the channel are expected. There is no blue line stream within the project property as depicted on the United States Geological Survey topographic maps or National Hydrography Dataset. The project is proposing a zone change from Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) to R-M General (20-25 du/ac), R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The proposed zones complies with the City of Coachella General Plan Update land use designations. As a result, no impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities are anticipated.
- c) No Impact.** The project site is surrounded by residential communities to the west and east, the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel to the north, and industrial uses to the south. The project site does not contain, nor is adjacent to, federally protected wetlands, marshes, or other drainage features. The project is adjacent to the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel; however, the proposed project will not impact the Channel or any other drainage features.

The project proposes a Change of Zone from R-S and R-M to R-m General, R-M Urban, and C-N. The project applicant will be required to develop and implement a Project-Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) to ensure that the project does not contribute pollutants of concern from storm runoff. As a result, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the direct removal, filing or other hydrological interruption of these resources. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

- d) No Impact.** No migratory wildlife corridors or native wildlife nursery sites are found on the project or adjacent properties. As previously discussed, the project has been graded and used for agricultural purposes for decades. Moreover, there are no existing drainages that would

support wildlife nursery sites or corridors and the site is not located in a known wildlife corridor. Therefore, no impacts to movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, corridors or wildlife nursery sites are expected.

- e) **No Impact.** The site has been disturbed for a number of years and as a result does not support natural vegetation communities or habitats. Project implementation would not result in demolition or tree removal. The future development will include landscaping improvements in a manner that is consistent with local development standards. The project will comply with the CVMSHCP and there are no other unique local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources that would cause a conflict nor does the site support high valuable biological resources that could be affected. There are no applicable tree preservation policies or ordinances and no impacts are expected.
- f) **No Impact.** The project lies within the boundary of the CVMSHCP, which outlines policies for conservation of habitats and natural communities. However, the project is not located within or adjacent to a designated Conservation Area under this plan. Therefore, it is not subject to CVMSHCP requirements regarding lands adjoining Conservation Areas. The CVMHSCP implements a Local Mitigation Development Fee (LDMF) from all new development to support the acquisition of conservation lands. The fee would be applied per Chapter 4.48.060 of the City of Coachella Municipal Code. Based on these provisions, the applicable fees would be collected by the City and future development is expected to comply with the provisions of the CVMSHCP. No impacts would result from the Change of Zone.

**Mitigation Measures:** None Required

**V. CULTURAL RESOURCES**

| Would the project:  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to 15064.5?    | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?                         | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Source: City of Coachella General Plan 2035, 2015; City of Coachella General Plan 2035 Draft Environmental Impact Report, 2015)

**Setting**

The City of Coachella sits on the shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla, a large intermittent freshwater lake created by the Colorado River. Its shorelines continually changed as the lake was filled and emptied by the river, and when it was full it attracted human settlement with its plentiful resources. Settlement along the lakeshore in the Coachella Valley was particularly intensive, with evidence of large-scale, multi-seasonal occupation.

The first known human inhabitants of the Coachella Valley included the Cahuilla Indians, whose occupancy spread from the Banning Pass to the Salton Sea. Anthropologists divided the Cahuilla into three groups based on their geographic setting: (1) the Pass Cahuilla of the San Geronio Pass-Palm Springs area; (2) the Mountain Cahuilla of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains; and (3) the Cahuilla Valley, and the Desert Cahuilla of the eastern Coachella Valley. The Cahuilla Indians developed a seasonal mobility system, which utilized the lake when it was full and benefited from the available terrestrial resources once the lake desiccated. They also migrated to higher elevations to utilize the resources and cooler temperatures.

The City of Coachella contains a significant amount of archeological resources due to its rich cultural history and historical settlements within its boundaries. It was once the site of Native Americans tribal land and some tribal land still exists there. While having a rich Native American historical background, the Native American population is still present in Coachella. Due to its historical, cultural, and archaeological resources, most of the City is designated as “medium sensitivity to historical resource sensitivity” (Coachella 2035 General Plan Final EIR, Figure 4.4-2).

The project property occupies approximately 56.9 acres of disturbed, vacant land north of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and west and east of Education Way. The site is surrounded by the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel to the north, and existing residential developments to the east and west. Valle Del Sol Elementary School abuts the project site’s western boundary. The paved roadway, 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, borders the southern property boundary. Industrial uses are located south of the project site, south of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

The site previously operated as agricultural land, and has been subject to grading, clearing, and harvesting since before 1953, according to historical aerial imagery. The project is currently zoned for Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M). The project is proposing a zone

change from the R-S and R-M designations to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N).

### Discussion of Impacts

- a) **No Impact.** A historical resource, as defined in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, shall include: a resource listed in or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources; a resource determined as historically or culturally significant; any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military or cultural annals of California may be considered to be an historical resource.

The project site occupies approximately 56.9 acres of fallow farmland. There are no known or observable historic resources as defined in Section 15046.5 of the CEQA Guidelines that would be adversely affected by the proposed zone change. This includes known or observable objects, buildings, structures, sites, areas, places, records, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant.

According to the National Register Database and Research, historic buildings do not exist within or near the project site. In addition, historical imagery dated between 1953 and 2016 do not indicate the existence of any buildings within the project vicinity. Therefore, no man-made features were known to be present in the project area prior to then. The aerial photographs further demonstrate that the project area has been primarily used as farmlands since 1953, alternating between fallow and vegetative cycles until present day.

The project site is not located on or near a mapped historical resource as identified in the Multipurpose Open Space of the Riverside County General Plan. At such time when development of residential or commercial uses are proposed, the property would be subject to further environmental analysis and a project specific cultural analysis shall be conducted by a qualified professional. The proposed project would only involve a zoning change and does not involve approval of any development entitlements. As a result, less than significant impacts to historical resources relative to the zone change are anticipated to result from the project.

Therefore, there are no recognizable potential historical resources as defined in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines that would be adversely affected by future development. No impacts are anticipated relative to the Change of Zone.

- b) **No Impact.** The City of Coachella defines an archeological resource as places where human activity has measurably altered the earth or left deposits of physical remains and may be either prehistoric-era (before European contact) or historic-era (after European contact). Archeological resources are important for scientific historic, and/or religious reasons to cultures, groups, or individuals. Given the sheer number of recorded resources and Native American or Euro-American locations throughout the Coachella Valley, the City of Coachella can be considered sensitive for archeological resources (2035 Coachella General Plan EIR).

The proposed project would only involve a policy action to amend the zoning designation and does not involve approval of any development entitlements. Future development of residential

or commercial uses would be subject to further environmental analysis and require a project specific cultural analysis be completed by a qualified professional. This would identify any archaeological resources and provide appropriate project mitigation as needed. No impacts relative to adverse change in archaeological resources are anticipated as a result of the proposed zoning change.

- c) **No Impact.** As previously discussed, the project site previously operated as agricultural land. The project site is not likely to uncover human remains during grading operations, since the site was previously disturbed during agricultural operations. However, the California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and the CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 requires that in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site, or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlay adjacent remains, until the County Coroner has examined the remains. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American or has reason to believe that they are those of Native American, the coroner shall contact by telephone the Native American Heritage Commission within 24-hours. Pursuant to the mentioned California Health and Safety Code, proper actions shall take place in the event of a discovery or recognition of any human remains during future development construction activities. Pursuant to the mentioned California Health and Safety Code, proper actions shall take place in the event of a discovery or recognition of any human remains during project construction activities. No impacts are expected relative to the proposed Change of Zone.

**Mitigation Measures None Required**

| <b>VI. ENERGY</b>   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project:</b>   |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: The City of Coachella 2035 General Plan, 2015; City of Coachella Climate Action Plan, 2014; California Energy Consumption Database, California Energy Commission, 2019; CalEEMod Version: CalEEMod.2016.3.2, accessed July 2019; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2020).

**Setting**

The project proposes a multi-family housing community located on approximately 56.9 acres in the City of Coachella. The site is located north of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and west and east of Education Way. The project is currently located within the Coachella General Plan Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations. The existing zoning designations for the project are Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M). The project is proposing a Change of Zone from the R-S and R-M zones to R-M General (20-25 du/ac), R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N).

According to the City of Coachella’s Climate Action Plan (CAP), energy is used for heating and cooling, transportation, manufacturing, and producing food. The most common sources of energy include fossil fuels like oil, gasoline, natural gas and coal. The consumption of these energy sources leads to the production of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In 2010, total GHG emissions in Coachella were approximately 382,787 metric tons (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e), a 22 percent increase over 2005 emissions of 312, 628 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e. This number accounts for direct emissions from the on-site combustion of fuels and the combustion of fuel in vehicles, as well as indirect emissions associated with community electricity consumption, and emissions from solid waste generated, crop management and water consumed by Coachella. The residential sector was the third largest producer of GHG emissions within the City, after transportation and commercial/industrial. The City of Coachella established various methods to reduce energy related GHG emissions produced by the City in their CAP.

Electricity is provided to the City of Coachella by Imperial Irrigation District (IID). IID is the sixth-largest utility in California, has an energy service area of 6,471 square miles, serving more than 145,000 customers and controlling more than 1,100 megawatts (MW) of energy. Electricity is delivered through high voltage transmission and low voltage distribution power lines. Distribution power lines transport anywhere from 4 kV to 69 kV, while transmission lines can transport 69 kV to 765 kV of electricity. Transmission and distribution power poles are located on the southern boundary of the project, along 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

The Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas or the Gas Company) provides natural gas to the City of Coachella, including the project site. Natural gas is used primarily for space and water heating, as well as cooking. The two closest high-pressure distribution lines provided by the Gas Company are located

approximately 0.37 miles west of the project site. High pressure distribution pipelines that operate at pressures above 60 psi and deliver gas in smaller volumes to the lower pressure distribution system.

The project does not currently propose development on the 56.9-acre property and a site plan does not currently exist. However, energy consumption of future development is analyzed in this Energy discussion. Future development is expected to consume energy in the form of electricity, natural gas and petroleum during project construction and operation. The latest version of CalEEMod v2016.3.2 was utilized to calculate construction-source and operational-source energy use for the future development. The discussion of the findings is provided below.

### Discussion of Impacts

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** As previously stated, the proposed Change of Zone will not consume energy. However, future development of the project site will consume energy during its construction and operation. Energy consumption (via electricity, natural gas, and petroleum) relative to potential future development of the site is analyzed below. Energy consumption was calculated using the latest version of CalEEMod.

#### Electricity

According to the California Energy Commission (CEC), the residential sector in Riverside County consumed approximately 7,705.52 million kWh (GWh) in 2018. The non-residential sector in Riverside County consumed approximately 8,275.21 million kWh in 2018. This equals a combined electrical consumption of residential and non-residential uses 15,980.73 million kWh.

Electricity is provided to the City of Coachella, and the project site, by Imperial Irrigation District (IID). Electricity use resulted in the second largest emissions produced community-wide, behind petroleum (discussed further below). Electricity use increased from approximately 212 million kWh in 2005 to 220 million kWh in 2010, a 4 percent increase. Residential electricity consumption increased by 20 million kWh (25 percent) and outdoor and street lighting electricity use rose by approximately 300,000 kWh (48 percent).

#### Construction

Temporary electrical power for lighting and electronic equipment, such as computers inside interim construction trailers, would be provided by IID. Electricity consumed for onsite construction trailers, which are used by managerial staff during the hours of construction activities, as well as electrically powered hand tools are expected to use a minimal amount of electricity. However, the electricity used for such activities would be temporary and negligible. Most energy used during construction would be from petroleum consumption (discussed further below).

#### Operation

Future development is anticipated to be composed of mixed uses including residential and local serving commercial uses. The project would not result in the use of excessive amounts of fuel or electricity and would not result in the need to develop additional sources of energy. While energy use at the site would not be excessive, future development would incorporate several measures directed at minimizing energy use. These measures include applying energy efficient design building shells and building components, such as windows, roof systems, electrical



lighting systems, and heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems to meet the most current Title 24 Standards at the time of development, as well as providing low-flow appliances and covered parking stalls with PV solar facilities. Therefore, reducing the use of electricity during operation.

According to the CalEEMod calculations future development could generate the demand for approximately 5,733,960 kWh of annual electricity use for the multiple-family residential component (depicted in CalEEMod as “apartments low-rise”), as depicted in the table below.

**Table VI-1 Operational Electricity Demand**

|                     | <b>Electricity Use</b> |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Land Use</b>     | kWh/yr                 |
| Apartments Low-Rise | 5,733,960              |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>5,733,960</b>       |

### **Natural Gas**

According to the California Energy Commission, the residential sector consumed approximately 259.34 million therms of natural gas in 2018, while the non-residential sector consumed approximately 139.19 million therms in 2018. Combined, both the residential and non-residential sectors consumed approximately 398.54 million therms in 2018.

Natural gas is provided to the City of Coachella, and the project site, by the SoCal Gas Company. In 2010, the residential sector consumed approximately 2.1 million therms of natural gas. Specifically, single family residential natural gas use grew by over 500,000 therms (35 percent), multifamily residential natural gas fell by approximately 20,000 therms (16 percent), and commercial and industrial natural gas use increased by over 50,000 therms (4 percent). Throughout the City, natural gas use between 2005 and 2010 increased 20 percent, equivalent to an increase of approximately 600,000 therms. Natural gas combustion resulted in 11,000 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> of greenhouse gas emissions. Natural gas use within multi-family residential contributed one percent of the emissions (City of Coachella Climate Action Plan).

*Note:* The CalEEMod program uses thousand British thermal units (kBtu) to quantify natural gas use, where 1 therm equals approximately 99.976 kBtu. For example, the approximately 600,000 therm increase of natural gas consumption between 2005 and 2010 is equivalent to approximately 59,985,680 kBtu. Thousand British thermal units will be used when analyzing the potential project-related natural gas consumption below.

### Construction

Natural gas is not anticipated to be required during construction of the future development. Fuels used for construction would primarily consist of diesel and gasoline, which are discussed under the following petroleum subsection. Any minor amounts of natural gas that may be consumed because of construction would be temporary and negligible and would not have an adverse effect.

### Operation

The consumption of natural gas typically is consumed during building heating, water heating and cooking, which will occur during project operation. The project's expected natural gas consumption was calculated using the CalEEMod default values. Based on the CalEEMod calculations, the project is estimated to consume approximately 22,209,200 thousand British thermal units (kBTU) of natural gas annually during operation of the multiple-family residential (apartment low-rise) component. This is displayed in Table VI-2, Operational Natural Gas Demand, below.

As such, future development would result in a long-term increase in demand for natural gas. However, future development would be designed to comply with Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). Natural gas consumption would be appropriate and not place a significant burden on SoCal Gas services.

**Table VI-2 Operational Natural Gas Demand**

|                     | <b>Natural Gas Use</b> |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Land Use</b>     | kBTU/yr                |
| Apartments Low Rise | 22,209,200             |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>22,209,200</b>      |

### **Petroleum**

Petroleum is the largest U.S. energy source according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). Petroleum products are used to fuel vehicles and produce electricity. U.S. Petroleum consumption in 2017 was primarily used by the transportation sector (71 percent). The industrial sector accounted for 24 percent petroleum consumption, the residential sector consumed 3 percent, commercial consumed 2 percent, and finally, electric power consumed 1 percent.

Gasoline is the most consumed petroleum product in the United States. In 2017, consumption of finished motor gasoline averaged about 392 million gallons per day, which was equal to about 47 percent of total U.S. petroleum consumption, according to the U.S. EIA. Gasoline and other vehicle fuels are commercially provided commodities and would be available to the project via commercial outlets.

The transportation sector within the City of Coachella produced approximately 130,000 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> in 2010, being the largest contributor to GHG emissions in the City. Overall, the transportation sector emitted 45 percent of the City's GHG emissions in 2010. Transportation sector emissions were estimated in the City's CAP by applying conversion factors to daily vehicle miles traveled (VMT). It was estimated that 75 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector were the result of burning gasoline, and the remainder resulted from burning diesel fuel.

### Construction

Petroleum would be consumed throughout construction of future development of the project property. Fuel consumed by construction equipment would be the primarily energy resource expended over the course of construction, while VMT associated with the transportation of

construction materials and construction worker commutes would also result in petroleum consumption. Heavy-duty equipment used for project construction would rely on diesel fuel, as would haul trucks involved in off-hauling materials from excavation. Construction workers are expected to travel to and from the project site in gasoline-powered passenger vehicles. There are no unusual characteristics or construction processes that would require the use of equipment that would be more energy intensive that is used for comparable activities or use of equipment that would not conform to current emission standards (and related fuel efficiencies).

Heavy-duty construction equipment of various types would be used during each phase of construction. CalEEMod was used to estimate construction equipment usage. In the analysis of the future development, the mitigated construction figures were used, based on the assumption that the site will implement applicable mitigation measures. Fuel consumption from construction equipment was estimated by converting the total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from each construction phase to gallons using the conversion factors shown in the tables included below.

**Table VI-3 Construction Worker Gasoline Demand**

| Phase           | Days  | Trips | Miles | VMT        | KgCO <sub>2</sub> e | Kg/CO <sub>2</sub> /Gallon | Gallons          |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|------------|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Site Prep.      | 10    | 18    | 11    | 1,980      | 2,413.5             | 8.89*                      | 271.5            |
| Grading         | 110   | 20    | 11    | 24,200     | 7,159.2             | 8.89                       | 805.3            |
| Building Const. | 1,110 | 1,207 | 11    | 14,737,470 | 3,418,407           | 8.89                       | 384,522.7        |
| Paving          | 60    | 15    | 11    | 9,900      | 2,494.2             | 8.89                       | 280.6            |
| Arch. Coating   | 150   | 205   | 11    | 338,250    | 82,975.5            | 8.89                       | 9,333.5          |
| <b>Total</b>    |       |       |       |            |                     |                            | <b>395,213.6</b> |

\*<https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gases-equivalencies-calculator-calculations-and-references>  
<https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>

Table VI-4, Construction Vendor Diesel Fuel Demand (below), illustrates the demand of diesel fuel for construction vendor trips to and from the site. These trips are associated with the delivery of construction materials during the construction phase. Construction vendor demand equals a total of 1,646,043 gallons of diesel fuel.

**Table VI-4 Construction Vendor Diesel Fuel Demand**

| Phase            | Days  | Trips | Miles | VMT     | KgCO <sub>2</sub> e | Kg/CO <sub>2</sub> /Gallon | Gallons          |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Site Preparation | 10    | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0                   | 10.18                      | 0                |
| Grading          | 110   | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0                   | 10.18                      | 0                |
| Building Const.  | 1,110 | 152   | 5.40  | 911,088 | 16,756,721          | 10.18                      | 1,646,043        |
| Paving           | 60    | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0                   | 10.18                      | 0                |
| Arch. Coating    | 150   | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0                   | 10.18                      | 0                |
| <b>Total</b>     |       |       |       |         |                     |                            | <b>1,646,043</b> |

Table VI-5, Construction Equipment Diesel Fuel Demand, displays the demand of diesel fuel for construction vehicles on-site during the various construction phases. Construction equipment diesel demands equals a total of 171,288.9 gallons of diesel fuel.

Table VI-5, Construction Equipment Diesel Fuel Demand

| Phase            | Days  | Equipment Units | KgCO <sub>2</sub> e | Kg/CO <sub>2</sub> /Gallon | Gallons   |
|------------------|-------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Site Preparation | 10    | 7               | 67,412              | 10.18                      | 6,622.0   |
| Grading          | 110   | 8               | 302,321.2           | 10.18                      | 29,697.6  |
| Building Const.  | 1,110 | 9               | 1,294,360.5         | 10.18                      | 127,147.3 |
| Paving           | 60    | 6               | 60,453.3            | 10.18                      | 5,938.4   |
| Arch. Coating    | 150   | 1               | 19,175.5            | 10.18                      | 1,883.6   |
| <b>Total</b>     |       |                 |                     |                            | 171,288.9 |

Overall, future development is estimated to consume approximately 395,213.6 gallons of gasoline and 1,817,331.9 gallons of diesel fuel during the construction phases. In total, future development may consume approximately 2,212,545.5 gallons of petroleum during the estimated 6 years of construction. Petroleum use is necessary to operate construction equipment. The US EPA applied a Tier 3 program in order to reduce the impacts of motor vehicles on air quality and public health. The vehicle emissions standards will reduce both tailpipe and evaporative emissions from passenger cars, light-duty trucks, medium duty passenger vehicles, and some heavy-duty vehicles. The construction equipment will utilize Tier 3 engines or higher, therefore would be newer off-road equipment units.

The energy used during the construction of future development would be limited to the development of the property and would not require long-term petroleum use. Additionally, at this time there are no unusual characteristics or construction processes that would require the use of equipment that would be more energy intensive that is used for comparable activities or use of equipment that would not conform to current emissions standards (and related fuel efficiencies). Thus, construction is not anticipated to consume petroleum in a wasteful or inefficient manner. No impacts relative to the Change of Zone are anticipated.

#### Operation

Lowering transportation emissions requires making vehicles and their fuels cleaner, reducing the length of driving trips, managing the demand for travel, and providing alternatives such as walking, biking, and transit for travel. According to the Coachella CAP, in 2010 the City produced approximately 900,000 vehicle miles traveled each day, producing 180,078 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e from transportation-related emissions.

According to the figures provided by the CalEEMod calculations, future development could potentially generate and estimated annual VMT of 21,043,892, depicted in Table VI-6 below. The average daily trip rate for weekdays could be 9,397.34 VMT, 10,210.16 on Saturdays, and 8,655.82 on Sundays. Total mobile source CO<sub>2</sub>e is 9,853.76 MT per year, or 9,853,760 kg per year. CalEEMod assumes 92.5 percent of VMT burns gasoline, while the remaining 7.5 percent burn diesel. Thus, of the 9,853,760 kg of mobile emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>e), 9,114,728 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e is generated by gasoline combustion and 739,032 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e is generated by diesel combustion. Future development could have an annual gasoline demand of 1,025,278.7 gallons and an annual diesel demand of 72,596.5 gallons, as displayed in the following Table VI-7.

**Table VI-6, Operational Petroleum Demand**

| Land Use            | Annual VMT        |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Apartments Low Rise | 21,043,892        |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>21,043,892</b> |

**Table VI-7 Operational Annual Petroleum**

|                  | Annual VMT  | KgCO <sub>2</sub> e* | Kg/CO <sub>2</sub> /Gallon | Annual Gallons     |
|------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Gasoline</b>  | 1,951,419.8 | 9,114,728            | 8.89                       | 1,025,278.7        |
| <b>Petroleum</b> | 158,223.2   | 739,032              | 10.18                      | 72,596.5           |
|                  |             |                      | <b>Total</b>               | <b>1,097,875.2</b> |

\*9,853,760 x 0.925 = 9,114,728; 9,853,760 x 0.075 = 739,032

Over the lifetime of operation of future development, the fuel efficiency of vehicles in use is expected to increase, as older vehicles are replaced with newer more efficient models. Therefore, it is expected that the amount of petroleum consumed due to the vehicle trips to and from the future development site during operation would decrease over time. Additional advancement of technology includes the use of plug-in hybrid and zero emission vehicles in California, which will also decrease the amount of future petroleum consumed in the state. With the foregoing, operation of future development is expected to use decreasing amounts of petroleum over time, due to advances in fuel economy.

Additionally, future development is located within a mile radius of various existing markets, restaurants and services. These services are located primarily on Grapefruit Boulevard, approximately 2,000 feet west of the project site. Bus services, provided by SunLine Transit, will also be accessible to the project site. Three bus stops are located within 1,000 feet of the project. These stops include 52nd Avenue at La Ponderosa (Stop ID 494), 52nd Avenue at Enterprise (Stop ID 230), and 52nd Avenue at Tyler (Stop ID 487). 52nd Avenue at La Ponderosa is the closest stop to the project site, located approximately 450 feet east of the project. The availability of bus lines and services will reduce the amount of potential VMTs created by future development.

Although future development of the project property would result in an increase in petroleum use during construction and operation compared to the existing, vacant conditions, the property would comply with the City's General Plan Update, City Municipal Code, and Climate Action Plan regarding VMT reduction. Additionally, future development may provide a pedestrian access network that internally links all uses and connects to all existing external streets and pedestrian facilities contiguous with the site. Providing a pedestrian access network to link areas of the site encourages people to walk instead of drive, therefore, reducing the regional VMTs and associated vehicular-source emissions. Given these considerations, petroleum consumption associated with operation would not be considered excessive.

Development and operation of future development would increase demand for energy in the project area and in the service areas of IID and SoCal Gas Company. However, based on the findings described above, construction and operation are not anticipated to result in potentially significant impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy

resources, during project construction or operation. No impacts to energy resources relative to the Change of Zone are expected.

- b) **No Impact.** The project proposes to change the existing zoning of an approximately 56.9-acre property north of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and east and west of Education Way in Coachella. The site is currently designated as R-S and R-M; however, the proposed Change of Zone will revise the project zones to R-M General, R-M Urban, and C-N. As stated in the previous discussion, the proposed project will not use an unnecessary or wasteful amount of energy resources. To ensure the conservation of energy, the state of California and the City of Coachella implements various regulations in order to be more energy efficient and reduce the amount of GHG emissions. Some of the state-wide and local regulations are listed below.

### State Regulations

#### Assembly Bill 32

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32) was signed in 2006 to establish and reduce the amounts of greenhouse gases being emitted on a state-wide level. Specifically, AB 32 requires a reduction of emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. It plans to do this by establishing an annual reporting program for significant sources. Energy efficiency goals listed in AB 32 includes maximizing energy efficiency building and appliance standards, and pursuing additional efficiency efforts including new technologies, and new policy and implementation mechanisms.

#### Executive Order S-3-05

Executive Order (EO) S-3-05, passed in 2005, established reduction targets of an 80 percent of 1990 levels reduction by 2050, and created agencies to achieve these targets. The passage of this regulation requires the use of more energy efficient practices regarding building development and operation in order to reduce the amount of GHGs produced.

#### Title 20: Appliance Efficiency Standards

The California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 20: Division 2, Chapter 4, Article 4, Sections 1601-1608 (Appliance Efficiency Regulations) regulates the sale of appliances in California. The Appliance Efficiency Regulations include standards for both federally regulated appliances and non-federally regulated appliances. 23 categories of appliances are included in the scope of these regulations. The standards within these regulations apply to appliances that are sold or offered for sale in California, except those sold wholesale in California for final retail sale outside the state and those designed and sold exclusively for use in recreational vehicles or other mobile equipment.

#### Title 24: Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen Building Standards Code

In addition to Title 20 (Sections 1601-1608) of the CCR, Title 24, parts 6 and 11, also outlines energy efficient building designs for new development. The CCR's 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, Part 6), and the CALGreen Building Standards Code (Title 24, Part 11), establish mandatory guidelines and standards requiring more energy efficient new and existing developments. The California Energy Commission adopted the Building Energy Efficient Standards for all new residential and nonresidential construction to reduce greenhouse gases, as a part of the California Building Code, Title 24. This requires new homes to include at least 50 percent of kitchen lighting to be LED, compact fluorescent or similar high efficiency fixtures, double pane windows, cool roofs, and other design techniques to reduce heat loss. Title 24, Part

11, establishes design and development methods that include environmentally responsible site selection, building design, building siting and development to protect, restore and enhance the environmental quality of the site and respect the integrity of adjacent properties. The proposed project will be required to comply with the state implemented standards for energy efficient new developments.

#### California's Renewable Portfolio Standards

The California Renewable Portfolio Standards will reduce GHG emissions by requiring utility companies, such as IID, to switch from non-renewable resources, such as coal-fired power plants, to renewable resources, such as wind turbines and solar power.

#### Low Carbon Fuel Standard

The Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), or Executive Order (EO) S-1-07, establishes a low carbon fuel standard for transportation fuels in California. EO S-1-07 was enacted to reduce carbon intensity in transportation fuels as compared to conventional petroleum fuels, such as gasoline and diesel. It requires that the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels be reduced at least 10 percent by 2020.

#### Clean Car Standards

The Clean Car Standards, otherwise known as Pavley 1493, sets more stringent vehicle fuel economy standards for cars and light trucks that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In 2009, the federal government enabled the state of California to enforce stricter tailpipe emissions limits on new passenger vehicles. In 2010, the US EPA and the Department of Transportation's National Highway Safety Administration announced new vehicle greenhouse gas emission standards and corporate average fuel economy standards that reinforce California's standard.

### **City Regulations**

#### The City of Coachella Climate Action Plan

The City of Coachella developed their Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2014 in order to achieve community-wide greenhouse gas emissions reductions. The CAP quantifies emissions from the build-out of the City and includes additional policies and implementation actions to help Coachella further reduce emissions. The CAP analyzes policies from the General Plan Update, that reduce energy use, vehicle miles traveled, resource consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions, comparing the emissions to voluntary statewide emissions targets outlined in the California Climate Action Scoping Plan and Executive Order S-03-05. In compliance with the statewide emission targets, the City established a per service population 2020 emissions reduction target of 15 percent below 2010 levels and a 2035 emissions reduction target of 49 percent below 2010 levels.

The CAP organizes the General Plan polices into six strategies to reduce emissions reductions throughout the City: building and infrastructure energy efficiency, renewable energy generation, land use and transportation, vegetation and open space, solid waste, and water use. According to the CAP residential and non-residential buildings produce approximately 39 percent of Coachella's emissions and are a primary target for the CAP. The City plans to achieve this emissions reduction through energy efficiency policies for homes, and businesses including energy performance targets to construct buildings 15 percent more energy efficient than Title 24 standards.

#### Coachella General Plan Update

The City of Coachella's General Plan Update (GPU) emphasizes the importance to increase energy conservation and efficiency and reduce energy consumption and emissions within its City. The various goals and policies outlined within the Sustainability and Natural Environment Element of the GPU focuses on City development and its impact to climate change, energy and water resources, while presenting the goal to implement green building design into new developments in the City. Reoccurring policies include GHG emissions reductions, water conservation methods, energy efficient building design, and implementation of renewable energy sources. Goal 2 specifically requires and energy efficient community that relies primarily on renewable and non-polluting energy sources. Policies within this goal include building design strategies such as passive solar design, use of alternative energy, construction standards, and energy performance targets in order to create a more energy efficient community.

The importance of efficient land use and transportation patterns is also a goal in the GPU, in order to reduce emissions and VMTs, while improving air quality. The overall goal is to reduce energy consumption in the City to improve air quality, reduce GHG emissions, to increase the quality of life for the City's residents.

#### Coachella Municipal Code

Similar to the City's CAP and GPU, the City's Municipal Code also encourages the reduction of air pollution created by vehicle emissions. Chapter 12.40, Transportation Demand Management Program, of the Coachella Municipal Code, is intended to protect the public health, welfare and safety by reducing air pollution caused by vehicle trips and VMTs. This chapter is intended to reduce emissions by requiring the development of a trip reduction and travel demand element to the congestion management plan (CMP), and adoption and implementation of trip reduction and travel demand ordinances by local agencies.

The project property proposes a residential and commercial project on approximately 56.9 acres of disturbed, vacant land in the City of Coachella. The project will comply with state-implemented building standards such as those outlined in Title 20 and Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. As stated in the previous discussion, project-related energy consumption and VMTs created by the project are not anticipated to be substantial. Construction activities would require the use of equipment that would be more energy intensive that is used for comparable activities. However, construction equipment will comply with the Tier 3 program engines or higher, therefore would be newer off-road equipment units.

The project property is located in a built urban environment, surrounded by existing residential uses. Existing grocery stores, elementary schools, parks, churches and bus stops all lie within a half-mile radius of the project property. Pedestrian pathways that internally links all uses and connects to all existing planned external streets will assist in reducing potential project-related VMTs. Future development of the project property will comply with all applicable State and local guidelines and regulations regarding energy efficient building design and standards. The proposed Change of Zone will not conflict or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. No impacts.

**Mitigation Measures:** None Required



**VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

| <b>Would the project:</b>  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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. | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| iv) Landslides?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: The City of Coachella 2035 General Plan, 2015; The City of Coachella 2035 General Plan Update EIR, 2015; Technical Background Report to the Safety Element, 2014; FEMA Flood Zone Map: Riverside County, 2017; Riverside County General Plan EIR, 2014)

**Setting**

Coachella defines its city as highly diverse both physically and geologically. The multiple faults that traverse the area and climate helps define the Coachella Valley region as a low and relatively flat desert basin bounded by mountainous terrain. The surrounding mountain ranges specifically include the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the northeast, the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south, and the San Jacinto Mountains to the west. The topographic variety in the Coachella Valley establishes elevations from 1,000 feet in the Mecca Hills to the east, to approximately 160 feet below sea level south of Thermal. Although the elevation varies widely, the City of Coachella is relatively flat, with a gentle slope from northwest to southeast. The project site is located in the southeast portion of the City on previously disturbed and relatively flat land.

The City of Coachella, including the project site, is located within a northwest-southeast structural depression extending from the Banning Pass to the Gulf of California. This region is designated as the Salton Trough, which was inundated by the Colorado River's water, forming ancient Lake Cahuilla. Since that time, the floor of the Trough has been repeatedly flooded with other "fresh" water lakes, the most recent being the current Salton Sea. The Trough is an internally draining area with no readily available outlet to the Gulf of California portions well below sea level. The sole outlet for these waters is evaporation, leaving behind vast amounts of terrestrial sediment materials.

The project does not currently propose development on the 56.9-acre property and a site plan does not currently exist. However, analysis of future development on geology and soils is provided in this discussion. In 2014 the City of Coachella published a Technical Background Report to the Safety Element Update, which analyzes various hazards that can possibly occur in the City. The various hazards addressed within the Technical Background Report includes seismic, geologic, flood, fire, hazardous material and severe weather hazards. The seismic and geologic hazards sections of the Technical Background Report were consulted for this Geology and Soils Section.

### Discussion of Impacts

- a.i) **No Impact.** The City of Coachella recognizes the potential of seismic hazards in the region. 2035 Coachella General Plan Update (CGPU) states that because the San Andreas Fault passes through the northeastern portion of the City, the potential for primary surface fault rupture and strong ground shaking are very high. For this reason, a project's location relative to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone is evaluated to determine the project's susceptibility to seismically induced rupture. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone is a northwest-southeast descending zone established in 1971 to reduce losses from surface fault rupture on a statewide basis. The intent of the zone is to ensure public safety by prohibiting the siting of most structures for human occupancy across traces of active faults that constitute potential hazards to structures from surface faulting or fault creep.

According to the City of Coachella's Technical Background Report, the maximum magnitude recorded from the San Andreas Fault was 7.2, and the Coachella section is the only section of the southern San Andreas Fault that has not produced a major earthquake in historic times. Surface rupture is expected to occur along pre-existing, known active fault traces, however, it could potentially splay or step from the known active faults or rupture along unidentified traces. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Map issued by the State Geologist, determined that the subject property lies approximately 1.70 miles southwest of the closest Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone.

The City of Coachella's Municipal Code reflects the possible impacts of potential seismic hazards in Chapter 15.66, Seismic Hazards Mitigation. New buildings are required to follow these codes in order to be theoretically stronger and more likely to survive an earthquake, with the main purpose to prevent the collapsing of structures. Therefore, risks to future development associated with fault rupture at the project site is considered low since the project site is not located within the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone and will comply with the requirements outlined in the Coachella Municipal Code. No impacts are expected associated with the Change of Zone.

- a.ii) No Impact.** The project site is located in a seismically active region where earthquakes originating on local and regional seismic faults can produce severe ground shaking. Like most of the Coachella Valley, the project site has been subjected to past ground shaking by nearby faults. According to Plate 1-1 of the Technical Background Report, the closest recorded historical (years 1800-2014) seismic event to the project occurred at the residential community immediately east of the site, with an earthquake magnitude 2 to 3.

In order to reduce hazards associated with ground shaking impacts on people and buildings, the City of Coachella implements the latest seismic safety design standards outlined in both the Coachella General Plan Technical Background Report, and the most recent (2019) edition of the updated California Building Code (CBC). The City of Coachella requires new buildings to be constructed in accordance with the most recent edition of the CBC and City Municipal Code. The Coachella Municipal Code provides regulations for collapse-resistant design, which will be enforced during structure design and construction. Remedial grading and construction will work to reduce exposure of people or structures to adverse effects to the greatest extent possible against seismic hazards.

The buildings and structures proposed for the future development will be required to follow all applicable building standards outlined in the CBC and the City's Municipal Code, in order to ensure the safety of the residents. All grading and construction plans will be reviewed by the City. No impacts associated with the Change of Zone are expected.

- a.iii) No Impact.** The General Plan's Technical Background Report addresses the different forms of ground failure that the City of Coachella may be susceptible to after the event of an earthquake, including liquefaction, settlement and slope failure. Liquefaction, according to the Technical Background Report, typically occurs in saturated, loose, fine- to medium-grained sandy to silty soils in the presence of ground accelerations of 0.2g, and groundwater within 50 feet below the ground surface. In an event of an earthquake, the increase of subsurface water pressure may fill the pores and increase subsurface water pressure, causing the soil to lose strength and behave like a liquid, and potentially compromising the ground. According to the General Plan Seismic Hazard Zones Map in the Technical Background Report (Plate 1.3), the project site is located in an area with high liquefaction susceptibility due to the youthful, unconsolidated sediments, and historically shallow groundwater within 30 feet of the ground surface.

The Coachella Water Authority and Sanitary District operates and maintains the water distribution system for the project property and the City of Coachella. According to the California Department of Water Resources Groundwater Information Center, one of the nearest monitored public well to the project is identified as State Well 05S08E33D001S, located approximately 1.50 miles northwest of the project. Based on the most recent monitoring information, reported on May 26, 2020, the depth to groundwater at this well site was approximately 27.2 feet. Additional wells in proximity to the project includes State Well 06S08E22D002S, approximately 2.34 feet southeast of the site, and 06S07E13J003S, approximately 2.75 miles southwest of the site. Groundwater depths at these sites were measured at 18.8 feet below ground surface (measured June 24, 2020), and 58.54 feet below ground surface (measured November 18, 2020), respectively. Due to the shallow groundwater depths in the area, the site is susceptible to seismically-induced liquefaction.

Settlement is a potential consequence of seismic activity and liquefaction, where the excess pore pressure generated by ground shaking and leading to liquefaction is associated with the tendency for loosely compacted, saturated soil to rearrange into a denser configuration during shaking. Dissipation of that excess pore pressure will produce volume decreases (termed consolidation or compaction) within the soil that may be manifested at the ground surface as settlement. Unconsolidated young alluvial deposits are especially susceptible to this hazard. Artificial fills may also experience seismically induced settlement. Damage to structures typically occurs as a result of local differential settlements. Plate 2-1a (Geologic Map) in the Technical Background Report indicates that the project site, and a majority of the City's valley floor is underlain by young, unconsolidated alluvial and lacustrine sediments, locally mantled with wind deposits (map symbols Qg and Ql/Qa). These sediments are susceptible to seismically induced settlement.

Per the Technical Background Report, mitigation for seismically induced settlement is similar to those used for liquefaction. Over-excavation and re-compaction are the most commonly used method to densify soft soils susceptible to settlement. Deeper over-excavation below final grades, especially at cut/fill, fill/natural, or alluvium/bedrock contracts may be recommended to provide a more uniform subgrade. Over excavation should also be performed so that large differences in fill thickness are not present across individual lots. In some cases, specially designed deep foundations, strengthened foundations, and/or fill compaction to a minimum standard that is higher than that required by the applicable building codes may be recommended. The potential for seismic related ground failure at the project site is projected to be less than significant with the efforts established in the California Building Code and Coachella Municipal Code.

Seiches can occur in bodies of water both near and far from the earthquake epicenter. Given that there are canals, ponds, and pools in the Coachella area, seiches as a result of ground shaking can be expected to occur in the region. The amplitude of these waves cannot be predicted but these are typically less than about 1.6 feet (0.5 meters) high. The amplitude of the seiche waves that could occur in these water bodies cannot be predicted given that several parameters combine to form these waves, although, given the relatively shallow depth of these bodies of water, the seiches are anticipated to be relatively minor. Water in swimming pools is known to slosh during earthquakes, but in most cases, the sloshing does not lead to significant damage, according to the Technical Background Report. Given its distance from the ocean, Coachella does not have a tsunami hazard.

The Change of Zone will not be impacted by seismically induced liquefaction, settlement, or seiches.

- a.iv) No Impact.** The City defines landslides as movements of relatively large landmasses, either as nearly intact bedrock blocks, or as jumbled mixes of bedrock blocks, fragments, debris and soils. The potential for landslides is dependent on various factors including slope height, slope steepness, shear strength and orientation of various weak layers underground. Strong ground shaking can cause existing slopes to become unstable, which may lead to landslides or rockfalls that can overrun structures, harm people or damage property, sever utility lines and block roads. According to the City of Coachella's Technical Background Report to the Safety Element Update, the majority of the City has a 0 to 10 percent grade, including the project site (Plate 2-2). Areas with a 10 percent grade or greater involves the areas along the San Andreas Fault

northeast of the project site. In the Technical Background Report, the City recognizes and maps the various landslide and rockfall hazard areas in Coachella (Plate 1-3). These areas are also located where the percent grade is higher than 10 percent.

Rockfalls and landslides are more likely to occur in the northeastern and eastern portions of the Coachella General Plan area due to the steep slopes located in those regions. Protection from rockfalls or surficial slides can often be achieved by protective devices such as barriers, retaining structures, catchment areas, or a combination of the above. According to Plate 1-3, in the Technical Background Report, the project property is not located in an area that is susceptible to seismically induced rockfalls, rock slides, soil falls, soil slides and soil slumps. This is due to the project's location in a generally developed and urban area, as well as its distance from the nearest sloped areas. The subject site is located on relatively level ground and is not located immediately adjacent to any mountains or hillsides. As such, the site is not susceptible to any forms of slope instability. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

- b) No Impact.** The Coachella Technical Background Report states that climate, topography, soil and rock types and vegetation are all influential factors of erosion, runoff and sedimentation in the Coachella Valley. Human activities, such as grading and construction, are also a large contributor to erosion in the region. The soils most susceptible to erosion include the unconsolidated sediments in the canyon bottoms and valley floor, as well as the granular semi-consolidated sediments forming the hills. Windborne, waterborne and human-borne erosion are concerns for the City of Coachella, especially because wind-blown sand causes soil loss, dryness and deterioration of soil structure, nutrient and productivity losses, air pollution, sediment transport and deposition, and health problems.

Windborne erosion is a widespread concern in Riverside County, especially in the Coachella Valley. Approximately 20 percent of land area in the County is vulnerable to “high” and “very high” wind erosion. The Coachella Valley floor is highly susceptible to wind erosion due to the high winds funneled from the west (Riverside County 2016 General Plan Figure S-8). As previously stated, windborne erosion not only causes physical and structural damage, but also damages to the public health by causing respiratory problems.

Future development will require activities such as clearing onsite vegetation, grading, construction, and other ground disturbances by heavy machinery that could result in the loss of some topsoil and generate particulate matter. The City of Coachella requires mitigation of this hazard with the implementation of a Fugitive Dust Control Plan (Coachella Municipal Code Chapter 8.20, Fugitive Dust Control). The Fugitive Dust Control Plan is a document that describes fugitive dust sources at a site and the corresponding control measures. Pursuant to SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1, the future development is required to implement the Fugitive Dust Control Plan and the use of best management practices (BMPs) during operations capable of generating fugitive dust in the Coachella Valley.

In addition to windborne erosion, the City of Coachella determines that a majority of the City, including the project site, is susceptible to water erosion due to the distal fan and lake deposits. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Map Panel Number 06065C2270H, revised March 6, 2018, the entire project is located within the FEMA Flood Zone X, protected by levee. Flood Zone X are areas determined to have moderate to low flood risk, and corresponds to areas of 500-year flood, areas of 100-year flood with average depths of less

than one foot or with drainage areas less than one square mile, and areas protected by levees from 100-year flood. North and east of the project property is the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel, which FEMA designates as Flood Zone A. This flood zone is defined as an area subject to inundation by the 1-percent-annual-chance flood event and likely to create erosion within the zone.

The mitigation of waterborne erosion at the project site during future construction activities includes the developer's compliance with the State's most current Construction General Permit (CGP) (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-0006-DWQ). Compliance with the CGP involves the development and implementation of a project-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) designed to reduce potential adverse impacts to surface water quality during the period of construction. The required plan will identify the locations and types of construction activities requiring BMPs and other necessary compliance measures to prevent soil erosion and stormwater runoff pollution. The plan will also identify the limits of allowable construction-related disturbance to prevent any exceedances or violations. Waterborne erosion and the City's Standard Conditions associated with it are thoroughly discussed in the Hydrology and Water Quality Section of this document.

To reduce the amount of soil erosion created, future development shall implement a Fugitive Dust Control Plan, a SWPPP, and best management practices, which are required not only by Coachella but also the Riverside County. No impacts are expected associated with the Change of Zone..

- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project site is located on the southeastern side of the City, on previously disturbed land. The majority of the City has a grade of 0 to 10 percent, meaning that Coachella is relatively flat. Per the Coachella's General Plan Technical Background Report, Quaternary river channel deposits (Qg), alluvial fan and stream deposits (Qa), and interbedded lake and distal fan deposits (Ql/Qa) sediments are cohesionless and loose in the upper sections, and thus susceptible to liquefaction. According to Figure 4.5-7 in the Coachella General Plan Draft EIR, Soils Classification, the surficial sediments at the project site includes lake and distal deposits (Ql/Qa). These sediments are fine-grained sand, silt, and clay of the valley floor. The various soil components are vital to the stability of the project site specifically regarding landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

As previously stated in discussion VII.a.iii, above, the project site is located in an area susceptible to liquefaction due to the youthful, unconsolidated sediments, and historically shallow groundwater. Since the site is potentially susceptible to liquefaction, it may also be susceptible to lateral spreading, which also requires a shallow water table or proximity to a water source that could cause inundation of onsite soils. However, ground improvement (such as over-excavation and re-compaction of low density soils) and foundation design can mitigate the potential effects of liquefaction, lateral spread, and settlement.

The site is not susceptible to landslides due to its relatively flat terrain and distance from mountainous slopes, and although tectonic subsidence has been documented in the Coachella Valley, it is not known to occur in the project vicinity.

Settlement or collapsible soils, as the Safety Element of the Coachella GPU states, typically occur in recently deposited sediments that accumulated in arid or semi-arid environments. Collapsible

soils do not appear to be widespread in the planning area, but most likely do occur in localized areas, especially in those with distal fan and lake deposits. However, settlement resulting from the anticipated foundation loads should be minimal provided that foundation design and construction complies with the applicable California Building Code and the Coachella Municipal Code standards. No impacts are expected associated with the Change of Zone.

Overall, no impacts of liquefaction, lateral spread, landslides and rockfall, settlement, or collapsible soils to the project site are anticipated relative to the proposed Change of Zone.

- d) **No Impact.** Expansive soils typically contain large amounts of clay that expand when water is absorbed and shrink when they dry. The best defense against this hazard in new developments is to avoid placing expansive soils near the surface or over watering the expansive soils.

As stated in discussion VII.c., the surficial sediments at the project site includes lake and distal deposits (Ql/Qa), which includes fine-grained sand, silt, and clay of the valley floor. According to the Technical Background Report, the potential for expansive soils in lake and distal deposits is generally low, except where lake deposits of silt and clay are within or just below the depth of structural foundation elements. These deposits are suitable for fill materials; however, clay-rich sediments should not be placed in foundation areas if possible.

No impacts are anticipated relative to risks of structural damage caused by expansive soils regarding the Change of Zone.

- e) **No Impact.** The project site previously operated as agricultural land intermittently since at least 1953. Currently, crops are not being harvested and the site is fallow. Residential structures have not occurred onsite, and septic tanks do not occur within the project boundaries. The project property is surrounded by residential developments to the west and east, Valle Del Sol Elementary School to the west, and industrial uses to the south. The proposed project will connect to the City's existing sewer system. No alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed. No adverse impacts associated with wastewater disposal systems will occur. No impacts are expected regarding wastewater disposal systems and sewers.

- f) **No Impact.** The City values its rich history and paleontological resources; therefore, the preservation of these resources is highly important. The protection of important archaeological and paleontological resources from loss or destruction depends on the implementation of appropriate mitigation during development activities.

Per the Riverside County Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the County categorizes the project site as having a "High Sensitivity A" regarding paleontological sensitivity. High Sensitivity A, as defined by the Riverside County EIR, "is based on geologic formations or mapped rock units that are known to contain or have the correct age and depositional conditions to contain significant paleontological resources. These include rocks of Silurian or Devonian age and younger that have potential to contain remains of fossil fish, and Mesozoic and Cenozoic rocks that contain fossilized body elements and trace fossils such as tracks, nests and eggs."

Although the Riverside County General Plan EIR mapped the project as an area with high paleontological resources, the Coachella GPU EIR considers the project site and surrounding

area as having an “undetermined sensitivity” for paleontological resources (Figure 4.4-3, Paleontological Resource Sensitivity).

Additionally, the site has been subject to previous human disturbance since at least 1953, where it served as agricultural land. Agricultural activities include tilling the land, and planting, growing and harvesting crops. Paleontological resources are not likely to be onsite due to the use of the property for agricultural purposes for multiple decades. The project is also located in an urbanized context within the City and due to the disturbance on the project site, the property is not recognized as a unique paleontological or a unique geologic feature. No impacts are expected associated with the Change of Zone.

**Mitigation Measures** None required



**VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

|  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project:</b>  |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have significant impact on the environment?        | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                               | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                               | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2; 2035 General Plan, 2015; City of Coachella Climate Action Plan, June 2014.)

**Setting**

Greenhouse gases (GHG) are a group of gases that trap solar energy in the Earth’s atmosphere, preventing it from becoming too cold and uninhabitable. Common greenhouse gases in the Earth’s atmosphere include: water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), ozone, and chlorofluorocarbons to a lesser extent. Carbon dioxide is the main GHG thought to contribute to climate change. Carbon dioxide reflects solar radiation back to Earth, thereby trapping solar energy and heat within the lower atmosphere. Human activities (such as burning carbon-based fossil fuels) create water vapor and CO<sub>2</sub> as byproducts, thereby impacting the levels of GHG in the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) is a metric used to compare emissions of various greenhouse gases. It is the mass of carbon dioxide that would produce the same estimated radiative forcing as a given mass of another greenhouse gas. Carbon dioxide equivalents are computed by multiplying the mass of the gas emitted by its global warming potential. Global Climate Change (GCC) is defined as the change in average meteorological conditions on the earth with respect to temperature, precipitation, and storms. GCC is currently one of the most controversial environmental issues in the United States, and much debate exists within the scientific community about whether or not GCC is occurring naturally or as a result of human activity.

To address the long-term adverse impacts associated with global climate change, California’s Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32) requires California Air Resource Board (CARB) to reduce statewide emissions of greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by 2020. In 2016, Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 32 (SB32) that requires California to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. With the passage of the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32) in California, environmental documents for projects pursuant to CEQA are required to analyze greenhouse gases and assess the potential significance and impacts of GHG emissions. On July 11, 2018, CARB announced in a press release (No. 18-37) that greenhouse gas pollution in California fell below 1990 levels for the first time since emissions peaked in 2004, an achievement roughly equal to taking 12 million cars off the road or saving 6 billion gallons of gasoline a year. Moreover, according to the CARB report on California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2016, which tracks the trends of GHG emissions, California’s GHG emissions have followed a declining trend between 2007 and 2016. The largest reductions are attributed to the electricity sector, which continues to see decreases as a result of the State’s climate policies.

**Discussion of Impacts**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact:** CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2 was used to quantify GHG emissions associated with the project. As previously mentioned, this software was developed in conjunction with the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) to estimate air emissions, including GHGs. CalEEMod utilizes widely accepted methodologies for estimating emissions combined with default data that can be used when site-specific information is not available. Sources of these methodologies and default data include but are not limited to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) AP-42 emission factors, California Air Resources Board (CARB) vehicle emission models, studies commissioned by California agencies such as the California Energy Commission (CEC) and CalRecycle. The project's total building area and parking lot uses were factored into the model to evaluate whether the estimated criteria pollutants and GHG emissions would exceed the established thresholds and therefore conflict with the plans and efforts of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Construction-related GHG emissions were amortized over a 30-year period and added to the project's annual operational GHG emissions. The operational GHG emissions can be attributed to the following sources:

Area Sources: Landscape maintenance equipment would generate emissions from fuel combustion and evaporation of unburned fuel. Equipment in this category would include lawnmowers, shredders/grinders, blowers, trimmers, chain saws, and hedge trimmers used to maintain the landscaping of the developed site.

Energy Sources: GHGs are emitted from buildings as a result of activities for which electricity and natural gas are typically used as energy sources. Combustion of any type of fuel emits CO<sub>2</sub> and other GHGs directly into the atmosphere; these emissions are considered direct emissions associated with a building. GHGs are also emitted during the generation of electricity from fossil fuels; these emissions are considered to be indirect emissions.

Mobile Sources: GHG emissions will also result from mobile sources associated with the project, which include the typical daily operation of motor vehicles by employees and visitors. Project mobile source air quality impacts are dependent on both overall daily vehicle trip generation and the effect of the project on peak hour traffic volumes and traffic operations in the local vicinity.

Solid Wastes: The proposed land uses will result in the generation and disposal of solid waste. A large percentage of this waste will be diverted from landfills by a variety of means, such as reducing the amount of waste generated, recycling, and/or composting. The remainder of the waste not diverted will be disposed of at a landfill. GHG emissions from landfills are associated with the anaerobic breakdown of material. GHG emissions associated with the disposal of solid waste associated with the proposed project were calculated by the CalEEMod model using default parameters.

Water Supply, Treatment and Distribution: Indirect GHG emissions result from the production of electricity used to convey, treat and distribute water and wastewater. The amount of electricity required to convey, treat and distribute water depends on the volume of water as well as the sources of the water.

The currently applicable GHG thresholds for local lead agency consideration are referenced from the SCAQMD Draft Local Agency Threshold supporting documentation, which establishes

an interim tiered approach. Under this guidance, a screening threshold of 3,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e) per year has been an acceptable approach for non-industrial projects, while industrial projects have higher screening level of 10,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year. As a conservative measure, the GHG analysis for future development aims to meet the lowest screening level of 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year, as shown below.

**Table VIII-1  
Total Project Greenhouse Gas Emissions  
Associated with Future Construction at Mid-Density Development Scenario**

| Unmitigated Emission Source                           | Emissions<br>(metric tons per year) |
|---|-------------------------------------|
|   | Total CO <sub>2</sub> E             |
| Annual Construction Emissions Amortized Over 30 Years | 50.8660                             |
| Area, Energy, Mobile Sources, Waste, and Water Usage  | 15,718.7184                         |
| Total CO <sub>2</sub> E (All Sources)                 | 15,769.5844                         |
| Service Population                                    | 6,110                               |
| Total CO <sub>2</sub> e/Service Population            | 2.5809                              |
| Threshold   | 3.0 (Based on 2035 Target)          |
| <b>Threshold Exceeded?</b>                            | <b>NO</b>                           |

As shown in VIII-1 resulting from the CalEEMod calculations, future construction is expected to generate approximately 15,769.6 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year from construction, area, energy, stationary, waste, and water usage sources. As such, future development GHG emissions would not exceed the lowest threshold of significance set at 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year. Having been evaluated against the regionally accepted thresholds, which are part of the State's regulations aimed at addressing climate change, future development is not expected to interfere with the plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. The Change of Zone project will result in no impacts.

- b) No Impact:** The City of Coachella has prepared and adopted Climate Action Plan (CAP) in conjunction with a General Plan Update as a roadmap for achieving community-wide greenhouse gas emissions reductions. The CAP builds on the 2013 General Plan Update, quantifying emissions from the build-out of the proposed plan and includes additional policies and implementation actions to help Coachella further reduce emissions. It also includes strategies to protect public health and make the community more resilient to climate change. Coachella's CAP is designed to provide clear policy guidance to the City staff and decision-makers on how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It identifies a pathway to reduce emissions within a range of voluntary, state-level emissions reduction targets. This path includes strategies for improving connectivity and land use patterns, transportation modes and systems, incorporating energy efficiency standards, increasing the City's renewable energy supply, and reducing waste and consumption. By providing an emissions inventory, emissions targets, and strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the City of Coachella has established a framework evaluating and mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. Part of these emissions

reductions will need to be achieved through better environmental performance of new development.

The CAP organizes General Plan policies into six strategies to reduce emissions throughout the City: building and infrastructure energy efficiency; renewable energy generation; land use and transportation; vegetation and open space; solid waste; and water use. Each strategy is supported by a number of more specific programs, actions, and measures that will be implemented as part of the City's General Plan.

Energy Efficiency: Residential and non-residential buildings produce approximately 39% of Coachella's emissions and are a primary target for the CAP. This strategy for energy performance targets to construct buildings 15% more energy efficient than Title 24, increase passive solar design features, and planting new shade trees. The proposed development will include solar photovoltaic panels mounted on the proposed carports, thus complying with the energy efficiency strategy identified in the City's CAP.

Energy Generation: This strategy includes General Plan policies that will help homes and businesses in Coachella increase renewable energy production. It includes requirements for solar photovoltaic infrastructure on new homes and businesses and pursuing clean energy through community choice aggregation. The proposed development will include solar photovoltaic panels mounted on the proposed carports, thus complying with the energy efficiency strategy identified in the City's CAP.

Land Use and Transportation: Coachella's General Plan provides clear guidance for how Coachella will become a city of walkable neighborhoods tied together by multi-modal transportation corridors and interspersed with vibrant districts for shopping, working, entertaining, and commerce. The walkable neighborhoods will have a diverse mix of housing types and will be in close proximity to shopping and neighborhood services so that the majority of one's daily needs are a short walk away. This strategy evaluates the land use and transportation policies in the General Plan that aim to reduce vehicle miles travelled and improve mobility. Specific implementation measures involve changing land uses, adopting a new perspective on community design, promoting alternative modes of travel, and revising antiquated parking standards.

Future development of the project property will occur on a site located within a walkable environment in terms of proximity to schools, commercial uses, and other services. Specifically, the site is located adjacent to the nearest elementary school, and approximately one half-mile (equivalent to a 10-minute walk) to the nearest commercial establishment. As such the project's location is expected to align with the land use and transportation strategy of the CAP.

Solid Waste: Solid waste generation produces only a small percentage of Coachella's emissions (3%), but with population and employment growth, the specific actions outlined in the General Plan to increase waste diversion can result in significant emissions reductions. This strategy includes General Plan policies related to increase residential and commercial recycling and construction recycling. The proposed development is expected to follow the City's most current recycling and other waste diversion programs, which tend to be promoted at the Citywide level. Therefore, no conflicts with this strategy are anticipated.

Vegetation and Open Space: Not only do trees and open space enhance the appearance of a community, they reduce ambient air temperature, lower energy use, reduce air and water pollution, and absorb greenhouse gases. Coachella's General Plan includes polices for increasing access to parks and open spaces and planting new trees. This compilation of General Plan polices focuses on the carbon sequestration benefits of new vegetation and trees. Approximately 60 percent of the site's land use composition will consist of open space while the remaining 40 percent will be occupied by residential buildings, community buildings, and paving.

Water Use: Water use represents one of the fastest growing emissions sectors in the Coachella CAP with potable water use growing 45% between 2005 and 2010. The General Plan includes policies to address indoor and outdoor water use and future water supply. This strategy analyzes the effectiveness of these measures at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The proposed development is expected to implement the required water-efficient landscape irrigation and indoor fixtures to support the water use strategy.

The CAP includes a process in which projects are evaluated for their design attributes and performance. The CAP establishes a per service population 2020 emissions reduction target of 15% below 2010 levels and a 2035 emissions reduction target of 49% below 2010 levels. The CAP's 2020 targeted GHG emissions per service population goal is 7.0 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/SP/year and the 2035 targeted GHG emissions per service population goal is 4.2 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/SP/year.

As previously discussed, future development on the project property may result in GHG emissions totaling 15,769.6 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e. The City of Coachella CAP defines a service population as the total number of residents and employees (jobs) in a geographic area. From the perspective of service population efficiency, the project's total emissions (15,769.6 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e) divided by a service population of 6,110 residents is equivalent to 2.58 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/SP/year, which satisfies the 2035 targeted GHG emissions per service population goal is 4.2 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/SP/year. As such, the proposed residential development is not expected to conflict with the applicable plan for the purposes of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. No impact relative to the Change of Zone is anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

| <b>IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b>  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project:</b>   |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: City of Coachella 2035 General Plan Update, 2015; Coachella Municipal Code; Coachella Technical Background Report to the Safety Element Update, 2014; Enforcement and Compliance History Online, EPA; EnviroStor, Department of Toxic Substances Control; GeoTracker, State Water Resources Control Board.)

**Setting**

The project site is located on approximately 56.9 acres of disturbed land north of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and east and west of Education Way in the City of Coachella. The project proposes to re-zone the 56.9-acre property from its current designation of Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) zones to R-M General (20-25 du/ac), R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The project is currently characterized by disturbed land. Approximately 8 acres of the site (southwest corner) has been graded and disturbed, however, this area is currently vacant. The remainder of the site (approximately 49 acres) was previously used for agricultural operations; however, it is currently vacant.

The project does not currently propose development on the 56.9-acre property and a site plan does not currently exist. However, a general analysis of future development relative to hazards and hazardous materials are provided in this discussion.

### Discussion of Impacts

- a-b) **No Impact.** As stated in the Setting, the project proposes to re-zone approximately 56.9 acres of land north of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and east and west of Education Way in Coachella. The project site is surrounded by the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel to the north, residential uses to the east and west, Valle Del Sol Elementary School to the west, and industrial and agricultural land uses to the south (separated by 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue).

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR Title 40, Part 261) defines hazardous materials based on ignitability, reactivity, corrosivity, and/or toxic properties. The State of California defines hazardous materials as substances that are toxic, ignitable or flammable, reactive and/or corrosive, which have the capacity of causing harm or a health hazard during normal exposure or an accidental release. As a result, the use and management of hazardous or potentially hazardous substances is regulated under existing state, federal and local laws. Hazardous wastes require special handling and disposal methods to reduce their potential to damage public health and the environment. Manufacturer's specifications also dictate the proper use, handling, and disposal methods for the specific substances.

Future construction would involve the use of heavy equipment that have a potential of fuel and oil spills due to the usage of fuel, oil, lubricants and other potential flammable substances. The contractor will be required to identify a staging area for storing these materials, as well as other practices to prevent any hazardous discharge or release into the environment, in their Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP requires a list of pollutant sources and the identification of construction areas where additional control measures are necessary to prevent pollutants from being discharged. Best management practices (BMPs) are necessary for proper material delivery and storage, material use and spill prevention and control. The measures will outline the required physical improvements and procedures to prevent impacts of pollutants and hazardous materials to workers and the environment during construction. For example, all construction materials including paints, solvents, and petroleum products must be stored in controlled areas and according to the manufacturer's specifications. Additionally, perimeter controls (fencing with wind screen), linear sediment barriers (gravel bags, fiber rolls or silt fencing), and access restrictions (gates) would help prevent temporary impact to the public and environment. No impacts will occur associated with this Change of Zone.

The project proposes residential and commercial zoning designations on the approximately 56.9-acre site. The proposed residential portion of the project would include Multiple Family Residential (R-M) General developments, which allows 20 to 25 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and Urban developments, which allows 20 to 38 du/ac. Approximately 4 acres of the southwest portion of the site is designated as Neighborhood Commercial zone, which permits commercial businesses in proximity to residential communities. The nature of residential and commercial uses are not expected to involve, as a primary activity, the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials in quantities or in a manner that would pose a threat to the project and its surroundings or create a significant hazard through a foreseeable accident condition involving

the release of hazardous materials into the environment. The regular operation of future development will involve the handling, application, and storage of cleaning agents, building maintenance products, paints, solvents and other related substances commonly used with residential apartment maintenance. These products are not expected to be used in amounts harmful to the public.

The handling, application and storage of cleaning agents, building maintenance products, paints, solvents and other related substances is expected to occur within the project in order to carry out the necessary operations for the residential and commercial uses. However, these materials would not be present in sufficient quantities that pose a significant hazard to public health and safety, or the environment. The Change of Zone will result in no impacts.

- c) **No Impact.** The closest school is located west of the project, Valle Del Sol Elementary School. As previously discussed, the project proposes a Change of Zone from the property's existing zoning of R-S and R-M to R-M General, R-M Urban, and C-N on approximately 56.9 acres. During the construction of future development, proper safety measures will be implemented. These standard operational procedures and protocols as well as the best management practices (BMPs), will minimize any potential public exposure to hazardous materials. Operation of future residential and commercial property will not include the use, transportation, or storage of hazardous materials in quantities that would pose a significant hazard to the west-lying school (see discussion b. for further analysis). No impact to schools is expected relative to the Change of Zone.
- d) **No Impact.** As previously discussed, the project site proposes a change of zone from R-S and R-M to R-M General (20-25 du/ac), R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), and C-N. Since before 1953, the project site operated as agricultural land; however, the site is currently vacant.

Record searches on the project property were performed within multiple database platforms, pursuant to Government Code 65962.5 and its subsections. The resources consulted included GeoTracker, EnviroStor and the EPA Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO).

GeoTracker is a database maintained by the State of California Water Resources Control Board that provides online access to environmental data. It serves as the management system for tracking regulatory data on sites that can potentially impact groundwater, particularly those requiring groundwater cleanup and permitted facilities, such as operating underground storage tanks and land disposal sites.

EnviroStor is a database maintained by the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). The EnviroStor database identifies sites with known contamination or sites for which there may be reasons to investigate further. It includes the identification of formerly contaminated properties that have been released for reuse; properties where environmental deed restrictions have been recorded to prevent inappropriate land uses; and risk characterization information that is used to assess potential impacts to public health and the environment at contaminated sites.

Moreover, the ECHO database focuses on inspection, violation, and enforcement data for the Clean Air Act (CAA), Clean Water Act (CWA) and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act



(RCRA) and also includes Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) data.

In December 2020, a search was performed on all three database platforms. The three consulted databases did not list any facilities related to the project site. The three databases, however, recorded sites within a half-mile radius of the project property. The results are described below:

GeoTracker is a database maintained by the State of California Water Resources Control Board to provide online access to environmental data. It serves as the management system for tracking regulatory data on sites that can potentially impact groundwater. The database search results revealed thirteen Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) Cleanup Sites and Cleanup Program Site within a mile of the project site. The facilities are listed as follows:

- Koolco is located approximately 0.12 miles southwest of the project, at 52112 Industrial Way. This facility is listed as a LUST Cleanup Site, with an existing status of Completed Case Closed as of December 24, 1994.
- Coachella Valley Water District, located at 85995 52nd Avenue, approximately 0.20 miles west of the project. The site is listed as a LUST Cleanup Site three times. The site currently has a status of Completed Case Closed as of August 26, 1996, April, 29, 2005, and January 13, 2011.
- Kinder Morgan Energy Partners (Former Santa Fe Pacific Pipeline Partners – 52<sup>nd</sup> Ave/HWY) is located at 85989 52nd Avenue, approximately 0.27 miles west of the site. This facility is registered as a Cleanup Program Site and has the status of Open – Remediation as of July 15, 1990. The site is currently monitored, and quarterly and semi-annual groundwater monitoring reports are administered at the site (available at GeoTracker).
- El Super Toro Loco #3, located approximately 0.40 miles west of the project at 52051 Grapefruit Avenue. This facility is registered as a LUST Cleanup Site; however, the site currently has a status of Completed Case Closed as of July 7, 2006.
- Circle K/Former, located at 51989 Grapefruit Boulevard, approximately 0.40 miles west of the project site. This registered facility is listed as a LUST Cleanup Site; however, the facility currently has a status of Completed Case Closed as of December 12, 2002.
- Circle K #1303 is located at 49989 Grapefruit Boulevard, approximately 0.56 miles west of the project site. This facility is listed as a LUST Cleanup Site, with a Completed Case Closed status as of November 13, 2000.
- Red Dragon Restaurant, approximately 0.62 miles west of the project, is located at 85981 Grapefruit Boulevard and registered as a LUST Cleanup Site. This facility currently has a status of Completed Case Closed as of November 7, 1986.
- Cox Oil Company is located at 1121 Highway 111, approximately 0.75 miles west of the project. This registered site is listed as a LUST Cleanup Site with a status of Completed Case Closed as of July 24, 1992.
- Santa Fe Pacific Pipeline Partners – 52<sup>nd</sup> Ave/HWY lies approximately 0.76 miles west of the project, at 52nd Avenue and Highway 111. This facility is listed as a Cleanup Program Site with a status of Open – Remediation as of July 6, 2010. The site is currently monitored, and semi-annual groundwater monitoring is administered at the site (available at GeoTracker).

- Sanchez Mini Mart is located approximately 0.80 miles west of the project, at 1003 Grapefruit Avenue. This facility is registered as a LUST Cleanup Site with a status of Completed Case Closed as of August 22, 2007.
- CVSD Palm View Maintenance is located at 1101 Orchard Street, approximately 0.87 miles west of the project. This facility is registered as a LUST Cleanup Site, however, the current status of the facility is Completed Case Closed as of January 13, 1997.

The facilities listed above are not anticipated to impact the project site due to their distances from the site and their statuses of Completed Case Closed.

The EnviroStor database revealed two “cleanup sites” within a mile radius of the project property. The two facilities are listed below:

- The closest facility in the database is Bobby Duke Middle School conversion and expansion project, at 85358 Bagdad Avenue, approximately 0.86 miles northwest of the project. This facility is listed as a school investigation, however, as of June 2007, it was listed as Inactive, Withdrawn.
- The second facility listed included East Coachella Elementary School, approximately 1-mile northwest of the project. This site is listed as a School Cleanup Site; however, no further action was required as of June 2004.

When consulting the Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) database, no facilities or records on the property were identified, however, thirteen were listed within a mile radius of the project. The facilities are listed as follows:

- Woodspur Operations LLC: 52200 Industrial Way, approximately 0.13 miles south of the project. This facility is registered with the RCRA. No violations.
- SFPP LP Coachella Site: 85985 52nd Avenue, approximately 0.23 miles west of the project. This site is registered with the RCRA as an active small quantity generator (SQG). No violations.
- BCI Coca Cola Bottling Company of LA: 86375 Industrial Way, approximately 0.26 miles south of the project site. Registered under the Clean Water Act (CWA) as a Minor General Permit Covered Facility. No violations.
- Imperial Irrigation District/Coachella: 1280 Grapefruit, approximately 0.59 miles west of the project. This facility is registered under the CAA, as an operating major emissions facility. No violation.
- Armtec Defense Products Company: 85901 Avenue 53, approximately 0.60 miles southwest of the project. This site is registered under the RCRA as an active large quantity generator (LQG), the CWA as a Minor General Permit Covered Facility, and the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI). No violation.
- Coachella Gas Turbine Plant: J1170 Shady Lane, approximately 0.70 miles west of the project is registered under the CWA as a Minor General Permit Covered Facility. The facility has failed to submit the required reporting for Stormwater Non-Construction permit. The violation has been identified since January 2019.
- Coronet Concrete Prod Inc: 50305 Highway 111, approximately 0.71 miles west of the project. The facility is registered under the CWA as a Minor General Permit Covered Facility.

The site is currently in violation for failing to submit required Storm Water Non-Construction report. The facility has been in violation since January 2019.

- South West Pump & Drilling Inc: 53381 Highway 111, approximately 0.74 miles south of the project site, is registered under the RCRA. No violations.
- Valley Pride Inc.: 86120 Tyler Lane, approximately 0.79 miles south of the project. This site is registered under the RCRA. No violations.
- Coachella Water Authority: 1515 6<sup>th</sup> Street, approximately 0.92 miles west of the project, is listed under the SDWA. No violations.
- Imperial Western Products: 86600 Avenue 54, approximately 0.93 miles south of the project. This site is registered under the CWA as a Minor Unpermitted Facility and the RCRA.
- General Telephone of CA: 723 Vine Street, approximately 0.96 miles northwest of the project. The facility is listed under the RCRA as an active SQG. No violations.
- Burrtec Coachella Yard: 53600 Polk Street, approximately 0.96 miles southeast of the project. This facility is registered under the CWA. No violations.

The facilities listed above are not anticipated to impact the project site due to their distances from the site and their statuses of “No Violations”. Future development on the project property would be required to assess the statuses of the facilities registered in the property’s vicinity prior to development of the site.

The project site is characterized by approximately 56.9 acres of disturbed land and proposes a Change of Zone from R-S and R-M to R-M General, R-M Urban, and C-N. The nature of the proposed zones will not use hazardous materials in sufficient quantities as to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. The facilities registered in the GeoTracker, EnviroStor, and ECHO are not associated with the project, and the project is not located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. The Change of Zone will have no impacts.

- e) **No Impact.** The Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport is located approximately 2.20 miles south of the project site. The proposed project is located within Zone E of the airport’s land use compatibility plan. Zone E is the least restrictive zone within an airport’s land use compatibility plan. Zone E is considered “Other Airport Environs”, and there are no limits to residential densities/intensities. However, airspace review is required for objects greater than 100 feet in height. Additionally, physical (e.g., tall objects), visual, and electronic forms of interference with the safety of aircraft operations, otherwise referred to as “Hazards to flight”, are prohibited. The project will not result in safety hazards or excessive noise for people living or working in the area.
- f) **No Impact.** The City of Coachella’s Technical Background Report to the Safety Element Update analyzes various safety hazards within the City. These potential hazards include seismic hazards, geologic hazards, fire hazards, hazardous materials management and severe weather hazards. The preparation, response and recovery of these hazards are outlined within Chapter 7 of the Technical Background Report. According to Chapter 7, the City of Coachella is a participant member of the Riverside County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) approved by FEMA in 2005 and ongoing updates to the document.

The Coachella Fire Department Station is located approximately 1.15 miles northwest of the project site, at 1377 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The closest police station to the project site is the Riverside County Sheriff Department Thermal Station at 86625 Airport Boulevard, approximately 2 miles south of the project property. The Indio Police Department, at 46800 Jackson Street, and the Indio Fire Department, at 46990 Jackson Street, lies approximately 4.15 miles northwest of the project site. The Police Department typically serves as the lead organization in carrying out evacuations, supported by the Fire Department as appropriate. The Public Works Department typically assists in the identification of the best evacuation routes and in barricading the evacuated areas.

As depicted in Plate 7-2 in the Technical Background Report, major evacuation routes within the City of Coachella includes 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Route 86, Harrison Street, Grapefruit Boulevard, and Interstate 10 (I-10) freeway. The closest evacuation route to the project property is 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, lying immediately south of the project site. Grapefruit Boulevard (Highway 111) and Route 86 are the second and third closest evacuation routes to the project, lying approximately 0.36 miles west and 0.50 miles east of the proposed project, respectively.

The proposed project will not significantly alter the existing circulation pattern in the project area or adversely impact evacuation plans, considering that the site is currently surrounded by developed homes and existing paved improvements. The project lies within the City's General Plan Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations. These land use designations permit the development of residential dwelling units and commercial uses, respectively. The project's western and eastern boundaries are met by existing residential communities. Valle Del Sol Elementary School is located west of the project site, and industrial uses are located south of the project property. The Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel borders the northern boundary, and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue borders the southern property boundary. The area surrounding the project is developed with paved roadways and existing infrastructure. The project will not impact existing evacuation routes.

As previously discussed, the proposed residential community and commercial use on approximately 56.9 acres of disturbed land. Primary ingress and egress will be located along the existing paved roadways: 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Education Way. These roadways will also provide emergency access to the project site. Proposed parking and circulation plans will be reviewed by the Fire and Police Departments to assure that the project's ingress/egress driveways and roads are adequate for accommodating emergency vehicles. In order to assure that the future development does not interfere with emergency access during development, a construction traffic plan may be required to be submitted to the Fire Department for review prior to development. The Change of Zone will have no impacts.

- g) **No Impact.** Large areas of Southern California are susceptible to wildfires all year around due to the region's weather, topography and vegetation conditions. The Coachella Valley's hot, dry summer with the dry brush vegetation creates ideal conditions to fuel most wildfires. The California Board of Forestry considers wildland as important source of water, timber, minerals, wildlife, recreation and forage. Wildland fire protection in California is the responsibility of either the State, local government, or federal government. Local responsibility areas include incorporated cities where fire protection is typically provided by City fire departments, fire protection districts, counties and by CAL Fire under contract to local government.

The project site is located in the Coachella General Plan's Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations. It is located in an urbanized area of the City with existing residential units to the west and east, Valle Del Sol Elementary School to the west, and industrial and agricultural uses to the south. The Riverside County General Plan and the CAL Fire Maps for Western Riverside County indicate that the project and its surroundings are not located within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone for both State or Federal Responsibility Areas and Local Responsibility Areas. With the foregoing, the project would not expose people or structures to significant injury, loss or death due to wildfires. See the Wildfire Section of this Initial Study for further discussion. No impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None Required.

**X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

|   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project:</b>   |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner that would: |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm-water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or                           | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| iv) impede or redirect flood flows?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: Flood Insurance Rate Map #06065C2270H, Federal Emergency Management Agency, March 6, 2018; 2035 Coachella General Plan, 2015; City of Coachella, 2015 Urban Water Management Plan, 2016)

**Setting**

The Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1972 was enacted to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters by regulating the discharge of pollutants to waters of the U.S. from point sources. As part of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, subsequent amendments to the CWA established a framework for regulating non-point source discharges from urban land runoff and other diffuse sources that were also found to contribute to runoff pollution. Under CWA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) authorized the NPDES permit program to various state, tribal, and territorial governments, enabling them to perform many of the

permitting, administrative, and enforcement aspects of the program. California is a delegated NPDES state and has authority to administer the NPDES program within its limits.

The Porter-Cologne Act is the principal law governing water quality regulation for surface waters in California. It established a comprehensive program to protect water quality and the beneficial uses of water. Presently in the state of California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and nine California Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) regulate and protect water quality pursuant to NPDES. Their regulations encompass storm water discharges from construction site, municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s), and major industrial facilities.

The approved Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) identifies the beneficial water uses, describes the water quality which must be maintained to support such uses, and describes the programs, projects, and other actions necessary to achieve the standards and protect water quality. The proposed project is located within the Whitewater River Watershed in the Colorado River Region (Region 7). As a component of Region 7, the Whitewater River Watershed MS4 established a compliance program that covers approximately 1,645 square miles, including the City of Coachella and the proposed project.

The Regional Basin Plan establishes water quality standards for surface waters within the Colorado River region, which include designated beneficial uses of those water bodies and the levels of water quality that must be met and maintained to protect those uses. Based on the project's location and setting, the nearest receiving water to the project is the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel (CVSC), located north of the project property. CVSC is the primary regional flood control facility in the eastern Coachella Valley and City of Coachella. As an unlined, engineered extension of the Whitewater River, CVSC accepts agricultural irrigation return water and conveys treated wastewater, urban runoff, and stormwater runoff to the Salton Sea. The project is physically and hydrologically separated from this facility by the existing engineered levee system that is operated and maintained by CVWD.

Water bodies where the assessed water quality does not meet the standards to support the beneficial uses are regionally listed pursuant to Section 303(d) of the CWA. The most current 2014 and 2016 Integrated Report (Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List/305(b) Report) indicates that portions of the CVSC are impaired by DDT (Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane), Dieldrin, Indicator Bacteria, PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyls), and Toxaphene. These water quality impairments are not known to be associated with or caused by development.

The Chapter 13.16 (Water Quality Control) of the Coachella Code of Ordinances serves as the local stormwater management standard, aligning with CWA, NDPEs, and MS4 provisions.

### Discussion of Impacts

- a) **No Impact.** The size and nature of the proposed development prompts compliance with the existing regulations pertaining to water quality standards and waste discharge requirements during and after construction. As a result, the project proponent must comply with the State's most current Construction General Permit (CGP), Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-006-DWQ. Compliance with the CGP involves the development and implementation of a project-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), designed to prevent potential adverse impacts to surface water quality during the period of construction. The required plan will identify the limits of disturbance during construction, indicating specific

locations where activities will require implementation of storm water Best Management Practices (BMPs). Storm water BMPs refer to a schedule of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintenance procedures, and other management practices to prevent, eliminate, or reduce the pollution of water of the receiving waters. BMPs also include treatment requirements, operating procedures, and practices to control plant site runoff spillage or leaks. Consistent with Section XIV of the CGP, the required SWPPP will also specify the necessary recordkeeping, relevant good site housekeeping requirements, proper waste management, proper handling and storage within the allowable construction limits.

Based on the project location and setting, the compliant SWPPP is expected for future development to identify temporary sediment track-out prevention BMPs at each construction entrance/exit point that eventually exits to a public street. This type of BMP will provide temporary stabilization to prevent sediment track-out and fugitive dust emissions from exiting the site. Linear sediment barriers may be warranted along portions of the construction perimeter to prevent soil erosion impacts and sediment impacts. As construction progresses, any on-site catch basin inlets that become operational will require temporary protection to prevent sediment or pollutants from entering the on-site storm drain system. As a standard condition, any ground surface area disturbed by construction activities must be entirely covered by the SWPPP and must be properly re-stabilized to satisfy the City and NPDES requirements. The BMPs will be regulated by the plan review process prior to obtaining a grading permit and will be enforced as part of the agency site inspection protocols during construction.

During construction, future development will also be required to comply with South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) Rule 403 and 403.1 and the City's Fugitive Dust Control policies, which establish the minimum requirement for construction and demolition activities and other specified sources in order to reduce man-made fugitive dust and the corresponding PM10 emissions. Implementation of Fugitive Dust Control Plan primarily pertains to air quality, but also supports water quality protection through the requirement of soil stabilization measures to prevent sediment erosion and track-out. The concurrent implementation of the required SWPPP and Dust Control Plan plans will prevent the potential construction-related impacts to water quality at the site and its surroundings, therefore, resulting in less than significant impact.

Future development will be designed with an on-site stormwater retention system that during the life of the project will comply with the City's drainage requirements by preventing site discharge and transport of untreated runoff. The proposed storm drain system will include facilities sized to provide sufficient storage for the 100-year controlling storm event. As a standard requirement, the project development proponent must develop and implement a project-specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) to comply with the most current standards of the Whitewater River Region Water Quality Management Plan for Urban Runoff and the Whitewater River Watershed MS4 Permit.

The project-specific WQMP and Hydrology Report will identify a strategy of site design, source controls, and treatment controls with a required operation and maintenance program to address post-construction runoff quality and quantity. To achieve this, future will be divided into multiple drainage management areas with corresponding underground retention facilities. Runoff from the impervious areas of the project (building buildings, hardscape, asphalt) will be conveyed to a corresponding retention facility sized to collect and percolate the entire



stormwater volume resulting from the controlling 100-year storm event. The site plan, grading design, catch basin design, and retention facilities of the project must be factored in the project-specific WQMP development and documentation. The project design will be subject to City review and approval.

During construction and operation, future development will be required to comply with CWA, NPDES, and local regulations to prevent impacts to water quality standards and the beneficial uses assigned to local receiving waters. No impacts are anticipated relative to the Change of Zone.

- b) No Impact.** The Coachella Water Authority (CWA) is the primary domestic water purveyor for the City of Coachella and the project area, primarily relying on groundwater as the primary supply. The project area and City of Coachella are underlain by the East (Lower) Whitewater River Subbasin, which forms part of the Coachella Valley groundwater basin. The East (Lower) Whitewater River Subbasin is managed regionally by a collaborative effort by multiple agencies. The collaboration among CWA, CVWD, and other local water districts has resulted in an established water conservation, water reuse, and groundwater recharge strategy to ensure water availability and system capacity to meet the growing needs of the City. These planning efforts include: residential and commercial landscape and irrigation upgrade rebates, water audits, water conservation kits, budget-tiered rate structure, water conservation workshops, and a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and CVWD to help ensure a sufficient and reliable water supply for development projects within the City and in its Sphere of Influence.

In 2014, the California Legislature signed a three-bill legislative package into law, collectively known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). SGMA allows local agencies to manage groundwater resources in a sustainable manner, with management efforts tailored to the resources and needs of their specific communities. Groundwater management is described as the planned and coordinated monitoring, operation, and administration of a groundwater basin sustainability. As part of this effort, the Coachella Water Authority was elected to serve as a groundwater sustainability agency (GSA) to develop and implement the Groundwater Sustainability Plan. Since groundwater management has been a historic effort in the Coachella Valley, local agencies, including Coachella Water Authority, have been able to adapt their current measures as part of their sustainability plan.

Local groundwater resources are managed under the 2015 City of Coachella Urban Water Management Plan (2015 UWMP). The 2015 UWMP serves as a planning tool that documents actions in support of long-term water resources planning and ensures adequate water supplies are available to meet the existing and future urban water demands.

The 2015 UWMP indicates that the Coachella Valley groundwater basin historically has been in a state of overdraft. An overdraft condition occurs when the outflows (demands) exceed the inflows (supplies) to the groundwater basin over a period of time. To address this condition, the Coachella Water Authority and other domestic water suppliers like CVWD have implemented water conservation measures and groundwater replenishment efforts to stabilize the groundwater levels and eliminate the overdraft condition. Artificial replenishment, or recharge, is recognized by the water districts as one of the most effective methods available for preserving local groundwater supplies, reversing aquifer overdraft and meeting demand by domestic

consumers. According to the CVWD web site on Ground Replenishment and Imported Water, local agencies have percolated over 650 billion gallons of water back into the aquifer to date. In the eastern Coachella Valley, Thomas E. Levy Groundwater Replenishment Facility is the primary site for groundwater recharge. This facility operates by recharging water obtained from the Coachella Canal at a capacity of 40,000 acre feet per year (AFY).

Combined with water conservation and efficiency requirements, individual development projects can contribute to groundwater sustainability by implementing the required stormwater runoff retention and infiltration facilities.

The project's location and setting will not impede with any existing or planned groundwater recharge facility, such that it would impede sustainable groundwater management in this manner. The proposed project aligns with the local and regional groundwater recharge strategies by implementing on-site retention, infiltration and low impact development improvements as part of the site design. Project's stormwater management design includes a system of on-site retention basins designed to collect and infiltrate storm water runoff resulting from the controlling 100-year event. Based on the preliminary engineering estimates, the proposed underground retention structures will have a combined capacity of approximately 60,524 cubic feet. As such, the entire volume of stormwater runoff generated on-site up to the 100-year event will be percolated on-site, contributing to groundwater recharge.

Furthermore, future development will implement water conservation measures in accordance with the 2015 UWMP. These measures include water efficient landscaping and irrigation and water efficient plumbing and appliances. Future development will conserve water through measures that may include efficient irrigation and drought-tolerant planting materials. Therefore, the Change of Zone will not interfere with the regional groundwater recharge efforts or groundwater sustainability for the regional basins. No impacts are anticipated.

- c.i) No Impact.** The project property consists of fallow farmland and a relatively flat terrain absent of any on-site natural drainage features or courses attributed to any stream or river. The project sites surroundings include man-made drainage controls, including fully improved curb and gutter improvements along its southerly and westerly portions. Runoff resulting from precipitation events would have the propensity to follow the elevation gradient toward the southeast, but no defined drainage paths, depressions, or basins are present. The nearest defined drainage feature to the project is the engineered Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel (CVSC), located approximately 100 feet to the northeast. This channel accepts urban runoff from developed and undeveloped areas throughout the City of Coachella and other upstream jurisdictions. The CVSC facility is physically and hydrologically separated from the project site by a system of engineered levees.

As previously mentioned, the proposed zone change does not involve development entitlement or physical improvement on the vacant land that would result in the alteration of any drainage course or stream, such that would raise concerns about erosion or siltation. As a standard condition, future development of the site, whether under the existing or proposed land use policy, would require a proper and thorough review of the existing hydrologic conditions for site planning decisions that avoid drainage alterations. The proposed land use policy change would not preclude future development from undergoing environmental review and implementing the appropriate site design considerations to prevent substantial erosion or siltation impacts. Future

development would be subject to agency review and approval to ensure that the proposed grading and drainage conditions are acceptable to the City standards. Pertaining to erosion or siltation, on- or off-site, no impacts are anticipated relative to the Change of Zone.

- c.ii) No Impact.** The proposed project does not involve the entitlement of any specific form of development plan and no physical alterations to the existing undeveloped land would result from its implementation. Future development on the property would be subject to a separate environmental review process to assess the site-specific considerations pertaining to existing drainage conditions and the management of any potential changes to the surface runoff resulting from that development.

Future development under the proposed general and urban multiple family residential and neighborhood commercial designations could potentially involve a relatively more utilization of the project site compared to the current policy. This is due to the current residential development standards allowing for a density of 20-25 dwelling units per acre for the R-M General designation, and 20-38 dwelling units per acre for the R-M Urban designation. A greater portion of impervious cover (buildings, hardscape, pavement) allowable under the development standards of the aforementioned designations would typically result in a potential increase in surface runoff rates and amounts. Therefore, future development would be required to implement the appropriate storm drain and retention facilities to prevent to control the volume and rate of stormwater runoff, as stipulated in Chapter 13.16 of the Coachella Municipal Code (Ordinance #1152). On-site stormwater retention systems of future development will be adequately sized to protect the proposed buildings and facilities from flooding conditions up to the controlling 100-year storm event. As such, the future development's storm drain and flood control improvements are not expected to substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site. No impacts are anticipated related to the Change of Zone.

- c.iii) No Impact.** Runoff from the impervious surfaces introduced by future development will not be directly connected to the municipal stormwater system, such that it would exceed its capacity or introduced additional sources of runoff pollution. The City is currently in the process of developing its stormwater master plan, which will factor land use projects with and without on-site retention facilities. In complying with the applicable retention requirements, future development is not expected to interfere with the City's stormwater master planning efforts currently underway. No impacts related to the Change of Zone are anticipated.

- c.iv) No Impact.** As previously discussed, the project is absent of any mapped natural drainage courses or designated FEMA zones with flood flow concerns. The site is not situated in an area where flood flows could be impeded, redirected, or increased as a result of the implementation of the proposed Change of Zone. However, future development's storm drain system will meet the local MS4 and City requirements by including the properly sized retention facilities. No impacts are anticipated relative to the Change of Zone.

- d) No Impact.** Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) serve as the basis for identifying potential flood hazards. According to FIRM panel 06065C2270H, effective March 6, 2018, the entire Subject Property is located within Zone X, which applies to areas of 0.2 % annual chance flood; areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas of less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual chance flood. Furthermore,

this flood zone is categorized as an area of minimal flood hazard. The project is not located near any coastal areas and therefore is not prone to tsunami hazards. The project is not located near any body of water and therefore is not prone to seiche hazards. The project does not propose any development at this time; however, any future development would be required to design a storm drain system designed to properly capture the site's urban runoff to prevent any risk of uncontrolled pollutant discharge. The typical developments involved with a zoning of urban and general multiple-family residential and neighborhood commercial do not typically host the storage of pollutants, petroleum products, or other hazardous materials in conditions which would be deemed a risk of release in an inundation condition. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated related to the Change of Zone.

- e) **No Impact.** As discussed previously, the project proponent for future development is required to implement a project-specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) to comply with the most current standards of the *Whitewater River Region Water Quality Management Plan for Urban Runoff*, *Whitewater River Watershed MS4 Permit*, and the City of Coachella's Water Quality Control regulations outlined in the Code of Ordinances (Chapter 13.16). The WQMP will incorporate grading, hydrology, and other plans to document the site design, source controls, and treatment controls with a required operation and maintenance program to comply with the hierarchy water quality objectives. Moreover, storm water retention facilities will ensure that urban runoff is recharged into the ground via infiltration. Combined with the required water conservation practices, the project is expected to contribute to the groundwater sustainability efforts implemented for the Coachella Valley region. No impacts are anticipated related to the Change of Zone.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

| <b>XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING</b>   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact        | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project:</b>  |                                |  |                                     |                                     |
| a) Physically divide an established community?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

(Sources: City of Coachella 2035 General Plan Update, 2015; Coachella Municipal Code)

**Setting**

On-site and Vicinity Land Uses

Per the City of Coachella General Plan Update (CGPU), residential land uses (which include single family, multi-family and other) occupy approximately 1,339 acres of the City. This makes up almost 4 percent of the total area within the City, while vacant land occupies approximately 53 percent. Agricultural land uses occupy 33 percent of the City’s area, being the second largest land use classification in the City. Transportation, communications, and utilities is the third largest land use, covering approximately 6 percent of the City. Commercial land uses occupy approximately 138 acres (0.4 percent) in the City. The site of the proposed project is currently characterized by disturbed land, used previously for agricultural purposes.

The project site is primarily surrounded by developed, single family residential homes to the east and west, multiple family residential homes to the west, Valle Del Sol Elementary School to the west, and industrial and agricultural uses to the south. The Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel abuts the project’s northern boundary, and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue abuts the project’s southern boundary.

Existing General Plan Land Use Designations

Future development of the project site and all lands within the City of Coachella are subject to land use and other development related goals and policies contained in the recently adopted City of Coachella General Plan 2035, and the codified regulations, standards and other criteria provided in the Coachella Municipal Code. The current General Plan Update Land Use designation for the project site is Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. The Urban Neighborhood designation provides predominantly (although not exclusively) multi-family housing types with very good non-motorized access to a wide range of civic and commercial amenities located at the edges and/or within the mixed-use fabric of the neighborhood. Neighborhood Centers create a concentration of commercial businesses and civic amenities – often mixed with multi-family housing – within convenient walking or biking distance of nearby neighborhoods. Centers provide gathering places for residents of surrounding neighborhoods and are ideal locations for high-quality transit stops.

Existing Zoning Designations

The existing zones for project site includes Residential Single-Family Zone (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M), as designated by the City of Coachella. R-S zones are intended to provide areas within

the City where development is limited to low-density concentrations of single-family dwellings and to stabilize and protect the residential character of such areas (Coachella Municipal Code Chapter 17.16). R-M zones are intended to provide for the establishment and expansion of multiple-family residential development areas at various medium and high population densities and related community services, all located in conformance with the general plan (Coachella Municipal Code Chapter 17.20).

### Discussion of Impacts

- a) **No Impact.** The project site is currently located on disturbed and vacant land, surrounded by existing, developed properties. The Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel abuts the property's northern boundary, a single-family residential community abuts the property's eastern boundary, and single family residential, multi-family residential, and Valle Del Sol Elementary School abuts the property's western boundary. 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue delineates the project's southern boundary and industrial and agricultural uses lie south of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. The boundaries of the existing residential units that surround the project property are clearly separated from the project site, by either fencing or block walls. A majority of the Elementary School's perimeter is surrounded by fencing. The existing communities are developed and operate independently from the project property. Therefore, the project site is not anticipated to physically divide an established community. No impact.
- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** As stated previously, the subject property occurs in an area designated for Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center, according to the General Plan Map. Urban Neighborhood land uses allow 20 to 38 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), with a 30 du/ac average for new projects, and a flood area ratio (FAR) of 0.5. Neighborhood Center land uses allow 15 to 40 du/ac, and a FAR of 0.5 to 1.5.

#### General Plan Consistency

The project proposes to process a Change of Zone to facilitate the development of a housing community available for a variety of costs and local serving commercial uses with the Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations established by the City of Coachella. Project design features and land use operations shall be consistent with the General Plan land use designations.

#### Zoning Consistency

The City's Official Zoning Map identifies the project to be located in Residential Single Family Zone (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential Zone (R-M). R-S zones are intended to provide areas within the city where development is limited to low-density concentration of single-family dwellings, and to stabilize and protect the residential character of such areas. R-M zones are intended to provide for the establishment and expansion of multiple-family residential development areas at various medium and high population densities and related community services, all located in conformance with the general plan.

The project proposes a Change of Zone (CZ) to change the current R-S and R-M zones to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). R-M General zones will allow for 20 to 25 du/ac, and R-M Urban zones allow for 20 to 38 du/ac.

Chapter 17.20 of the Coachella Municipal Code states that R-M zones are intended to provide for the establishment and expansion of multiple-family residential development areas at various medium and high population densities and related community services. R-M zones allows higher density residential developments and is consistent with the Urban Neighborhood land use, designated by the General Plan. The increased land use density will provide much needed affordable housing to the City of Coachella. C-N zones are intended to provide for every day, convenience shopping intended to serve residential neighborhoods, consistent with the environmental requirements of such neighborhoods. Convenience shopping facilities are those which provide space for retail and service businesses serving the immediate neighborhood. The provisions of this zone are intended to minimize or eliminate, insofar as possible, any conflicting aspects of commercial land use within residential neighborhoods, particularly as related to traffic, type of activity, and site requirements (Coachella Municipal Code Chapter 17.24).

The CZ would permit an increased density and intensity allowed on the project site, compared to the existing R-S zoning designation. The proposed project would allow the development of much needed affordable housing units in the City, as well as locate commercial uses in proximity to the existing and proposed communities. The proposed R-M General, R-M Urban, and C-N zones are consistent with the existing General Plan land use designations of Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. As previously stated, Urban Neighborhood land use designations permit 20 to 38 du/ac, with 30 du/ac average for new projects.

Future development will participate in Architecture Review as part of the entitlement process. Overall, the Change of Zone will comply with the land use policies provided by the City of Coachella to ensure impacts are less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

| XII. MINERAL RESOURCES  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project:</b>   |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| 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?                                | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: Coachella 2035 General Plan, 2015; California Division of Mines and Geology, 1987; Riverside County General Plan, 2015)

**Setting**

Riverside County emphasizes the importance of mineral resources and its protection. For this reason, the State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB) listed and prioritized the mineral deposits in Riverside County. These Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ) help identify mineral deposits that need to be protected from encroaching urbanization and land uses incompatible with mining. The SMGB categorized the mineral resources into six zones and identifies designation as having either a regional or a statewide economic significance. The purpose of these designations is to identify those areas that are of prime importance in meeting the future needs of the study region and protect these areas from a land use perspective.

As described in Section VII of this document, the sedimentary units in the Coachella area are composed of a mix of water-transported alluvial sand, silt, clay, and gravel derived from erosion of the adjacent hills and mountains and very fine-grained ancient lake deposits. Very young, unconsolidated alluvial sediments line the drainage courses. The existing and potential mineral resources in Coachella include sand and gravel, clay, oil and gas, and geothermal.

The project site is located in the City of Coachella’s Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations, specifically zoned Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M). The project proposes a Change of Zone from R-S and R-M to R-M General, R-M Urban and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The proposed zones are consistent with the existing General Plan land use designations.

As stated throughout this document, the project site has been utilized for agricultural operations from the 1950s to recent years. The project site is currently vacant and fallow. According to the Department of Agriculture, the soil types present at the project site include Coachella fine sand (CrA), Gilman fine sandy loam (GcA), Gilman silt loam (GfA), and Indio fine sandy loam (Ir).

**Discussion of Impacts**

**a-b) No Impact.** The project site is designated as Mineral Resource Zone 1 (MRZ-1) by the State Mining and Geology Board. Available geological information indicates that areas within this designated zone have little likelihood of significant mineral resources (Riverside County General Plan 2015). The project site also occurs in an existing residential district and is not designated for



mineral resource land uses. The proposed zone change, therefore, will not 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.

Due to the mineral resource designation by the State Mining and Geology Board, and the land use designation selected by the City, the proposed zone change is not expected to result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site defined on a local general plan, specific plans or other land use plans. No project-related impacts to mineral resources are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

| <b>XIII. NOISE</b>  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project result in:</b>   |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| 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?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

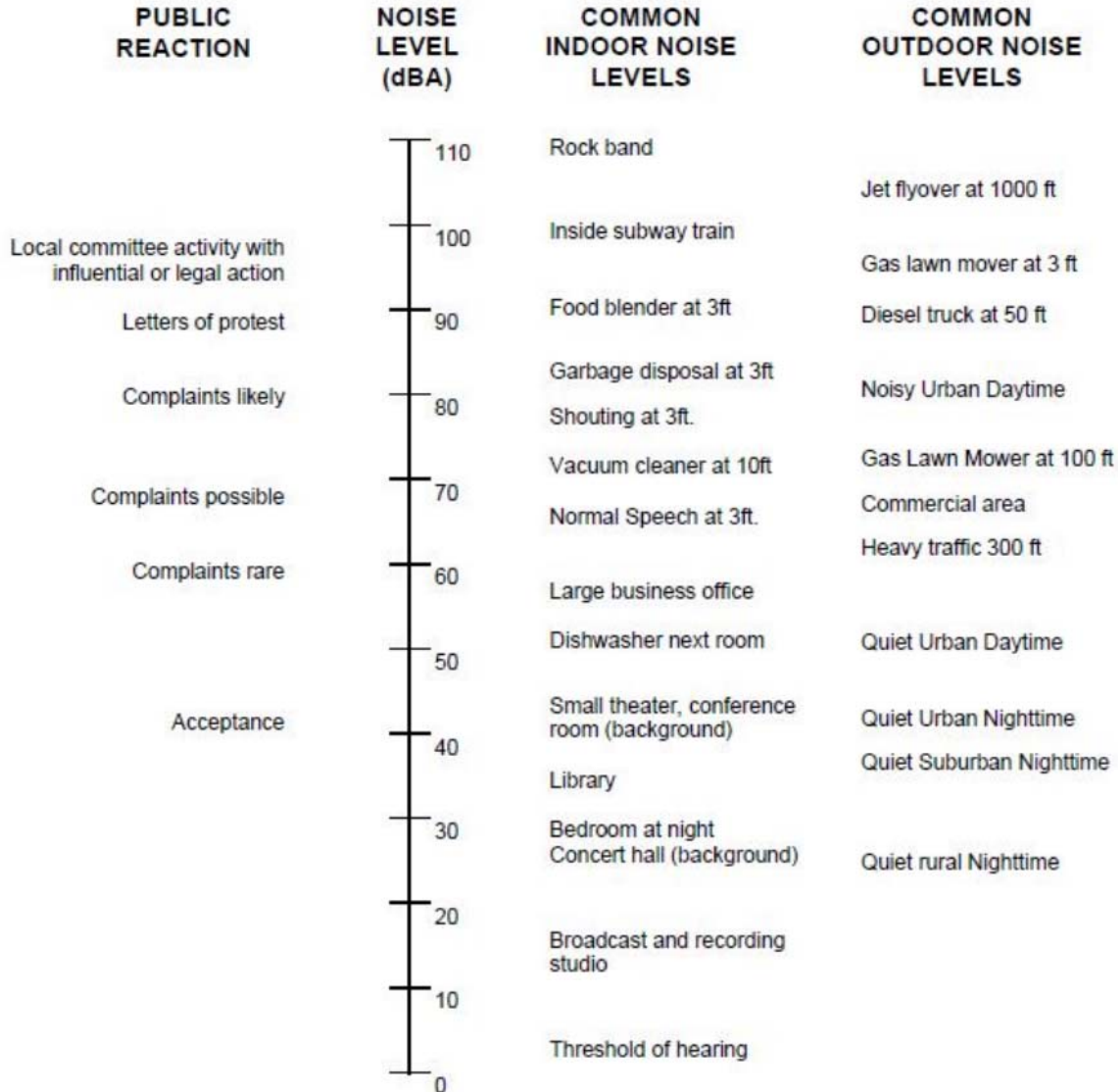
(Sources: Coachella 2035 General Plan, 2015; Coachella Noise Technical Appendix, 2015)

**Setting**

Noise

Noise is simply defined as “unwanted sound.” Sound becomes unwanted when it interferes with normal activities, causing physical harm or causing adverse effects on health. Noise is measured on a logarithmic scale of pressure level known as a decibel (dB). An A-weighted decibel (dBA) is an expression of the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by the human ear. In the A-weighted system, the decibel values of sounds at low frequencies are reduced compared with unweighted decibels, in which no correction is made for audio frequency. Excessive noise or prolonged exposure to noise can contribute to temporary and permanent impairments, such as hearing loss, fatigue, stress, sleep deprivation, anxiety, and annoyance. Although noise has been accepted as a necessary by-product of urban development, it can become an environmental hazard. A variety of components of the urban environment generate noise; these include construction equipment and activities, motor vehicles, air traffic, mechanical equipment, household appliances, and other sources. Figure 4.10-1 in the Coachella General Plan Update (CGPU) Environmental Impact Report (EIR) outlines common indoor and outdoor noise levels. The figure is provided below.

Figure XIII-1 Examples of Typical Sound Levels



Source: City of Coachella, Noise Technical Appendix, Figure 1, 2015.

Noise transmission is affected by a variety of factors, such as temperature, wind speed and direction, as well as the type of ground surface. Soft ground surfaces tend to reduce sound levels better than hard surfaces. This reduction of sound intensity caused by surfaces, walls, vegetation, or other material is called attenuation. A drop off rate of 4.5 dBA per doubling distance is typical across soft ground. In comparison, hard ground, such as concrete, stone, and hard packed earth reduce sound by 3.0 dBA per doubling distance. Effective noise barriers, such as walls or berms, can help reduce noise levels by 10 to 15 decibels. These types of barriers can provide relief from traffic noise. Vegetation, on the other hand, is less effective for reducing noise levels. For a noise barrier to work, walls need to be high enough and long enough to block the view of a road.

The State of California requires each city and county to adopt Noise Elements as a part of their General Plan. In addition to the 12 Land Use Categories included in the Noise Element, there are 4 Community

Noise Equivalent Level’s (CNEL), in order to interpret the compatibility of the 12 Land Use Categories. Zone A (Green) – Clearly Compatible, Zone B (Yellow) – Normally Compatible, Zone C (Orange) – Normally Incompatible, Zone D (Red) Clearly Incompatible. The four zones of compatibility are dependent on the Land Use Categories (Figure 10-1 Coachella General Plan Update). Figure 10-1 from the CGPU is provided below.

**Figure 10-1 Coachella Land Use/Noise Compatibility Matrix**

| LAND USE CATEGORIES                                     |   | CNEL   |        |        |        |        |        |
|---|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| CATEGORIES  | USES  | 55     | 60     | 65     | 70     | 75     | 80     |
| RESIDENTIAL   | Single Family, Duplex, Multiple Family  | Green  | Green  | Yellow | Yellow | Orange | Red    |
| RESIDENTIAL   | Mobile Homes  | Green  | Green  | Yellow | Orange | Orange | Red    |
| COMMERCIAL - Regional, District                         | Hotel, Motel, Transient Lodging   | Green  | Green  | Yellow | Yellow | Orange | Red    |
| COMMERCIAL - Regional, Village District, Special        | Commercial Retail, Bank, Restaurant, Movie Theater  | Green  | Green  | Green  | Green  | Yellow | Orange |
| COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL                                   | Office Building, Research and Development, Professional Offices, City Office Building           | Green  | Green  | Green  | Yellow | Yellow | Red    |
| COMMERCIAL - Recreation INSTITUTIONAL - Civic Center    | Amphitheater, Concert Hall Auditorium, Meeting Hall   | Yellow | Yellow | Orange | Orange | Red    | Red    |
| COMMERCIAL - Recreation                                 | Children’s Amusement Park, Miniature Golf Course, Go-cart Track, Equestrian Center, Sports Club | Green  | Green  | Green  | Yellow | Yellow | Red    |
| COMMERCIAL - General, Special INDUSTRIAL, INSTITUTIONAL | Automobile Service Station, Auto Dealership, Manufacturing, Warehousing, Wholesale, Utilities   | Green  | Green  | Green  | Green  | Yellow | Yellow |
| INSTITUTIONAL - General                                 | Hospital, Church, Library, School Classroom   | Green  | Green  | Yellow | Orange | Orange | Red    |
| OPEN SPACE  | Parks   | Green  | Green  | Green  | Yellow | Orange | Red    |
| OPEN SPACE  | Golf Course, Cemeteries, Nature Centers, Wildlife Reserves, Wildlife Habitat                    | Green  | Green  | Green  | Green  | Yellow | Orange |
| AGRICULTURE   | Agriculture   | Green  | Green  | Green  | Green  | Green  | Green  |

**INTERPRETATION**

ZONE A (GREEN)  
CLEARLY COMPATIBLE

Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.

ZONE B (YELLOW)  
NORMALLY COMPATIBLE

New construction or development should be undertaken only after an analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design are determined. Conventional construction, with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.

ZONE C (ORANGE)  
NORMALLY INCOMPATIBLE

New construction or development should be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

ZONE D (RED)  
CLEARLY INCOMPATIBLE

New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

\* Construction of new residential uses will not be allowed within the 65 dBA CNEL contour for airport noise.

Noise levels are generally low in agricultural and rural areas, and higher in more urbanized areas. Noise in eastern Coachella Valley is generally related to linear sources, or “noise corridors,” such as roadways and railroads, or to aircraft. Within the General Plan area, principal noise corridors are major roadways such as Highway 111 and Highway 86/86S; Southern Pacific Railroad; Harrison Street and Polk Street;

and the Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport. Other sources of vehicular noise include the local streets in the General Plan area. Transportation noise is concentrated along these roadways and can vary with the volume of traffic, the vehicular speed, the vehicular mix, and the roadway cross-section.

The project site is located north of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and west and east of Education Way. According to the Noise Technical Appendix, 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue west of Education Way is a roadway with relatively high traffic volumes. As part of the development of the Noise Element of the General Plan, noise level measurements were collected at 11 different locations throughout the City. The measurement locations were selected on the basis of proximity to major noise sources, noise sensitivity of nearby land uses, and obtaining a representative sample of different noise environments throughout the community. A measurement of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue was taken west of Education Way, approximately 50 feet from the centerline of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 670 feet south of Valle Del Sol Elementary School, at 1:19 p.m. The noise level measurement at this location was 65.8 dBA. Contours of 70 dBA are rated normally compatible with residential land use categories.

Interior and exterior noise standards for the City of Coachella are outlined in Table 4.10-3 in the Noise Element of the CGPU EIR and displayed below. In Coachella, interior and exterior noise standards for residential communities are 45 dB (interior) and 65 dB (exterior).

**Table XIII-1 Coachella Interior and Exterior Noise Standards**

| LAND USE CATEGORIES |   | ENERGY AVERAGE<br>CNEL (DB) |                       |
|---------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>CATEGORIES</u>   | <u>USES</u>   | INTERIOR <sup>1</sup>       | EXTERIOR <sup>2</sup> |
| RESIDENTIAL         | Single Family, Duplex, Multiple Family  | 45 <sup>3</sup>             | 65                    |
|                     | Mobile Homes  | -----                       | 65 <sup>4</sup>       |
| COMMERCIAL          | Hotel, Motel, Transient Lodging   | 45                          | 65 <sup>5</sup>       |
| INDUSTRIAL          | Commercial Retail, Bank, Restaurant   | 55                          | ----                  |
| INSTITUTIONAL       | Office Building, Research and Development, Professional Offices, City Office Building | 50                          | ----                  |
|                     | Amphitheater, Concert Hall, Amphitheater, Meeting Hall                                | 45                          | ----                  |
|                     | Gymnasium (Multipurpose)  | 50                          | ----                  |
|                     | Sports Club   | 55                          | ----                  |
|                     | Manufacturing, Warehousing, Wholesale, Utilities                                      | 65                          | ----                  |
|                     | Movie Theaters  | 45                          | ----                  |
| INSTITUTIONAL       | Hospitals, School classroom   | 45                          | 65                    |
|                     | Church, Library   | 45                          |                       |
| OPEN SPACE          | Parks   | ----                        | 65                    |

INTERPRETATION

1. Indoor environment excluding: bathrooms, toilets, closets, corridors.
2. Outdoor environment limited to:
  - \* Private yard of single family residence
  - \* Multi-purpose private patio or balcony which is served by means of exit from inside
  - \* Mobile home Park
  - \* Hospital patio
  - \* Park's picnic area
  - \* School's playground
  - \* Hotel and motel recreation area
3. Noise level requirement with closed windows. Mechanical ventilating system or other means of natural ventilation shall be provided as of Chapter 12, Section 1205 of the Uniform Building Code.
4. Exterior noise level should be such that interior noise level will not exceed 45 CNEL.
5. Except those areas affected by aircraft noise.

Source: City of Coachella General Plan Noise Element Background Study, November 1996.

Vibration

Vibration is sound radiated through the ground. The rumbling sound caused by the vibration of room surfaces is called groundborne noise. Groundborne vibration is almost exclusively a concern inside buildings and is rarely perceived as a problem outdoors. Groundborne vibration related to human annoyance is generally related to root mean square (RMS) velocity levels expressed in vibration decibels (VdB). However, construction-related groundborne vibration in relation to its potential for building damage can also be measured in inches per second (in/sec) peak particle velocity (PPV), as determined by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) (2006).

The background vibration velocity level in residential and educational areas is usually around 50 VdB. The vibration velocity level threshold of perception for humans is approximately 65 VdB. A vibration velocity level of 75 VdB is the approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible levels for many people. Most perceptible indoor vibration is caused by sources within buildings, such as operation of mechanical equipment, movement of people, or the slamming of doors. Typical outdoor sources of perceptible groundborne vibration are construction equipment, steel-wheeled trains, and traffic on rough roads. If a roadway is smooth, the groundborne vibration of traffic is rarely perceptible. The range of interest is from approximately 50 VdB, which is the typical background vibration velocity level, to 100 VdB, which is the general threshold where minor damage can occur in fragile buildings.

The project site is located on approximately 56.9 acres north of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and east and west of Education Way. Surrounding land uses includes residential communities to the east and west, Valle Del Sol Elementary School to the west, and industrial and agricultural uses to the south. The Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel delineates the property's northern boundary, and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue delineates the property's southern boundary. The project proposes a Change of Zone from the existing

designations of Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) to R-M General (20-25 du/ac), R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac) and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The land use designations for the project property is Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. The existing land use designations are compatible with the proposed Change of Zone.

The project does not currently propose development on the project property and a site plan does not currently exist. However, analysis of noise generated by the proposed zone changes is provided in this Noise discussion. All future activities within the project property will be required to adhere to the City's Noise Ordinance. Project-related impacts to noise and vibration will be less than significant.

### Discussion of Impacts

- a) **No Impact.** As stated above in the Setting, the project proposes a Change of Zone from the existing zoning designations of R-S and R-M to R-M General (20-25 du/ac), R-M Urban (20-38 du/ac), and C-N. The project property is currently vacant, however, previous onsite operations included agricultural uses. Land uses surrounding the project includes residential communities to the east and west, Valle Del Sol Elementary School to the west, and industrial and agricultural uses to the south. The northern and southern boundaries are met by the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, respectively.

According to the CGPU, noise sources in the City can be divided into two basic categories, transportation sources (primarily traffic) and non-transportation sources; however, transportation sources are by far the largest contributor to noise in Coachella. Project-related construction and operational noise impacts are discussed in greater detail below.

### Construction

Construction of future development would include development of residential and commercial uses on approximately 56.9 acres of vacant land previously used for agriculture. Construction activities include site preparation (i.e., clearing, watering the site), grading, building construction, and paving the site; all activities that impact the noise environment.

Sensitive receptors are located near to the potential project construction site of future development. In order to mitigate the potential noise impacts generated by construction, the City of Coachella established hours of construction permitted for projects adjacent to sensitive receptors. The restriction on hours of construction would keep any such construction activities at the nearest sensitive receptor from significantly interfering with people's sleep or morning and evening activities. Section 7.04.070 of the Coachella Municipal Code (CMC) specifically exempts noise sources associated with construction, erection, demolition, alteration, repair, addition to or improvement of any building, structure, road or improvement to realty, provided that such activities take place during daytime hours, as follows:

October 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>

Monday – Friday: 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Saturday/Sunday/Holidays: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

May 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>

Monday – Friday: 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Saturday/Sunday/Holidays: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

During construction, future development shall follow common industry standards that will help limit noise level increases. For example, construction equipment, fixed or mobile, should be equipped and properly operating and maintained mufflers and the engines should be equipped with shrouds. Approved haul routes shall be used to minimize exposure of sensitive receptors to potential adverse levels from hauling operations. Construction equipment shall be in proper working order and maintained to reduce backfires. To maintain normal noise levels during construction and vehicle movement on/off the project site, the staging area(s) will be required to maintain a safe minimal distance from the nearby residences to avoid high noise levels.

Additionally, construction traffic and equipment are also anticipated to generate noise along access routes to the proposed future development. The larger pieces of heavy equipment would be moved onto the development during their associated construction activity (i.e., site preparation, grading, etc.). Daily transportation of construction workers and the hauling materials both on and off the project site are expected to cause increases in noise levels along surrounding roadways. However, vehicle movement on/off the project site shall occur within the City designated construction times.

### **Operation**

The Change of Zone project proposes Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations. Primary project-related operational noise sources will include vehicular traffic accessing the site, grounds maintenance equipment, and heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) units. Stationary and traffic noise generated by the proposed project are discussed subsequently.

### **Stationary Noise**

Stationary noise generated by the proposed project's R-M and C-N zones will include activities normally associated with residential communities and commercial developments. These activities include the operation of HVAC units, people talking, parking area noise, car alarms, trash pick-ups, and landscaping and property maintenance equipment (i.e. lawn mowers). People talking at a normal level typically has a noise level of 60 to 65 dBA, while louder activities such as operating HVAC equipment and car alarms typically lie within the moderately loud range of 65 to 80 dBA, and garbage trucks can be very loud at 100 dBA. However, these activities are typically temporary and intermittent; therefore, stationary noise generated by the proposed project is not anticipated to increase the existing ambient noise environment substantially.

Table 4.10-3 in the CGPU EIR's Noise Element outlines the interior and exterior noise standards for the various land uses within the City (this table is also included in the Setting discussion of this Noise section). Per Table 4.10-3, residential land uses are permitted to have a maximum exterior noise standard of 65 dB (energy average CNEL), and interior noise standard of 45 dB. The 45 dB noise level for residential interiors is the requirement with closed windows (excluding bathrooms, toilets, closets, and corridors). Interior noise can be mitigated by using standard building materials during construction of the residential structures.



The outdoor environment is limited to private yard of single family residence, multi-purpose private patio or balcony which is served by means of exit from inside; mobile home park, hospital patio, park's picnic area, school's playground, and hotel and motel recreation area. The Coachella Land Use/Noise Compatibility Matrix (CGPU, Figure 10-1) defines noise levels up to 70 CNEL within residential developments (single-family, duplex, and multiple family) to be normally compatible. Noise levels exceeding 70 dBA CNEL are categorized as normally incompatible and clearly incompatible in residential land uses. Normally compatible noise levels for commercial uses (i.e., commercial retail, bank, restaurant, movie theater) is up to 80 dBA CNEL (Figure 10-1). As previously stated, the outdoor noise environment in residential and commercial areas can range from 60 dBA (people talking) to 100 dBA (trash trucks). However, these activities are intermittent, temporary, and typical of residential and commercial areas.

Per the Noise Element in the CGPU, the goal is to create a community where excessive noise from stationary sources is minimized through policies such as the City noise ordinance and noise control. Chapter 7.04.030 of the Coachella Municipal Code states that regardless of whether an objective measurement by sound level meter is involved, it shall be unlawful for any person to make, continue, or cause to be made or continued, within the city limits any disturbing excessive or offensive noise or vibration which causes discomfort or annoyance to any reasonable person of normal sensitivity residing in the area or that is plainly audible at a distance greater than fifty (50) feet from the sources point for any purpose. The following ten-minute average sound level limits, unless otherwise specifically indicated, shall apply as indicated in the following table as it relates to a fixed noise source.

| Zone                    | Time                    | Applicable Ten-Minute Average Decibel Limit (A-weighted) |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Residential – All Zones | 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. | 55   |
|                         | 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. | 45   |
| Commercial – All Zones  | 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. | 65   |
|                         | 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. | 55   |

Maintenance of the project site is anticipated to include activities, such as landscaping and gardening, that create a stationary source of noise. Chapter 7.04.075 of the Coachella Municipal Code states that noise associated with property maintenance activity and all portable blowers, lawnmowers, edgers, or similar devices shall be prohibited except during the following hours:

| Date  | Permitted Hours of Property Maintenance  |
|---|--|
| October 1 <sup>st</sup> through April 30 <sup>th</sup>        | Monday – Sunday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  |
| May 1 <sup>st</sup> through September 30 <sup>th</sup>        | Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.<br>Saturday and Sunday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. |
| *Property maintenance activities shall not occur on holidays. |  |

Notwithstanding the hours of permitted operations, such equipment that constitutes a public nuisance may be abated as otherwise provided in the Noise Control Chapter of the City's Municipal Code.

The project proposes residential uses on approximately 52.9 acres of the site and 4 acres of commercial uses on the southwest portion of the site. The project is currently located within the City's Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) zoning designations. However, the project proposes a Change of Zone from R-S and R-M to R-M General, R-M Urban and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The proposed zones are consistent with the land uses designations for the project, which is Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. The project proposes increased development intensities for the residential portion of the site; however, the noise levels are not anticipated exceed the City's noise compatibility level for residential properties. Future development will include building materials and noise attenuating devices, such as block walls and landscaping, in order to decrease noise generated by the project. Additionally, the project will comply with the City's Noise Ordinance which designates times permitted for operation of the project (i.e., property maintenance). Future development will not introduce a land use that will exceed the allowable noise levels in residential and commercial areas. Additionally, the project's proposed zones comply with existing land use designations for the project, and the surrounding area. Therefore, the project will not generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project.

#### Traffic Noise

The project proposes Multiple-Family Residential and Neighborhood Commercial zones on approximately 56.9 acres. The vehicle mix will be comparable with existing vehicles on surrounding roads and within the surrounding residential communities. Neighborhood Commercial zones are intended to provide for a concentration of neighborhood-serving commercial businesses and civic amenities (often mixed with multi-family housing) within convenient walking or biking distances of nearby neighborhoods. The proposed commercial zone would be utilized by the proposed multiple-family residential dwellings associated with the project, as well as the existing residential communities in proximity to the project.

#### *Onsite Traffic*

Vehicular use related to residential properties typically include commuter vehicles. The project proposes R-M General, R-M Urban, and C-N land uses on the 56.9-acre property. Residential communities typically do not generate high levels of traffic noise in a neighborhood due to the decreased traffic speeds, traffic calming designs, and pedestrian pathways generally designed for residential communities. These features keep traffic noise levels low and maintains the ambient noise environment typical for residential communities. The residential portion of the project will not generate a substantial increase in ambient noise levels. The residential portion of the project will increase the existing ambient noise level due to the proposed land use, however, the implementation of traffic calming designs, pedestrian features, and low vehicle speeds will ensure that the increase of noise level is not substantial.

Traffic generated by the commercial zone at the site (southwest portion of the project property) would likely increase the noise environment in the area nominally. Traffic generated by the commercial portion of the project would occur during the permitted hours of operation and would cease during the nighttime hours. As previously stated, Neighborhood Center land uses are intended to provide for a concentration of neighborhood-serving commercial businesses and civic amenities. These land uses are located near neighborhoods, where biking and walking to

the centers are permitted and encouraged through design. According to Figure 4.10-1 in the CGPU EIR (also provided in the Settings discussion of this Noise section), outdoor noise levels generated by commercial areas typically ranges from 65 to 70 dBA. Per the Coachella Land Use/Noise Compatibility Matrix, this is a normally compatible noise level in residential uses (excluding mobile home communities). Impacts relative to the Change of Zone are not expected.

#### *Offsite Traffic*

Operation of future development would result in an increase of vehicular traffic on the existing surrounding roadways, including the south-adjacent roadway, 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue due to the increased land use densities. As stated in the Setting discussion of this Noise section, noise level measurements were collected at 11 different locations throughout the City for the development of the Noise Element in the CGPU. The measurement locations were selected on the basis of proximity to major noise sources, noise sensitivity of nearby land uses, and obtaining a representative sample of different noise environments throughout the community. The segment of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, west of Education Way, was measured since it is a roadway with relatively high traffic volumes located near a sensitive receptor (Valle Del Sol Elementary School). The noise measurement was taken at 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue west of Education Way, approximately 50 feet from the centerline of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 670 feet south of Valle Del Sol Elementary School, at 1:19 p.m. The noise level measured at this location was 65.8 dBA.

The CGPU EIR analyzes noise sections throughout the City to establish existing conditions and the noise measurement at 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, between Grapefruit Boulevard and Enterprise Way were used for this analysis. According to Table 4 in Coachella's Noise Technical Appendix, the segment of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue between Grapefruit Boulevard and Enterprise Way will generate a future noise level of 76.5 Leq (dBA), assuming City buildout. The results of the noise modeling of the roadways concluded that peak noise levels along I-10, SR-86S, Dillon Road, as well as certain segments of Grapefruit Boulevard and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue are expected to exceed 75 dBA CNEL. Peak noise level along all modeled segments are expected to exceed 70 dBA CNEL, with the 65 CNEL contour expected to extend over 100 feet from the centerline of all modeled roadways.

Given these projected future noise levels, it was concluded that implementation of the proposed CGPU could expose either existing or future noise-sensitive receptors in these areas to noise levels above the City's 65 dBA CNEL exterior noise standard for residential uses. A local government has little direct control of transportation noise at the source. State and federal agencies have the responsibility to control vehicle noise emission levels. The most effective methods local governments have to mitigate transportation noise is through land use planning that reduces vehicle trips and physical interventions that reduce the impact of the noise on the community (e.g., building and site design that shields sensitive receivers from noise sources).

Although noise barriers and setbacks have historically been common methods of protecting noise sensitive land uses from excessive transportation-related noise in many communities, recent attempts to emphasize pedestrian-friendly design and mixed-use development have led to consideration of alternative strategies for dealing with transportation-related noise sources. These alternative strategies include land use planning to reduce and slow (or "calm") vehicle trips, and incorporation of noise attenuating features into the architectural design of projects. Low vehicle speeds will be implemented in the residential community.

The project site is currently designated for residential communities and commercial developments in the General Plan, which allows for the exterior noise levels of between 65 and 70 dBA CNEL. The proposed project is consistent with surrounding land uses, and therefore, will not result in unacceptably high noise levels requiring mitigation. The City requires that all projects conform to all applicable General Plan goals and policies and will include noise attenuation strategies in its review of the project-specific design. No impacts relative to the Change of Zone are anticipated.

- b) No Impact.** Ground-borne vibration and/or ground-borne noise generated during construction of future development could be felt by adjacent land uses. The Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) May 2006 *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, states that temporary construction create "frequent" vibration events and a threshold of 72 VdB for frequent events affecting residences and buildings where people normally sleep.

Sensitive receptors are located near to the potential project. The restriction on hours of construction would keep any such construction activities exceeding 72 VdB at the nearest sensitive receptor from significantly interfering with people's sleep. Section 7.04.070 of the Coachella Municipal Code (CMC) specifically exempts noise sources associated with construction, erection, demolition, alteration, repair, addition to or improvement of any building, structure, road or improvement to realty, provided that such activities take place during daytime hours, as follows:

| Date   | Permitted Hours of Construction   |
|--|---|
| October 1 <sup>st</sup> through April 30 <sup>th</sup> | Monday – Friday: 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.<br>Saturday/Sunday/Holidays: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. |
| May 1 <sup>st</sup> through September 30 <sup>th</sup> | Monday – Friday: 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.<br>Saturday/Sunday/Holidays: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. |

The primary source of ground-borne vibration will be operation of heavy equipment, such as grading vehicles; however, the impacts will be temporary and will end once construction is complete. Construction of future development will involve the temporary operation of vehicles and equipment which could result in localized, short-term vibration increases during the permitted hours of construction established by the City.

Additionally, all construction equipment staging will be located within the temporary construction limits, while vehicular and equipment access to the construction site would be restricted to only the approved entry points that minimize disturbance to local traffic.

The transport of workers, equipment, and building materials to and from the construction site will incrementally increase noise levels along the roadways leading to and from the site. The increase, although temporary in nature, could be audible to noise receptors located along the roadways utilized for this purpose. Even though there could be a relatively high single event noise exposure potential with passing trucks causing annoyance, the effect on ambient noise levels would be substantially less than 3 dBA when truck noise (87 dBA at 50 feet) is added to existing noise levels and averaged over a 24-hour period.

Neither the County nor the affected cities have vibration standards for temporary construction, but the County's General Plan Noise Element does contain the human reaction to typical vibration levels. Vibration levels with peak particle velocity of 0.787 inches per second are considered readily perceptible and above 0.1968 in/sec are considered annoying to people in buildings. Riverside County General Plan Policy 15.3 identifies a motion velocity perception threshold for vibration due to passing trains of 0.01 inches per second (in/sec) over the range of one to 100 Hz.

No impact is anticipated relative to the Change of Zone.

- c) **No Impact.** The project is located approximately 2.20 miles from the Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport and is located outside of the 70, 65 and 60 CNEL noise contours associated with this facility. No impacts are expected relative to the Change of Zone.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING**

| <b>Would the project:</b>   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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)? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Source: Coachella 2035 General Plan, 2015; E-5 Population and Housing Estimates prepared by the California Department of Finance; E-8 Historical Population and Housing Estimates prepared by the California Department of Finance; SCAG: Profile of the City of Coachella [2019])

**Setting**

According to the California Department of Finance (DOF), the City of Coachella had a total population of 40,704 people in 2010. Based on the 2020 DOF population and housing estimates, the City of Coachella’s current total population is approximately 47,186, which is an approximately 16 percent increase from the City’s population in 2010. The City of Coachella’s population accounts for approximately 1.9 percent of the County of Riverside’s total population of 2,442,304 people (2020). In 2018 the median age in the City of Coachella was 30.8, while the median age in Riverside was 35 (SCAG Local Profiles, Coachella). Additionally, the number of jobs in Coachella in 2017 was 9,785; an approximately 9.2 percent increase in jobs since 2016.

Table XIV-1 shows the increase in number of households (total and occupied housing units) between 2000 and 2020, according to the DOF Population and Housing Estimates. In 2000, Coachella had 5,024 total households which increased to 10,631 total households by 2020, representing a 111.6 percent increase in 20 years.

**Table XIV-1 Total Households, 2000 to 2020**

| Jurisdiction        | Household | 2000    | 2020    | # Increase | % Increase |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------|------------|------------|
| County of Riverside | Total     | 584,674 | 856,124 | 271,450    | 46.4       |
|                     | Occupied  | 506,218 | 746,160 | 239,942    | 47.4       |
| City of Coachella   | Total     | 5,024   | 10,631  | 5,607      | 111.6      |
|                     | Occupied  | 4,807   | 10,126  | 5,319      | 110.6      |

Source: California Department of Finance E-8 Historical Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 1990-2000; E-5, Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2011-2020.

There are three housing types in the City of Coachella, as presented in Table XIV-2, Total Dwelling Units by Type of Structure, 2000 to 2020. The housing units include single family units, consisting of both detached and attached units; multifamily units, consisting of apartments, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, plus; and mobile homes.

**Table XIV-2 Total Dwelling Units by Type of Structure, 2010 to 2020**

| Building Type               | 2000         |            | 2020          |            | Change 2000-2020 |               |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|
|                             | Units        | % of Total | Units         | % of Total | Units            | % Change      |
| Single Family               | 3,419        | 68.0       | 7,838         | 73.7       | 4,419            | +129.2        |
| Multifamily                 | 1,150        | 22.9       | 2,164         | 20.3       | 1,014            | +88.2         |
| Mobile Home                 | 455          | 9.1        | 629           | 6.0        | 174              | +38.2         |
| <b>Total Dwelling Units</b> | <b>5,024</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>10,631</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>5,607</b>     | <b>+111.6</b> |

Source: California Department of Finance E-8 Historical Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 1990-2000; E-5, Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2011-2020.

In 2020, the City of Coachella had a total of 10,631 total housing units, in which 10,126 units (approximately 95 percent of units), were occupied. Conversely, 505 units, or 5 percent, were registered as vacant in 2020 by the DOF. This vacancy rate may be due to the seasonal, recreational, or occasional use of homes that is popular in the Coachella Valley. The average household size in the City of Coachella is 4.65 persons.

The project proposes a Change of Zone on approximately 56.9 acres of land north of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and west and east of Education Way. The site previously operated as agricultural land; however, agricultural operations has stopped. The site is currently located within the City's Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) zoning designations. Currently, the northern portion of the site is designated as R-S, and the southern portion is designated as R-M. The project proposes a Change of Zone from the R-S and R-M designations to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). R-M General zones permit 20 to 25 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), and R-M Urban zones permit 20 to 38 du/ac.

The Change of Zone proposed for the project is consistent with the Coachella General Plan Land Use designations within the project area. Currently, the project is located within the City's Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. Urban Neighborhood land use designations permit residential densities between 20 to 38 du/ac. Therefore, the project would permit an average of approximately 1,314 dwelling units on the 56.9-acre property. This is illustrated in Table XIV-3.

**Table XIV-3 Potential Project Units**

| Proposed Zone | Acreage | Allowed DU  | Mid Density | Total DU/AC  |
|---------------|---------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| R-M General   | 29.3    | 20-25 du/ac | 22.5 du/ac  | 659          |
| R-M Urban     | 22.6    | 20-38 du/ac | 29 du/ac    | 655          |
| <b>Total</b>  |         |             |             | <b>1,314</b> |

\*For purposes in the analysis of this Initial Study, Mid density dwelling units are utilized.

|                | R-M General | R-M Urban | Total Potential DU |
|----------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|
| <b>Min* DU</b> | 586         | 452       | 1,038              |
| <b>Mid DU</b>  | 659         | 655       | 1,314              |
| <b>Max DU</b>  | 733         | 859       | 1,592              |

\*Min = Minimum number du (20 in both zones), Mid = Medium/middle du (22.5 in R-M General and 29 in R-M Urban), and Max = Maximum du (25 in R-M General and 38 in R-M Urban)

The proposed project could generate a tenant population of 6,110 (mid du), when referencing the 4.65 persons per household in the City. The potential population generated from the project (6,110 persons) represents approximately 13 percent increase of the City's current population. It is anticipated that some of the project tenants served by the future development will be existing residents from within the City of Coachella and/or from neighboring incorporated and unincorporated areas. The net population increase resulting from the project is expected to be less than 13 percent. Therefore, the proposed development and associated tenant population are not expected to conflict with the City's land use composition, zoning, housing diversity, or other regulatory policies. The project is expected to meet the General Plan objective for Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations by contributing to the housing diversity within a walkable environment.

The project does not currently propose development on the 56.9-acre property and a site plan does not currently exist. However, analysis of future development on population and housing are provided in this discussion.

### Discussion of Impacts

- a) **No Impact.** As stated in the Setting, the project site is located in the City's General Plan Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designations. Per the Coachella General Plan Update (CGPU), Urban Neighborhood designations are intended to create a high-intensity, walkable, transit-ready neighborhood with a variety of types of housing – predominantly multi-family of various types. Permitted land uses within Urban Neighborhoods primarily includes multi-family residential; however, retail, office, civic, and recreational uses may be allowed in limited quantities. Small quantities of single-family homes may be allowed in this land use designation. Development intensities in this land use range from 20 to 38 du/ac, with 30 du/ac average for new projects. Neighborhood Center land use designations are intended to create a concentration of commercial businesses and civic amenities (often mixed with multifamily housing) within convenient walking or biking distance of nearby neighborhoods.

The project's currently zoning designation includes R-S and R-M; therefore, the project proposes a Change of Zone to change the zoning designations from R-S and R-M to R-M General, R-M Urban, and C-N. The proposed designations would increase development intensity since the project would remove the Single Family Residential zone. However, the densities allowed within R-M General, R-M Urban, and C-N zones are consistent with the development intensities permitted in Urban Neighborhoods and Neighborhood Centers, as distinguished in the Coachella General Plan Update.

The CGPU Environmental Impact Report analyzed future growth under Chapter 4.13, Population and Housing. Figure 4.13-2 in the EIR forecasts a population of 135,000 by year 2035. As of January 2020, the City of Coachella had a population of 47,186 (California Department of Finance). As a result of project build-out, the future development could add up to approximately 6,110 new residents to the City, for an approximate City population of 53,296. This is an increase of 13 percent and still below the projected 2035 population forecast of 135,000. Although future development would contribute to the growth within the City of Coachella, significant growth to population, housing and employment is already anticipated in the City's General Plan and EIR.



Furthermore, the project site is within an area that is fully served by existing infrastructure, public services and utilities. As a result, development of the project would not cause potential growth inducing effects by extending utilities into an undeveloped area.

No impacts are anticipated relative to the Change of Zone.

- b) **No Impact.** The entire property is currently disturbed and vacant land designated by the City General Plan as Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. The project area was previously utilized as agricultural land. Residential dwellings were not located on the project property; therefore, the proposed project would not displace any existing housing or require replacement housing. No impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**XV. PUBLIC SERVICES**

|  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project result in:</b>  |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| Substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services: |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| a) Fire protection?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Police protection?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Schools?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Parks?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Other public facilities?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Setting**

Fire Protection:

The City of Coachella contracts with Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD) for a full range of fire protection services provided 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. The RCFD is staffed with a combination of County and State of California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection employees. They operate 96 fire stations that serve 1,360,000 residents over 6,970 miles of Riverside County. The City of Coachella has one Fire station, Battalion 6, Coachella Fire Station No. 79, located at 1377 6<sup>th</sup> Street and approximately 1.2 miles from the site. Fire Station No. 79 is staffed by 18 full time personnel, 10 volunteer firefighters, and 10 explorer cadets. Six firefighters are on duty at times. The Station is equipped with two Type 1 fire engines which includes a staff of three persons per engine per day.

It is the goal of the RCFD fire service to have the first engine company arrive on the scene within five minutes 90 percent of the time. Response times to emergency calls within the City average approximately four minutes or less 80% of the time.

Police:

Law enforcement services are provided to the City of Coachella through a contractual agreement with Riverside County Sheriff's Department. The Sheriff's department provides 24-hour municipal police services associated with a City police department. The Sheriff's station is located at 86-625 Airport Boulevard, approximately 2.1 miles southeast of the subject property. Per the City's General Plan EIR, the Coachella Police Department has 36 sworn officers and 2 non-sworn, totaling 38 positions. 24 of these positions are dedicated to the patrol division with the remaining deputies dedicated to special assignments such as the Community Action Team, a School Resources Officer, and Gang and Narcotics Enforcement. The Coachella Police Department divides the City into three beats. The Patrol Division of the department covers an area of 30 square miles.

Schools:

The project site falls within the boundary of the Coachella Valley Unified School District (CVUSD). The nearest elementary school is Valle Del Sol Elementary School located immediate west of the project site, at 51433 Education Way. Bobby Duke Middle School located at 85358 Bagdad Avenue is the closest secondary school, approximately 1 mile from the project site. Coachella Valley High School is approximately 3 miles southwest of the project site.

Parks:

The Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District (CVRPD) provide park and recreational services to the City. Per the City of Coachella General Plan EIR (2015), there are seven public parks located within the City of Coachella, totaling approximately 60.3 acres.

**Discussion of Impacts**

- a) **No Impact.** The project proposes a Change of Zone (CZ) of approximately 56.9 acres of vacant land from Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N) zoning designations. The proposed project is located on an infill site surrounded by existing residential neighborhoods to the east and west, an elementary school to the west, and industrial uses to the south. The site is currently within an area that is provided with fire protection and emergency services by Riverside County Fire. The proposed CZ would permit the development of 20 to 25 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) in the proposed R-M General zone, and 20 to 38 du/ac in the proposed R-M Urban zone. C-N zones allow commercial uses, such as convenience shopping, in proximity to residential neighborhoods. C-N zones allow residential dwelling units with the submittal of a conditional use permit.

The proposed zone changes would allow for a development that would result in an increase in emergency and public service calls for fire services; however, based on the project sites proximity to Fire Station 79 (approximately 1.2 miles), the project would not require new or expanded facilities. Moreover, to ensure adequate emergency fire protection services, the City of Coachella maintains a mutual aid agreement with surrounding City and County jurisdictions. There are three other existing stations that are within the proximity of the City. These include Fire Station No. 39, located outside of the City limits at the Jacqueline Cochran Airport in Thermal, Fire Station No. 70 located at Avenue 54 and Madison Street in La Quinta, and Fire Station No. 86, located at Jackson Street and Dr. Carreon Boulevard in Indio. Fire Station 39 is approximately 3.1 miles away from the project site, Fire Station 70 is approximately 5.3 miles away and Fire Station 86 is approximately 3.9 miles away.

Through the Regional Fire Serve System, the City of Coachella received an immediate response from the outlying stations, including personnel and equipment for any major event or multiple events that may occur within the City. The City also participates in a cost sharing agreement with the Cities of Indio, La Quinta, and Riverside County for the use of the 100' ladder truck located at Fire Station 86 in Indio.

As previously stated, the project proposes a Change of Zone of approximately 56.9 acres. A site plan of the project is not currently provided; however, it can be concluded that development of the site would result in an increase in service and emergency service calls. Therefore, analysis of the proposed residential and commercial zones impact on fire services is provided in this

discussion. Development on the project site would be required to be designed to comply with all applicable fire safety requirements, to include, installation of fire hydrants, and sprinkler system and construction provisions contained in Title 14, California Building Code, and Riverside County Fire Department Standards. Additionally, future development would be required to comply with the City's Development Impact Fees in place at the time of construction. Payment of these fees helps offset impacts by providing revenue for necessary improvements to ensure acceptable fire facilities, response times, equipment and personnel are maintained. The project will be required to annex into the City's Communities Facilities District for Fire Services, which is a special tax used to pay for public services. Therefore, no significant impacts to fire protection services are expected relative to the Change of Zone.

- b) **No Impact.** The project proposes a CZ from the existing R-S and R-M zones, to R-M General, R-M Urban, and C-N. A site plan of the project is not currently provided; however, it can be concluded that development of the site would result in an increase in service and emergency service calls, due to its increase in density. Therefore, analysis of the proposed residential and commercial zones impact on police services is provided in this discussion.

Future development of the project will increase calls and demand for police and emergency services. However, this demand is not expected to hinder the City's ability to provide police services or create demands that would require the construction of a new police station. The project is located in a developed in an urban area, surrounded by existing development that is currently served by the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. The project will be required to comply with the City's Development Impact Fees in place at the time of construction. These fees on new development allow the City to continue to finance public facilities which goes towards the funding of various public services, including police. It also assists in offsetting impacts by providing enough revenue for necessary emergency service improvements to ensure acceptable police and fire response times, equipment, and personnel are maintained. Future development will be required to annex into the City's Communities Facilities District for Police Services, which is a special tax used to pay for public services.

The Change of Zone will contribute no impacts to fire protection services.

- c) **No Impact.** Public education services are provided to the City of Coachella by the Coachella Valley Unified School District. The project proposes a Change of Zone from the existing R-S and R-M zones, to R-M General, R-M Urban, and C-N, on approximately 56.9 acres. The proposed Change of Zone is consistent with the existing land use designations: Urban Neighborhood, and Neighborhood Center. With the proposed Change of Zone, the project site could allow an average of approximately 1,314 dwelling units on the site (see the Population and Housing section for further discussion. This is assuming that the site develops the mid-density dwelling units onsite. Per the 2020 CA Department of Finance, the average persons per household (PPH) is 4.65 persons. At full buildout, future development of the site has the potential to generate approximately 950 new students based on the District's Student Generation Rate (Table XVI-1).

Table XV-1 CVUSD District Wide Student Generation Rate

| School Type  | Dwelling Units | Generation Rate* | Students Generated** |
|--|----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Elementary School  | 1,314          | 0.3974           | 522                  |
| Middle School  | 1,314          | 0.1207           | 158                  |
| High School  | 1,314          | 0.2058           | 270                  |
| <b>Total New Students</b>  |                |                  | <b>950</b>           |
| *Source: 2020 CVUSD Fee Justification Study for New Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development, May 5, 2020 |                |                  |                      |
| **Student Generated numbers were rounded.  |                |                  |                      |

The addition of 950 new students is not anticipated to cause a substantial impact to the District nor would additional school facilities need to be constructed as a result of the proposed project. The District currently has school capacity to house approximately 21,004 students as calculated by the District. Elementary school facilities are sufficient to house 12,216 students in kindergarten through sixth grade, middle school facilities are sufficient to house 2,828 students in seventh through eighth grade, high school capacity is sufficient for 5,960 students in ninth through twelfth grade.

Per the 2020 CVUSD Fee Justification Study, a capacity analysis was conducted for the 2019/2020 school year and the District has excess capacity at its elementary and high school to accommodate students from new development. Middle schools were over capacity by 90 students for the 2019/2020 school year. Moreover, school age children may also attend several private schools located in the Coachella Valley.

Assembly Bill 2926 and Senate Bill 50 (SB 50) allow school districts to collect “development fees” for all new construction for residential/commercial and industrial use. At the time of writing, development fees are \$4.08/sq.ft. to residential and \$0.66/ sq.ft for commercial. Monies collected are used for construction and reconstruction of school facilities. The legislation was enacted to mitigate the impacts to schools by providing funds for the construction of additional facilities based on the additional demand created by new development. Should future construction be proposed, the property would be required to comply with CVUSD development fees. No impacts to local schools are expected relative to the Change of Zone.

- d) **No Impact.** The City of Coachella offers a diverse range of park and recreation facilities. The City operates eight parks, one tot lot, two community centers, one boxing club and a swimming pool. As discussed in the Recreation section (XVI) of this document, the proposed project would not create additional demand for public park facilities or result in the need to modify existing or the construction of new park facilities. Therefore, no impacts are expected.
- e) **No Impact.** No increase in demand for government services or other public facilities is expected beyond those discussed in this section. No impacts to other public facilities are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

| <b>XVI. RECREATION</b>   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Would the project:</b>  |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| a) 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? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?     | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: Coachella 2035 General Plan, 2015)

**Setting**

Parks and open space provide for the preservation, continued growth and enhancement of Coachella’s parklands, recreational areas and surrounding open spaces. Open spaces are areas intended to remain essentially open with limited or no development. This includes spaces used for passive recreation, resource protection and/or hazard avoidance. Parks include greenways, developed parks and other areas primarily used for recreation. Typically, these areas are characterized by a high degree of open area and a limited number of buildings. Parks frequently include sports fields, playground equipment, and picnic areas, sitting areas, concession businesses, open turf, natural areas, trails, and public golf courses. The City provides a variety of recreation facilities and currently has eight parks, one tot lot, two community centers, one boxing club and a swimming pool. The parks are funded by the Coachella parks and recreation foundation.

**Discussion of Impacts**

**a-b) No Impact.** The project proposes a Change of Zone from Single-Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial. Future development on the project site would be required to comply with the City’s parkland in lieu fee (Quimby) and other development impact fees. The future residents and guests generated by future development may lead to an incremental increase in physical deterioration of City public recreational facilities. However, this impact could be reduced if the project proposes open space and community recreational areas (i.e., parks, playgrounds, etc.).

With the compliance of the City’s fees, no impacts are expected relative to the Change of Zone.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**XVII. TRANSPORTATION**

| Would the project:   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?           | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Result in inadequate emergency access?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: Coachella 2035 General Plan, 2015; Coachella General Plan Update EIR, Traffic Section, 2013)

**Setting**

The project is situated north of 52nd Avenue, southwest of the Coachella Valley Storm Water Channel, and west and east of Education Way. Education Way intersects the southwest portion of the site. The project is within the City of Coachella’s Urban Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center land use designation, specifically zoned Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M). The project is proposing a Change of Zone to General R-M, Urban R-M, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). Development within the site limits is not proposed at the time of writing.

Access to the site is primarily provided by 52nd Avenue. The following analysis evaluated the potential circulation system deficiencies that may result from potential development of the site within the proposed zoning designations. Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual (9<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2012) rates were used to determine trip generation of the proposed project.

Level of Service

Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of transportation system performance based upon the ratio of traffic volume relative to the capacity of the roadway or intersection. The volume-to-capacity ratio (V/C) indicates the overall performance of the roadway segment or intersection and corresponds to a rating of A through F identifying its level of capacity utilization and relative level of congestion. LOS A represents free-flow traffic with little or no delay whereas LOS F represents a breakdown of traffic flow and a high incidence of delay. According to the City of Coachella Traffic Impact Study, the City of Coachella has established LOS D as the acceptable LOS for its intersections. Therefore, any intersection operating at LOS E or F will be considered deficient for the purposes of the analysis.

Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT)

Vehicle Miles Travelled is a measure of the amount of travel for all vehicles in a geographic region over a given period of time, typically a one-year period. The analysis of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) (SB743) attributable to a project in CEQA went into full effect statewide on July 1, 2020. According to the Governor’s office of Planning and Research (OPR) proposed CEQA Guideline Implementing SB 743,

projects that decrease vehicle miles traveled in a project area compared to existing conditions should be considered to have a less than significant transportation impact. The California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) publishes a resource for Local Government to assess emission reductions from Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures. The CAPCOA report recognizes that land use planning provides the best opportunity to influence GHG emissions through a reduction in overall VMT.

Goals for reducing Greenhouse Gasses (GHG) have been the primary motivation for the shift to VMT measures. Reductions in VMT produce many other potential benefits such as reductions in other air pollutant emissions, water pollution, wildlife mortality and traffic congestion, as well as improvements in safety and health and savings in public and private costs.

The City's Climate Action Plan (CAP) includes the following Reduction Target/Goal: Establish a per service population 2020 emissions reduction target of 15% below 2010 levels and a 2035 emissions reduction target of 49% below 2010 levels. The CAP states that the combustion of gasoline and diesel fuels by the transportation sector contributed the largest proportion of emissions in Coachella. Transportation gasoline use resulted in 41% of the community total of GHG emissions in 2010. The CAP further states that lowering transportation emissions requires making vehicles and their fuels cleaner, reducing the length of driving trips, managing the demand for travel, and providing alternatives such as walking, biking and transit for travel.

According to the National Center for Sustainable Transportation, a number of cities, regions and states across the United States have begun to deemphasize vehicle delay metrics such as LOS. In their place, policymakers are considering alternative transportation impact metrics that more closely approximate the true environmental impacts of driving. VMT is one metric that is increasingly being utilized.

Goals for reducing Greenhouse Gasses (GHG) have been the primary motivation for the shift to VMT measures. Reductions in VMT produce many other potential benefits such as reductions in other air pollutant emissions, water pollution, wildlife mortality and traffic congestion, as well as improvements in safety and health and savings in public and private costs.

#### TUMF

The Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) Ordinance became effective July 1, 1989. The TUMF program is a component of the twenty-year Measure A, sales tax program managed by the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) and approved by voters in November 1988. In 2002, a thirty-year extension was approved by Riverside County voters and resulted in an expiration date of 2039.

Under the TUMF, developers of residential, industrial, and commercial property pay a development fee to fund transportation projects that will be required as a result of the growth the projects create. TUMF will be required as a Condition of Approval for any future development project.

The City of Coachella implements a Development Impact Fee (DIF.) The proposed project is located within the City of Coachella and any proposed future development will therefore be subject to the DIF. Eligible facilities for funding the City DIF program are identified on the County of Riverside's Public Needs List.

#### **Discussion of Impacts**



- a-b) No Impact.** The project applicant proposes to process a zone change for approximately 56.9 acres. The property is currently zoned for Single Family Residential (S-F) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) and is proposing a change to General R-M, Urban R-M, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N).

The property is located on the north side of 52nd Avenue and on the east and west sides of Education Way. 52nd Avenue serves as the Project Site's primary source of access. This roadway is currently paved with two lanes, curb and gutter, forming portions of the western boundary of the project and intersecting the site through the southwesterly portions.

As required by SB 743, VMT replaced the former metric used to analyze traffic impacts which was LOS. According to *Table 1* of the Policy, retail project types would result in a significant impact if the project caused a net increase in the total existing VMT for the region.

With the implementation of SB 743, intersection LOS is not calculated to determine transportation impacts, however it provides information regarding intersection capacity and general plan consistency for the City.

#### LOS

Average Daily Trips (ADT) refers to the total number of vehicles that travel a defined segment of roadway over a twenty-four-hour period. The standard most often used to evaluate the operating conditions of the transportation system is called level of service (LOS). LOS is a qualitative assessment of the quantitative effect of factors such as: speed and travel time, traffic volume, geometric features, traffic interruptions, delays, and freedom to maneuver, driver comfort and convenience, and vehicle operating costs. LOS compares existing traffic volumes (V) with available roadway capacity (C). LOS allows operating conditions to be characterized as LOS "A" through LOS "F", where LOS "A" represents the most favorable free flow conditions and LOS "F" the least favorable forced flow driving condition. The LOS categories are based on relative levels of driver acceptability of various delays. A given lane or roadway may provide a wide range of service levels, depending upon traffic volumes and speeds.

Roadway capacity has been defined as the maximum number of vehicles that can pass over a given roadway during a given time under prevailing roadway and traffic conditions. The capacity of a roadway used for design purposes (generally defined as LOS D) is the level at which the facility is handling the maximum traffic volume that it can accommodate while maintaining an acceptable level of driver satisfaction. The City of Coachella has defined Level of Service "D" as the performance threshold for roadway segments and intersections.

52nd Avenue is designated as a major arterial road with enhanced bicycle facilities, according to the City of Coachella's General Plan. These facilities provide for all modes of travel, but they acknowledge that the arterial is a primary link in the City's vehicular transportation system. Major arterials have six travel lanes and can have ROW up to 132 feet. Travel lanes can vary from 11 to 12 feet. The General Plan roadway designations are determined based on projected traffic numbers. Future development projects will be conditioned to improve the adjacent portion of Little Morongo Road to its ultimate condition. The improvements are identified as a half-width (55 foot) section, including paving, gutter, sidewalk and landscape parkway. Final Street Improvement Plans will be reviewed and approved by the City.

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments Coachella Valley Traffic Counts Interactive GIS Map details the traffic counts throughout the Coachella Valley. 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue east of Highway 111 had traffic counts of 7,650 eastbound and 7,922 westbound, for a total of 15,572. In addition, 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue west of Highway 86 South had traffic counts of 2,845 eastbound and 2,910 westbound for a total of 5,755.

According to the Coachella General Plan Traffic Impact Study, a Major Arterial road has a maximum two-way traffic volume (ADT) of 56,000. 52nd Avenue, the Major Arterial Road and the sites primary source of access, has a V/C of 0.885 for a LOS of D. This would result in an overall capacity of approximately 63,300 for the adjacent portion of 52nd Avenue.

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Rates – 9<sup>th</sup> Edition was utilized to compare the potential maximum trip generation of the approved land use, Single Family Residential, and the proposed land uses, General R-M, Urban R-M, and Neighborhood Commercial. The guidance provides the following Rates for the four land uses:

**Table XVI-1 ITE Trip Generation Rates – 9<sup>th</sup> Edition**

| Description/ITE Code   | Units | ITE Trip Generation Rates |      |      |
|--|-------|---------------------------|------|------|
|  |       | Weekday                   | AM   | PM   |
| Single Family Homes/210  | DU*   | 9.52                      | 0.75 | 1.00 |
| Multi-Family Houses (low rise) / 220                             | DU    | 6.65                      | 0.51 | 0.62 |
| Mid-Rise Residential with 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Commercial / 231 | DU    | N/A                       | 0.67 | 0.78 |

\*DU = Dwelling Unit

The following assumptions are utilized for the purpose of this CEQA document:

**Table XVI-2 Project Assumptions Based on Proposed Land Uses**

| Land Use                              | Allowable Density | Acreage | Units (mid)* |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------|
| Existing: Single Family Homes         | 4.6 DU/acre       | 23.9    | 109.94       |
| Existing: Multi-Family Houses         | 14 DU/acre        | 29.8    | 417.2        |
| Multiple Family Residential - General | 20-25 DU/acre     | 29.3    | 659          |
| Multiple Family Residential – Urban   | 20-38 DU/acre     | 22.6    | 655          |
| Neighborhood Commercial               |                   |         |              |

\*Mid density dwelling unit number was utilized in the analysis of future development-generated trips.

**Table XVI-3 Estimated Maximum Total Generated Trips**

| Description/ITE Code<br>(Max. Density Allowed) | ITE Trip Generation Rates <sup>1</sup> |     |     |
|--|--|-----|-----|
|  | Weekday                                | AM  | PM  |
| Existing: Single Family Homes / 210            | 1,047                                  | 82  | 110 |
| Existing: Multi-Family Homes / 220             | 2,774                                  | 213 | 259 |
| Multi-Family Homes (General) / 220             | 4,382                                  | 336 | 409 |
| Multi-Family Homes (Urban) / 220               | 4,356                                  | 334 | 406 |
| Difference <sup>2</sup>                        | 4,917                                  | 375 | 446 |

**Notes:** 1. The max dwelling unit number was used for the table, to analyze worst case scenario.

2. The difference between proposed and existing land uses.

As shown in Table XVI-3, if a future General R-M, Urban R-M, or Neighborhood Commercial project is submitted with the maximum estimated FAR, average daily trips are estimated to be more than two times higher than a Single Family Residential or Multiple Family Residential project of maximum allowable density.

Future Development Projects will require case by case analysis to determine appropriate mitigation relative to estimated project trip generation. Future Traffic Analyses may be required at the time of project submittal. The City has the ability to establish a variety of conditions including fair share contributions to improvements to the circulation system. Impacts relative to trips in exceedance of rates utilized to determine current roadway design parameters will be addressed by appropriate conditions of approval as determined by the reviewing agencies.

Prior to approval future development projects, including offsite street design standards and the projects fair share portion of offsite street improvements will be reviewed by the City as part of project processing. As a Standard Condition, future applicants shall complete adjacent roadway improvements as designated by the General Plan or the City Engineer.

The Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) Ordinance became effective July 1, 1989. The TUMF program is a component of the twenty year Measure A, sales tax program managed by the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) and approved by voters in November, 1988. In 2002, a thirty year extension was approved by Riverside County voters and resulted in an expiration date of 2039.

Under the TUMF, developers of residential, industrial and commercial property pay a development fee to fund transportation projects that will be required as a result of the growth the projects create. TUMF will be required as a Condition of Approval for any future development project.

Circulation and parking will be required to be consistent with City parking standards as determined by City Staff.

City review of development projects is expected to result in appropriate conditions based on future project descriptions. Following implementation of conditions, future development projects are not anticipated to conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or Policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system.

#### VMT

Riverside County identifies RIVTAM as the appropriate tool for conducting VMT analysis for land use projects in Riverside County. RIVTAM considers interaction between different land uses based on socio-economic data such as population, households and employment.

Travel activity associated with total VMT is normally extracted from the “without Project” and “with Project” RIVTAM model run for 2012 and 2040 conditions, then interpolated for baseline (2020) conditions. This methodology is commonly referred to as “boundary method” and includes the total VMT for all vehicle trips with one or both trip ends within a specific geographic area. The “boundary method” VMT per service population for the CVAG subregion is utilized to normalize VMT into a standard unit for comparison purposes, focusing on the total population and employment in the Coachella Valley. VMT for the area is calculated, total area VMT is then

normalized by dividing by the respective service population (i.e., population and employment of the Coachella Valley).

Future development projects effect on VMT (for non-residential uses) is not considered significant if it results in a cumulative link-level boundary CVAG VMT per service population decrease under the plus project condition compared to the no project condition. For Residential Uses, VMT per capita exceeding a level of 15 percent below the current jurisdictional baseline VMT per capita. For new retail and other land use projects, utilizing a threshold consistent with the net total VMT of the jurisdiction.

There is currently no development proposed for the subject property. The proposed zone change is expected to result in no impacts relative to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3.

- c) **No Impact.** In its current condition, the undeveloped project property is bordered by the paved alignment of 52nd Avenue on the south. The paved alignment of Education Way abuts the project along the western portion of the site. To provide proper access to future development, off-site design and proposed off-site improvements would include street paving on portions of 52nd Avenue and Education Way along the southerly and westerly portions of the project. Circulation design will undergo City and Fire Department review before approval to ensure that the local development standards for roadways, in interior and exterior circulation designs, are met without resulting in traffic safety impacts including hazardous design features. Future projects will not include sharp curves or dangerous intersections. The proposed land use would be consistent with existing land uses throughout the neighboring community. No incompatible uses will result from future development. No impacts are expected associated with the Change of Zone.
- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** Future development projects will be required to provide adequate access to emergency response vehicles, as required by the City of Coachella and in accordance with the Fire Department review and requirements. Site plan review would include in-depth analysis of emergency access to the site to ensure proper access to facilities. As mentioned previously, future development projects are expected to obtain access from 52nd Avenue and Education Way. The design details of future vehicular driveways will be reviewed and approved by the Riverside County Fire Department.

Both residential and light industrial future development would be required to provide proper premises identification with legible site name, address numbers, and clear signage indicating the site access points. Operational fire hydrants and extinguishers are also required in accordance with Chapter 15.24 of the Coachella Municipal Code (California Fire Code). Off-site project improvements will involve paving along the project's perimeter within the required rights-of-way and according to the City's designated street standards.

The proposed zone change will not result in impacts relative to emergency access. No impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES**

| <b>Would the project:</b>  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a Tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resource Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size 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 Resource Code Section 5020.1(k), or;   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe. | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: 2035, Coachella General Plan Update).

**Setting**

As discussed in the Cultural Section of this Initial Study, the Coachella Valley is a historical center of Native American settlement, where U.S. surveyors noted large numbers of Indian villages and *rancherías*, occupied by the Cahuilla people, in the mid-19th century. The Takic-speaking Cahuilla are generally divided by anthropologists into three groups, according to their geographic setting: the Pass Cahuilla of the San Gorgonio Pass-Palm Springs area, the Mountain Cahuilla of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains and the Cahuilla Valley, and the Desert Cahuilla of the eastern Coachella Valley.

The Cahuilla were primarily hunters and gatherers who exploited nearly all of the resources available in a highly developed seasonal mobility system. They were adapted to the arid conditions of the desert floor, the lacustral cycles of Holocene Lake Cahuilla, and the environments of the nearby mountains. When the lake was full, or nearly full, the Cahuilla would take advantage of the resources presented by the body of fresh water. Once the lake had desiccated, they utilized the available terrestrial resources. They also migrated to the higher elevations of the nearby mountains to take advantage of the resources and cooler temperatures available in that environment.

The City of Coachella contains a significant amount of archaeological resources due to its rich cultural history and historical settlements within its boundaries. It was once the site of Native Americans tribal land and some tribal land still exists there. The Native American population is still present in Coachella. Per Figure 4.4-2 in the Coachella General Plan Update (CGPU) Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR),

most of the City is designated as “medium sensitivity to historical resources sensitivity”. This is due to the City’s historical, cultural, and archaeological resources.

The proposed project site occupies approximately 56.9 acres of vacant land previously used for agricultural operations. The site has been graded and disturbed since before 1953, according to historical aerial imagery.

### Discussion of Impacts

**a i-ii) No Impact.** As discussed previously throughout this document, the project site is approximately 56.9 acres of fallow farmland currently zoned for Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M). The project is proposing a Change of Zone (CZ) from the R-S and R-M designations to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N).

As discussed in the Cultural Resources section of this Initial Study, there are no known or observed historic resources as defined in Section 15046.5 of the CEQA Guidelines that would be adversely affected by the proposed zone change. This includes known or observable objects, buildings, structures, sites, areas, places, records, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically accurate. According to the National Register Database and Research, historic buildings do not exist within or near the project site. In addition, historic aerial imagery dated between 1953 and 2016 do not indicate the existence of any buildings within the project vicinity. Therefore, no man-made features were known to be present in the project area prior to then. The aerial photographs further demonstrate that the project area has been primarily used as farmlands since 1953, alternating between fallow and vegetative cycles until present day. The entire site has been extensively disturbed in the past, and no other features, site, or artifacts more than 50 years of age have been encountered.

Public Resources Code 21074 identifies “Tribal Cultural Resources” as “sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe” and that are either included or determined to be eligible for inclusion on the national, state, or local register of historic resources, or that are determined by the lead agency, in its discretion, to be significant when taking into consideration the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.

As previously discussed, the project is proposing a zone change from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L) and no development is proposed at this time. The City of Coachella and the Coachella Valley have a long history of tribal settlement; there is potential for future development to encounter Tribal Resources. Prospective development would require further environmental analysis and a project specific cultural assessment, at which time the NAHC would be contacted for sacred land research and contact information for local Tribes would be provided. Less than significant impacts to Tribal Resources are anticipated as a result of the zone change.

AB 52 Consultation was conducted by the City of Coachella from XX, XX, 2021 through XX, XX, 2021. Need information from City staff in order to complete this section and provide any mitigation if necessary.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**

| Would the project:   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonable foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Setting**

**Water**

Groundwater is the primary source of domestic water supply in the Coachella Valley; the Coachella Water Authority (CWA) provides over 8,000 municipal water service connections and over 2,128 million gallons (MG) of water to customers in their service area. CWA’s existing water system consists of different pressure zones, groundwater wells, storage reservoirs, booster pumping stations, and distribution facilities. Groundwater is pumped from six wells within the City’s distribution system. The total capacity of active wells is approximately 11,400 gallons per minute (gpm). CWA has three storage reservoirs within the City, with a total reservoir capacity of approximately 10.5 MG. CWA’s distribution system network consists of approximately 120 miles of pipeline, which ranges from 4-inches to 36-inches in diameter.

**Wastewater**

Wastewater services are provided to the City by the Coachella Sanitary District. The City of Coachella’s sewer system consist of approximately 90 miles of sanitary sewers that collect local flows generated from the City’s residential, commercial, and industrial areas and discharge to the City’s Avenue 54 wastewater treatment plan (WWTP) with a capacity of 4.5 million gallons per day (MGD).

**Solid Waste**

The City of Coachella contracts with Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services. Burrtec provides an array of services and offers residents containers for landfill waste, green waste, and recyclables. Residential and Commercial waste and recycling is taken to the Coachella Valley Transfer Station. Waste from the Transfer Station is then taken to a permitted landfill or recycling facility outside of the Coachella Valley. These include Badlands Disposal site, El Sobrante Sanitary Landfill, and Lamb Canyon Disposal Site.

**Discussion of Impacts**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The Coachella Water Authority (CWA) provides domestic water supply and the Coachella Sanitary District provides Wastewater services to the City of Coachella. The subject property is approximately 56.9 acres and is currently characterized as fallow farmland and is not served by existing utilities at this time. As previously discussed throughout this document, the project is requesting a zone change from its current land use designation of Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) to General R-M, Urban R-M, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N) and no entitlements for development are proposed at this time.

Groundwater is the primary source of domestic water supply in the Coachella Valley; CWA provides potable water to the City by pumping from six wells within the City's distribution system. The total capacity of active wells is approximately 11,400 gallons per minute (gpm). CWA has three storage reservoirs within the City, with a total reservoir capacity of approximately 10.5 MG. CWA's distribution system network consists of approximately 120 miles of pipeline, which range from 4-inches to 36-inches in diameter.

The City of Coachella 2015 Sewer System Master Plan Update states that flows generated from the City's residential, commercial, and industrial areas discharge to the City's Avenue 54 wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) with a capacity of 4.5 million gallons per day (MGD). In addition, the city maintains about 90 miles of sanitary sewers ranging in size from 4-inches to 54-inches in diameter.

The undeveloped, fallow farmland project site is currently not supported by an existing stormwater drainage system. Based on the local natural topography, runoff from the undeveloped property would have the propensity to flow toward the south and southeast without the benefit of any existing drainage controls. Project implementation would not result in physical improvements, such that would alter the on-site drainage conditions or contribute runoff water to the local facilities.

Future project-specific development will be subject to the City's entitlement and environmental review process to assess the nature and intensity of potable water and wastewater use, as well as all of the opportunities to incorporate water conservation measures. Development of any kind would be expected to implement water conservation measures to reduce impacts to local groundwater supplies. These measures may include low-flow plumbing fixtures, drought-tolerant (native) outdoor landscaping, and water-efficient irrigation systems.

Project specific domestic water and wastewater improvements necessary to serve future development would be identified by the CWA and the Coachella Sanitation District and included as conditions of approval by the City of Coachella during the City's standard review process. The



Zone change currently being processed through the City would not trigger the need for the construction of additional new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of these facilities.

No impacts are expected as a result of the proposed zone change.

- b) No Impact.** CWA's 2015 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) has been prepared to conduct long term water supply and water resource planning to ensure reliability in water service that is sufficient to meet the needs of its consumers in their service area. Per the CWA 2015 UWMP, the total pumping capacity of active wells is approximately 11,400 gpm or 16.5 mgd. CWA has a current baseline water demand rate of 204 gallons per capita per day (GPCD). CWA's actual water usage is 142 gpcd and is 40.8% lower than the targeted reduction for 2015 and 2020. It is anticipated that future users will continue to achieve a lower GPCD average usage across all customer classes due to implementation of plumbing code and updated landscape ordinance requirements. The City's Municipal Code has several ordinances in place to ensure water supply and efficiency measures are in place. Additionally, any development within the project area will be required to comply with the City's Landscape Development Guidelines and would include water efficient landscaping. Compliance with these guidelines and City ordinances will ensure that future development reduces water demand to meet CWA's target demands.

The UWMP estimates a population projection out to 2035, the 2020 population is estimated at 55,783. The current population of the City of Coachella is 47,186 persons (Department of Finance Population and Housing Estimates) which is still below the UWMP population estimates. The project site is vacant, fallow farmland and therefore is not currently utilizing domestic water services provided by CWA. The project proposes a zone change from Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) designations to General R-M, Urban R-M, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N) designations. The project does not propose any development at the time of writing. Development of either R-M or C-N designations will add to the demand of water supplies, however, potential demand is expected to be incremental and could be served by the existing water supply.

Future project-specific development will be subject to the City's entitlement and environmental review process to assess the nature and intensity of potable water, as well as all of the opportunities to incorporate water conservation measures. Project specific domestic water improvements necessary to serve future development would be identified by CWA and included as conditions of approval by the City of Coachella during the City's standard review process.

No impacts are expected as a result of the proposed Change of Zone.

- c) No Impact.** The project proposes a zoning change from Single Family Residential (R-S) and Multiple Family Residential (R-M) to General R-M, Urban R-M, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). The project does not propose any development at the time of writing. Any Wastewater generated by future development of the Project site will be conveyed to CWA Avenue 54 Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). This WWTP has a capacity of 4.5 million gallons per day (mgd). The City's collection system includes 90 miles of sanitary sewer and two pumping stations. Wastewater from the City is conveyed to the Avenue 54 WWTP, which treats an average of 2.9 mgd and has a capacity of 4.5 mgd. As previously discussed, future development of the project is expected to moderately increase wastewater flows, however the site will be

subject to the City's entitlement and environmental review process to assess and mitigate these impacts.

No impacts to wastewater are expected relative to the Change of Zone.

- d) **No Impact.** The City of Coachella contracts with Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services to provide regular trash, recycling, and green waste pickup. The proposed project does not currently involve any entitlements for development. However, solid waste generated by future residential or commercial development would generate an incremental increase in solid waste volumes during short-term construction and long-term operational activities. Solid waste generated by the future development would be hauled to the Edom Hill Transfer Station. Waste from this transfer station is then sent to a permitted landfill or recycling facility outside of the Coachella Valley. These include Badlands Disposal Site, El Sobrante Sanitary Landfill and Lamb Canyon Disposal Site. These facilities are required to comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. CalRecycle data indicated that these landfills have 40-50% of their remaining estimated capacity. Therefore, future development would be required to comply with all applicable solid waste statutes and regulations as a result of development on the project site. No impacts are anticipated relative to the Change of Zone.
- e) **No Impact.** The City of Coachella contracts with the Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services to serve the solid waste disposal needs of the city, including the undeveloped project site. The project does not propose any entitlements for development of the site at this time. The proposed land use change and any future development of the project site will comply with all applicable solid waste statutes and guidelines. No impacts are expected relative to solid waste statutes and regulations.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**XX. WILDFIRE**

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

|  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency plan or emergency evacuation plan?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(Sources: The City of Coachella 2035 General Plan, 2015)

**Setting**

A wildfire is an unplanned fire that burns in a natural area such as a forest, grassland, or prairie. Wildfires are often caused by humans or lightning and are exacerbated by steep slopes, dense vegetation (fuel), and dry and windy weather conditions. When these conditions are present, a wildfire can burn quickly and over a vast area, damaging hillsides, essential infrastructure, and homes and buildings.

A wildland urban interface (WUI) is the line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetation fuels. People and man-made structures in WUI areas are more susceptible to the impacts of wildfires due to their adjacency to areas that provide fuel to wildfires, such as forests with dense vegetation. The project site is located on approximately 56.9 acres of previously disturbed land. The project proposes a Change of Zone from Single-Family Residential (R-S) to Multiple-Family Residential (R-M) to R-M General, R-M Urban, and Neighborhood Commercial (C-N). Impacts of wildfires to the proposed project is discussed below.

**a-d) No Impact.** The site is currently characterized as disturbed land that was previously utilized for agricultural operations, since before 1953. The property ceased agricultural operations and is currently fallow. The topography at the site is defined as relatively flat, with a subtle gradient to the northwest. The properties surrounding the project site are completely developed with residential communities to the west and east, and Valle Del Sol Elementary School immediately west of the site. The northern property boundary is met by the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel, and the southern property boundary is met by 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Industrial land uses are located south of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

According to Cal Fire's Fire and Resource Assessment Program the proposed project site is not located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA), or a Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) in a State Responsibility Area (SRA). Additionally, Chapter 7, Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery, of the Technical Background Report for the Coachella General Plan Update (CGPU) Environmental Impact Report (EIR), claims that wildfires are not prevalent in the City. Wildfires occur rarely in or near the developed areas in the valley floor. Urban fires are particularly dangerous in heavily developed, older areas, where unsprinklered buildings not constructed of fire-resistant materials are located close together (Technical Background Report, page 7-2). Impacts of wildfires in or around the project area are not anticipated.

According to the Technical Background Report wildfires in the Coachella region typically start in the mountains or foothills to the east, and in the San Jacinto Mountains to the west. Minor vegetation fires have occurred to the south, in the Thermal area. These fires have historically not impacted the City of Coachella. With the future development of the hillsides, in the eastern portion of the General Plan area, there will be an increased potential for wildfires to impact development, especially if the prevailing winds at the time fan the fires so that they spread onto the urban-wildland fire interface. If this happens, evacuation of the potentially affected neighborhoods may be required. In general, evacuees would take roads leading toward the more developed areas of the City, to the west and south of the hillsides.

The CGPU identifies major evacuation routes in the City. The routes include: 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Route 86, Harrison Street, Grapefruit Boulevard, and Interstate 10 (I-10) freeway. The closest major evacuation route to the project site is 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, which lies immediately south of the project. Grapefruit Boulevard (Highway 111) and Route 86 are the second and third closest evacuation routes to the project, lying approximately 0.36 miles west and 0.50 miles east of the proposed project, respectively. The proposed project will not significantly alter the existing circulation pattern in the project area or adversely impact evacuation plans, considering the site is currently surrounded by developed homes and existing paved improvements.

Vehicular access to the project property would occur on the existing roadways, 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Education Way. Emergency access to the project would occur along these roadways during project operation. Prior to project development, access and site plans will be required to be submitted to the Fire Department for review in order to assure that the project does not interfere with emergency access. As a result, the project is not expected to impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No impacts are anticipated.

Wildfire risk is related to a number of parameters, including fuel loading (vegetation), fire weather (winds, temperatures, humidity levels and fuel moisture contents) and topography (degree of slope). Steep slopes contribute to fire hazards by intensifying the effects of wind and make fire suppression difficult. Fuels such as grass are highly flammable because they have a high surface area to mass ratio and require less heat to reach the ignition point. The topography of the project site is relatively flat, due to its previously graded nature and operation as agricultural land. Steep slopes do not occur on the project site. The closest slope to the project site is located north of the site for the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel. The Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel slopes approximately 26 feet. The Channel does not provide the environment suitable for a wildfire to occur. Therefore, project site is not expected to expose

project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

The proposed project would include development of infrastructure (water, sewer, and storm drainage). The proposed improvements would allow for decrease fire risk relative to existing conditions. The project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. As a result, the project is not expected to require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.

The property is located in an urbanized area. Landslides include rockfalls, deep slope failure, and shallow slope failure are not likely to occur at the project site, due to the absence of steep slopes. Factors such as the geological conditions, drainage, slope, vegetation, and others affect the potential for landslides. The project site is relatively flat; therefore, the potential for a landslide in the project site is essentially non-existent. As a result, the project is not expected to 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 and no impact is expected to result from the project.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

NOTE: If there are significant environmental impacts which cannot be mitigated and no feasible project alternatives are available, then complete the mandatory findings of significance and attach to this initial study as an appendix. This is the first step for starting the environmental impact report (EIR) process.

|   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Does the project:</b>  |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| a) Have the potential to substantially 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, substantially 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? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) 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)  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Discussion of Impacts**

a) **No Impact.** As concluded in the Biological and Cultural Resources Sections of this Initial Study, the proposed project would result in no impacts. The Change of Zone is compatible with the City of Coachella General Plan and its surroundings. The project will not significantly degrade the overall quality of the region’s environment, or substantially reduce the habitat of a 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 community. The project site has been previously disturbed over the years and development of the site would not eliminate important examples of major periods of the California History or pre-history. Based upon the information provided in the biological and cultural sections within this Initial Study, approval and implementation of the project is not expected to substantially alter or degrade the quality of the environment and mitigation measures included in this document will reduce potential impact to less than significant levels.

- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project and its location is found to be adequate and consistent with existing federal, state, and local policies and is consistent with the City of Coachella General Plan and surrounding land use. Approval and implementation of the proposed project will result in no impacts related to cumulatively considerable impacts.
- c) **No Impact.** As discussed in the various sections throughout this Initial Study, the proposed project would not include a land use that could result in substantial adverse effects on human beings. The City's detailed review process will ensure that applicable guidelines are being followed. Based upon the findings provided in this document, no impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None Required

## References

City of 2015 Coachella General Plan, 2035 and General Plan EIR

CWA 2015 Urban Water Management Plan

City of Coachella 2015 Sewer System Management Plan

City of Coachella Municipal Code

Riverside County General Plan, 2015

California Division of Mines and Geology, 1987

CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2

City of Coachella Climate Action Plan, June 2014

California Scenic Highway Mapping System

Riverside County Important Farmland 2014 Map

CalRecycle Solid Waste Information System