

# **Draft Initial Study and Negative Declaration**

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**Application for Change of Zone Change (ZMA 02-16)  
and General Plan Amendment (GPA02-16)  
Feliks Akopyan**

Prepared for:

City of Desert Hot Springs  
65950 Pierson Boulevard  
Desert Hot Springs, California 92240



Prepared by:



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

Desert Hot Springs Planning Department  
Charles Rangel  
Interim Community Development Director  
City of Desert Hot Springs  
65950 Pierson Boulevard  
Desert Hot Springs, California 92240  
760-329-6411

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# CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose and Authority

The City of Desert Hot Springs (City) is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Act (CEQA), and is responsible for carrying out, authorizing, or approving actions that have the potential to adversely affect the environment. The Project will require certain discretionary approvals by the City and other governmental agencies. Therefore, the Project is subject to environmental review requirements under CEQA.

CEQA requires that the public agencies analyze and acknowledge the environmental consequences of their discretionary actions and consider alternatives and mitigation measures that could avoid or reduce significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposed project.

The project proposes a General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Change of Zone (CZ) of approximately 19.44 acres of vacant and undeveloped desert, from Residential Low Density (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L), and does not involve any specific form of development. The project site is located east of Little Morongo Road and north of the unimproved alignment of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the City of Desert Hot Springs. The proposed land use conversion would result in the northward extension of the existing Light Industrial District that is situated east of Little Morongo Road. The current condition of the existing Light Industrial sector in this vicinity is largely undeveloped with various approved entitlements for pending development.

This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000 et. seq. The City of Desert Hot Springs will serve as the lead agency pursuant to CEQA.



## **1.2 Determination**

This Initial Study determined that the proposed Change of Zone and General Plan Amendment of 19.44 acres from R-L/SP Residential Low Density (0-5 DU/AC) to I-L Low Industrial would not have a significant impact on the environment, with the implementation of mitigation measures. A Negative Declaration is proposed.

## **1.3 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Authority to Prepare a Mitigated Negative Declaration**

This Draft Negative Declaration (Neg-Dec) has been prepared by the City of Desert Hot Springs as lead agency and is in conformance with Section 15070, Subsection (a), of the State of California Guidelines for Implementation of the CEQA. The purpose of the Neg-Dec and the Initial Study Checklist was to determine whether there were potentially significant impacts associated with the proposed Change of Zone and General Plan Amendment of 19.44 acres from R-L/SP Residential Low Density (0-5 DU/AC) to I-L Low Industrial as requested by Feliks Akopyan.

## **1.4 Public Review Process**

In accordance with CEQA, a good faith effort has been made during the preparation of this Neg-Dec to contact affected agencies, organizations and persons who may have an interest in this project. The Neg-Dec has been sent to the Riverside County Clerk, responsible agencies, and advertised in The Desert Sun.



City of Desert Hot Springs

Date: January 2017

Project Title: Application for Change of Zone ZMA 02-16, General Plan Amendment 02-16

Project Name: Feliks Akopyan

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## CHAPTER TWO – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Project Vicinity

The project is located on 19.44 acres of undisturbed desert east of Little Morongo Road, between 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Desert View Drive, in the City of Desert Hot Springs, California.

**Total Project Area:** 19.44 gross acres

**Assessor's Parcel Number:** 663-260-001; 663-260-002

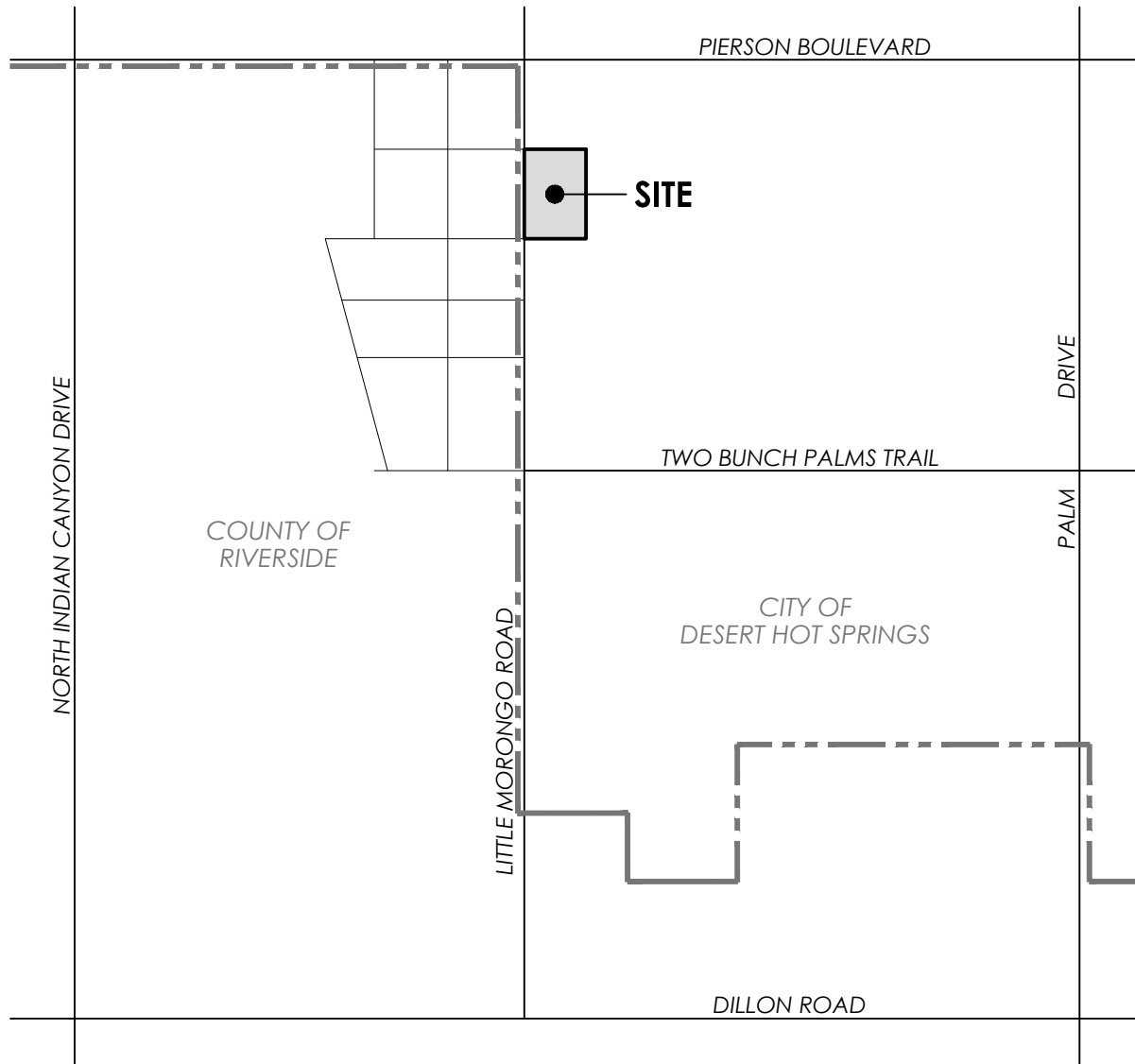
**Section, Township & Range Description or reference:**

POR of S ½ of NW ¼ of Section 36, Township 2 South, Range 4 East, San Bernardino Base Line & Meridian

The 19.44 acre site consists of vacant desert land and is located east of the projected centerline of Little Morongo Road, between 13<sup>th</sup> Ave and Desert View Drive. The project site contains slight to moderate amounts of typical desert vegetation (scrub brush and low-lying plants). Topographically, the site drains to the south/southeast. The site has no street improvements and has street access via Little Morongo Road, a two lane paved road. East of the property is the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) Morongo Wash Conservation Area, Riverside County Flood Control Interim Storm Channel and the entire site is within Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood zones AO, and subject to three distinguished flooding conditions, based in part on the proximity to the Big Morongo Wash. In particular, the northeast 2.5 acres of the project can potentially be affected by an average flood depth of 3' and a velocity of 9 FPS. The central 13.6 acres of the project are subject to an average flood depth of 3' and a velocity of 8 FPS, while the southwest 3.3 acres are subject to an average flood depth of 1' and a velocity of 5 FPS.

The location of the project site is shown below in Exhibit 1 and 2.





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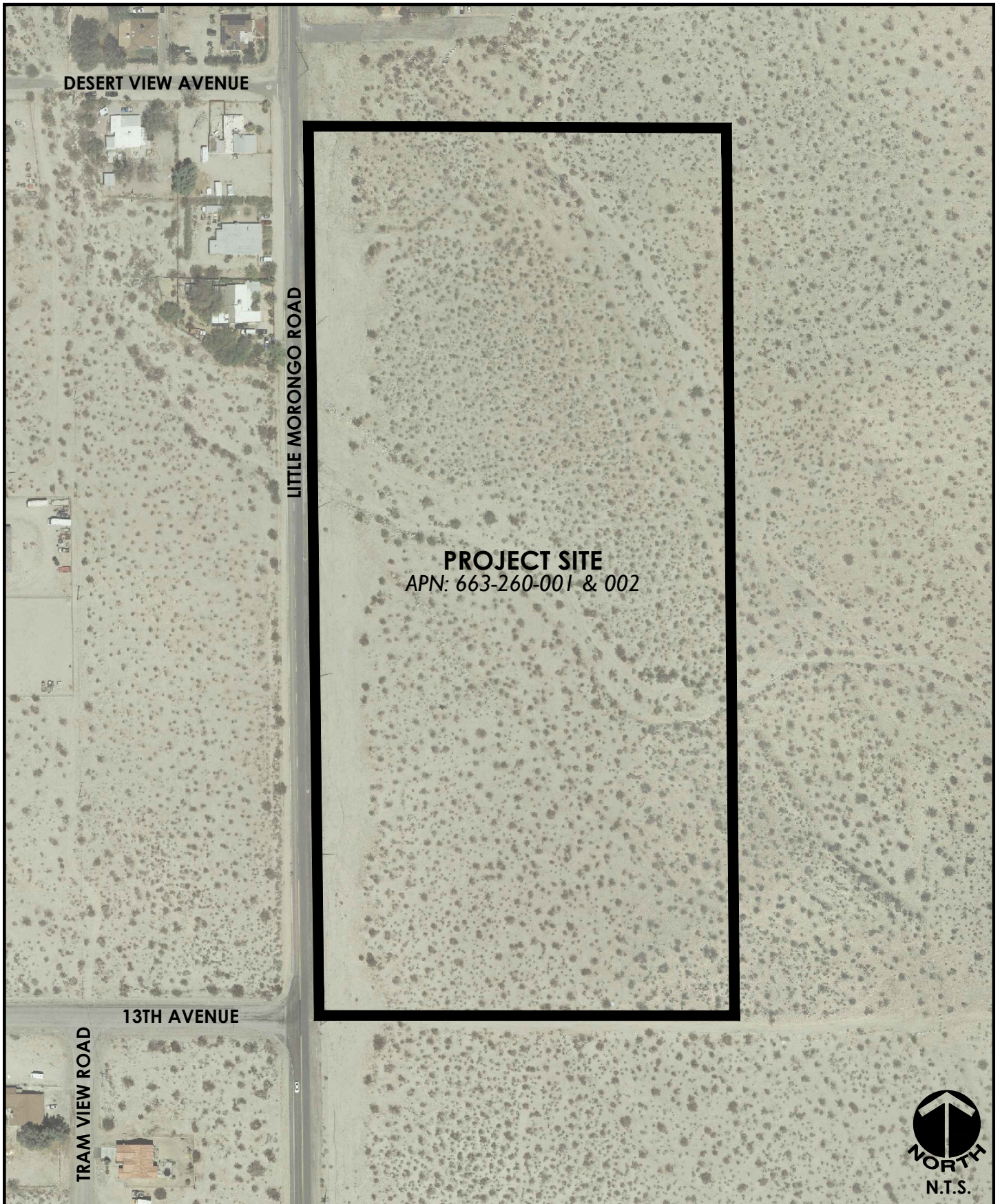
34200 BOB HOPE DRIVE ■ RANCHO MIRAGE ■ CA 92270  
 TELEPHONE (760) 320-9811 ■ FAX (760) 323-7893

**Vicinity Map**

**Akopyan**  
*Initial Study*

1





DESERT VIEW AVENUE

LITTLE MORONGO ROAD

**PROJECT SITE**  
APN: 663-260-001 & 002

13TH AVENUE

TRAM VIEW ROAD



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**Aerial Photograph**

**Akopyan**  
*Initial Study*

## 2.2 Project Description

The project proposes a General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Change of Zone (CZ) of approximately 19.44 acres of vacant and undeveloped desert, from Residential Low Density (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L), and does not involve any specific form of development. The project site is located east of Little Morongo Road and north of the unimproved alignment of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the City of Desert Hot Springs. The proposed land use conversion would result in the northward extension of the existing Light Industrial District that is situated east of Little Morongo Road. The current condition of the existing Light Industrial sector in this vicinity is largely undeveloped with various approved entitlements for pending development.

The project property is adjoined by undeveloped land and residential land uses to the north. In particular, the west half of the northerly boundary is adjoined by developed and undeveloped residential parcels with a Residential Low Density land use designation under the City's General Plan. The east half of this property line is adjoined by the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). To the east and south, the project is bordered by entirely undeveloped land with a relatively flat topography and scattered vegetation coverage, similar to the on-site conditions. Adjoining land to the east also forms part of the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area under the CVMSHCP, while the adjoining land to the south includes undeveloped properties within the City's Light Industrial (I-L) land use district. To the west, the project is bordered by Little Morongo Road, the centerline of which delineates the City-County limits. Land on the west side of Little Morongo Road (unincorporated) includes developed and undeveloped single-family residential lots with a Medium Density Residential land use designation under the County of Riverside General Plan.

The vacant project site currently has a General Plan and zoning designation of Residential Low Density. As such, any future development would be restricted to a maximum density of 5 dwelling units per acre and a 40-percent maximum building lot coverage on properties not smaller than 9,000 sq. ft. Up to two stories would be permitted with a maximum height of 20 feet. At 19.44 acres, the site could potentially develop a maximum of 97 single family residential units. Per the U.S. Census Bureau, the City has 2.63 persons per household (2010-2014 estimates). Using this number, a single family development of 97 units could generate approximately 255 new residents.

In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows for a maximum lot coverage of 75 percent on a 20,000 square foot lot area, and up to two stories with a maximum building height of 50 feet. The projects 19.44 acres could potentially allow up eight (8) industrial lots at 2.43 acres each with a total of 79,388 square feet per industrial building. Existing and recently proposed light industrial development in the City encompasses visually diverse building types with massing and scale proportional to the parcel size and operation being supported. Examples of Light Industrial development include clean manufacturing operations, warehousing and distribution facilities, mini-warehouse storage, and a variety of light manufacturing businesses. Medical marijuana facilities are also permitted this zone, subject to additional development and operational restrictions pursuant to Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code Chapters 5.50 and 17.180.





Following the proposed land use policy amendment, future and separate development would be required to implement a site plan and architectural design, subject to further project-specific City, and CEQA review.

The project site plan is shown below, in Exhibit 3.



City of Desert Hot Springs

Date: January 2017

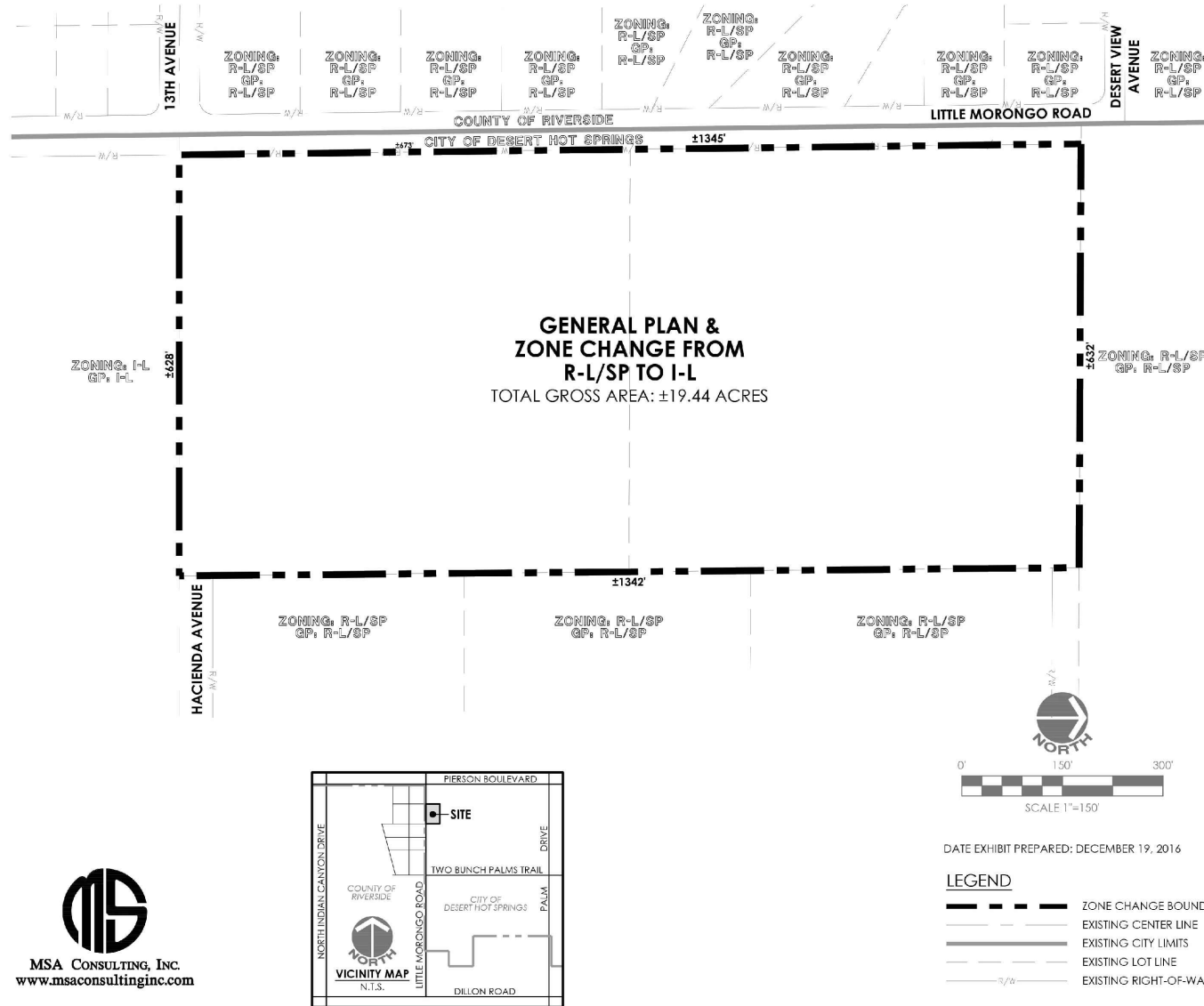
Project Title: Application for Chang of Zone ZMA 02-16, General Plan Amendment 02-16

Project Name: Feliks Akopyan

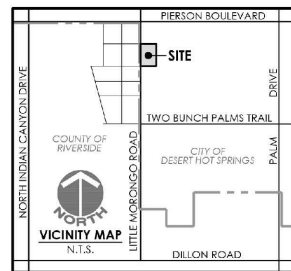
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# CHANGE OF ZONE / GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT EXHIBIT

<b>APPLICANT / LAND OWNER:</b>	FELIKS AKOPYAN 1276 BOYNTON STREET GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA 91205
<b>CONTACT:</b>	FELIKS AKOPYAN (818) 726-1776
<b>EXHIBIT PREPARER:</b>	MSA CONSULTING, INC. 34200 BOB HOPE DRIVE RANCHO MIRAGE, CALIFORNIA 92270
<b>CONTACT:</b>	PAUL DePALATIS, AICP (760) 320-9811
<b>ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER:</b>	663-260-001 & -002
<b>LEGAL DESCRIPTION:</b>	A PORTION OF THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 36, TOWNSHIP 2 SOUTH, RANGE 4 EAST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN, IN THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AS SHOWN BY UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT SURVEY.
<b>THOMAS BROTHERS MAP:</b>	PAGE: 696 / GRID: F4 AND F5 / YEAR: 2016
<b>EXISTING ZONING:</b>	R-L/SP - RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY (0-5 DU/AC)
<b>PROPOSED ZONING:</b>	IL - LOW INDUSTRIAL
<b>EXISTING GP LAND USE:</b>	R-L/SP - RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY (0-5 DU/AC)
<b>PROPOSED GP LAND USE:</b>	IL - LOW INDUSTRIAL
<b>PUBLIC UTILITY PURVEYORS:</b>	
<b>ELECTRIC:</b>	SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON CO.
<b>GAS:</b>	THE GAS COMPANY / SEMPRA ENERGY
<b>TELEPHONE:</b>	VERIZON COMPANY
<b>WATER:</b>	MISSION SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT
<b>CABLE:</b>	TIME WARNER CABLE
<b>SEWER:</b>	MISSION SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT
<b>SCHOOL DISTRICT:</b>	PALM SPRINGS UNIFIED
<b>FEMA FLOOD ZONE DESIGNATION:</b>	ZONE AO



**MSA**  
MSA CONSULTING, INC.  
www.msaconsultinginc.com



DATE EXHIBIT PREPARED: DECEMBER 19, 2016



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TELEPHONE (760) 320-9811 ■ FAX (760) 323-7893

**Change of Zone / General Plan Amendment Plan**

**Akopyan**  
*Initial Study*

## CHAPTER THREE – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

1. **Project Name:** Feliks Akopyan – GPA and CZ
2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**  
City of Desert Hot Springs  
65950 Pierson Boulevard  
Desert Hot Springs, California 92240
3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**  
Charles Rangel  
Community Development Director  
760-329-6411 Ext. 250
4. **Project Location:**  
See Exhibits 1 and 2
5. **Project Applicants' Name and Address:**  
Feliks Akopyan  
1276 Boynton Street  
Glendale CA 91205
6. **General Plan Designation:** R-L/SP Residential Low Density (0-5 du/ac)
7. **Zoning Designation** R-L/SP Residential Low Density
8. **Description of Project:** The project proposes a General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Change of Zone (CZ) of approximately 19.44 acres of vacant and undeveloped desert, from Residential Low Density (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L), and does not involve any specific form of development. The project site is located east of Little Morongo Road and north of the unimproved alignment of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the City of Desert Hot Springs. The proposed land use conversion would result in the northward extension of the existing Light Industrial District that is situated east of Little Morongo Road.
9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:** Surrounded on the north by undeveloped land and residential land uses, undeveloped and vacant land to the east and south and adjoined land forms part of the Morongo Wash Special Provision Area, adjoining land to the south also includes undeveloped properties of the City's Light Industrial district. To the west, the project is bordered by Little Morongo Road and developed and undeveloped residential development within the Unincorporated Riverside County.
10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):** None.



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## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

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

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics             | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources         | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources   | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources            | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology /Soils                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gases       | <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/Traffic | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

## DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

Associate Planner

Date



City of Desert Hot Springs

Date: January 2017

Project Title: Application for Change of Zone ZMA 02-16 General Plan Amendment 02-16

Project Name: Feliks Akopyan

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No  
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## CHAPTER FOUR – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Issues:

### I. AESTHETICS -- Would the project:

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

☐☐☒☐

#### Discussion:

The project encompasses approximately 19.44 acres of undeveloped land situated east of Little Morongo Road and north of the unimproved alignment of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The project property is presently vacant and exhibits a predominantly flat condition with scattered vegetation coverage, primarily associated with the Sonoran creosote bush scrub community. Overall, there are no salient topographic features or other natural visual landmarks on the project site or its general surroundings.

The project property is traversed by two meandering drainage courses flowing in from the north and west respectively before exiting the property in a generally southeastern direction toward the off-site confluence with the Big Morongo Wash. Both washes are formed by ephemeral/intermittent flows along shallow paths that are visually distinguished by slope breaks, soil erosion, and vegetative shifts. Portions of these paths have been outlined with man-made rock berms that rise one to two feet above ground. Overall, the on-site portions the washes exhibit physical features with a low visibility profile that therefore do not contribute to a unique scenic vista.

The project property is adjoined by undeveloped land and residential land uses to the north. In particular, the west half of the northerly boundary is adjoined by developed and undeveloped residential parcels with a Residential Low Density land use designation under the City's General Plan. The east half of this property line is adjoined by the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). To the east and south, the project is bordered by entirely undeveloped land with a relatively flat topography and scattered vegetation coverage, similar to the on-site conditions. Adjoining land to the east also forms part of the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area under the CVMSHCP, while the adjoining land to the south includes undeveloped properties within the City's Light Industrial (I-L) land use district. To the west, the project is bordered by Little Morongo Road, the centerline of which delineates the City-County limits. Land on the west side of Little Morongo Road (unincorporated) includes developed and undeveloped single-family residential lots with a Medium Density Residential land use designation under the County of Riverside General Plan. Pole-mounted overhead utility lines are present along the east side of Little Morongo Road and the property's street frontage. Little Morongo Road and other local streets are absent of any light posts or illuminated light signals.

The City of Desert Hot Springs has varying distinguished views of surrounding topographic features and mountain ranges. The visibility and uniqueness of scenic views from a particular setting of the City can differ according to the location and surrounding context, which is affected in part by the presence



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and intensity of man-made neighboring improvements and visual barriers, such as structures, trees and utilities. In the City of Desert Hot Springs, existing single-family residential settings typically consists of one and two-story buildings with setbacks and a scale appropriate to the parcel size. The undeveloped project property has distant and relatively unobstructed views of the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the west, north and east. The San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains are visible to the southeast, south and southwest. All visible mountain ranges are located over a mile from the project site and none have a formal designation as a scenic vista in relation to the project setting.

The vacant project site currently has a General Plan and zoning designation of Residential Low Density. As such, any future development would be restricted to a maximum density of 5 dwelling units per acre and a 40-percent maximum building lot coverage on properties not smaller than 9,000 sq. ft. Up to two stories would be permitted with a maximum height of 20 feet. Based on these standards, future on-site development would be expected to establish a representative low-density residential setting, the visual character of which would be consistent with other similar residential land uses throughout the City. Residential development under the current designation would not involve structures or facilities with a considerable height, scale or mass that would become visually obstructive in its context.

The project involves a general plan amendment and change of zone from Residential Low Density (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L), but does not involve any specific form of development. The proposed land use conversion would result in the northward extension of the existing Light Industrial District that is situated east of Little Morongo Road. The current condition of the existing Light Industrial sector in this vicinity is largely undeveloped with various approved entitlements for pending development. The Light Industrial land use and zoning designation was established to support the development of business parks and industrial uses operating in enclosed buildings. The existing development standards for this land use policy establish a maximum lot coverage of 75 percent and up to two stories with a maximum building height of 50 feet. Existing and recently proposed light industrial development in the City encompasses visually diverse building types with massing and scale proportional to the parcel size and operation being supported. Examples of Light Industrial development include clean manufacturing operations, warehousing and distribution facilities, mini-warehouse storage, and a variety of light manufacturing businesses. Medical marijuana facilities are also permitted this zone, subject to additional development and operational restrictions pursuant to Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code Chapters 5.50 and 17.180. Recently approved projects within the Light Industrial zone have been required to incorporate a coordinated building style with landscaping improvements to uphold a positive architectural presence. Any development proposal with visual elements found to be inconsistent with the community design standards and objectives would not be permitted.

Following the proposed land use policy amendment, future and separate development would be required to implement a site plan and architectural design, subject to project-specific CEQA review. In adhering to the current light industrial standards, foreseeable visual characteristics of development under this designation are expected to involve one or two-story buildings with a maximum height of 50 feet, an attractive visual quality, and the proper setbacks; parking lot facilities with downward-oriented lighting for nighttime safety; perimeter improvements (fencing) for site security; and coordinated landscaping elements along the property frontage and perimeter to compliment the local desert



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environment. As a standard condition, future site design considerations would be expected to improve the visual character of the property and diligently consider its surrounding context, including the presence of residential uses to the west and north.

The proposed land use conversion is not anticipated to adversely alter the existing viewshed on any scenic vistas and less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

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

☐☐☒☐

**Discussion:**

As previously discussed, the project property consists of relatively flat terrain with dispersed vegetation coverage. Utility posts with overhead lines are found on the project frontage along Little Morongo Road to the west. The property does not contain any landmarks or scenic resources, such as trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings that may be altered or damaged by utilization of the site.

The purpose of the State Scenic Highway Program is to preserve and protect scenic State highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. State highways can be officially designated as Scenic Highways or be determined to be eligible for designation. The status of a state scenic highway changes from eligible to "officially designated" when a local jurisdiction adopts a scenic corridor protection program and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) approves the designation as a Scenic Highway. The Caltrans status map of scenic highway designations indicates that Highway 62, from north of Interstate 10 to the San Bernardino County line, is considered an Eligible State Scenic Highway, but is not officially designated.

Moreover, the project is not located within close proximity to any designated county scenic highway. According to the Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan Update, the nearest roadway deemed eligible to be a County Scenic Highway is a segment of Pierson Boulevard, located approximately 0.4 miles to the north. Interstate 10, located approximately 3.9 miles to the south, is also considered eligible to be a County Scenic Highway.

Therefore, the proposed land use conversion from Residential Low Density to Light Industrial would not result in potential adverse impacts to scenic resources within a state scenic highway or other local transportation corridor. Future development would be subject to project-specific environmental review. Less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures: None**



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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion:**

As previously discussed, implementation of the proposed project on existing vacant land would result in a conversion of land use designation from low-density residential to a light industrial use. Due to the undeveloped nature of the project and most of its immediate surroundings, no existing buildings, facilities or salient natural features, such as those that would establish a unique visual quality for the site or vicinity, will be demolished or altered. Within the City of Desert Hot Springs boundaries, the nature of future development under the new designation would be contiguous and comparable to the existing Light Industrial district located to the south, on the east side of Little Morongo Road. Moreover, the neighboring Big Morongo Wash floodplain within the CVMSHCP Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area to the east would remain physically unaffected.

The west half of the northerly property boundary is bordered by individual residential lots and therefore would warrant the appropriate site design considerations as part of future entitlements, which are separate from proposed land use change. In particular, any future development on this property would be subject to a separate environmental review to ensure that the appropriate architectural character, setbacks, heights, lighting, landscape design and other physical and visual characteristics of the project are consistent with the General Plan and zoning requirements under the amended designation. Future project-specific entitlements and environmental review would also confirm that all facility operations only occur indoors and have the proper screening measures that allow the proper visibility by law enforcement vehicles from the street. Future site design, architecture and landscape architecture on the property will require review and approval by the City of Desert Hot Springs to ensure that aesthetic considerations of the community are addressed in the proposed design.

Less than significant impacts are expected to the existing visual quality of the vacant site and its undeveloped surroundings.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Discussion:**

Presently, the Project property is undeveloped; therefore, there are no existing sources of glare or light generated on-site. Undeveloped land to the north, east, south, and west also does not constitute an existing source of light or glare. In the local vicinity, existing sources of low-intensity nighttime lighting can be attributed to residential structures to the north and west of the project. The individual home



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lighting typically consists of low-intensity, wall-mounted, downward-oriented fixtures in the patio, side, and front yards of homes. Little Morongo Road does not have public street lighting or illuminated traffic signals. Day-time glare and night-time lighting can be attributed to vehicular traffic on this roadway.

The proposed general plan amendment and change of zone does not pursue or involve approval of any specific development entitlements. However, the land use policy conversion from low-density residential to light industrial represents a likely future increase in the intensity and nature of light and glare conditions compared to what would be allowed under the current designation. In addition, future light industrial facilities would likely involve considerably larger structures than what is allowed for a single-family residential zone. Daytime visibility of future light industrial buildings would be more noticeable from local roadways than residential structures.

The project property is located adjacent to the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Plan. As a result, future development is required to comply with the CVMSHCP Land Use Adjacency Guidelines, which are established to avoid or minimize indirect effects from development adjacent to or within the Conservation Areas, including edge effects resulting from man-made lighting conditions. Future development will be required to implement exterior energy-efficient light fixtures that are properly shielded, recessed and/or oriented to contain lighting within the project boundaries and therefore prevent light spillage onto adjacent land. Future lighting conditions will ensure that nighttime safety and facility security are maintained on-site while minimizing ambient lighting levels in the surroundings. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

## II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES – Would the project:

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

☐☐☐☒

### Discussion:

The Project will not disturb or convert any designated farmland or other form of agricultural resource. The subject property is designated as “Other Land” according to the Important Farmland Map of the 2012 California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. A large portion of the City of Desert Hot Springs is designated as Other Land, which is land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural development, brush, timber, wetland and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing, confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities, strip mines, borrow pits and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded by urban development and greater than 40 acres mapped as other land. The subject site and surrounding land to



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the north, east, south and west are not categorized as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of local or statewide importance, thus no impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☐☒

**Discussion:**

The Project site is not located in an existing zoning for agricultural use or classified as farm land. According to the Williamson Act Program 2014 Status Report, no portion of land within a one-mile radius is recognized as being under a Williamson Act Contract. The Project will not impact or remove land from the City or County's agricultural zoning or agricultural preserve. No impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

- 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))?

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**Discussion:**

The Project will occur in an existing urban desert setting. 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.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☐☒

**Discussion:**

The Project will occur in an existing urban desert setting. No forest land 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 expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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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 land?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion:**

The Project will not result in conversion of any farmland or forest land because no farmland or forest land is situated within or adjacent to the Project site. No impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Discussion:**

The Project is located in the Coachella Valley region within the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Air quality in the SSAB is influenced by the regional climate as well as the temperature, wind, humidity, precipitation, and amount of sunshine. The Coachella Valley is an arid desert region with a climate characterized by low annual precipitation, low humidity, hot days, and very cool nights. Wind direction and speed (which in turn affect atmospheric stability) are the most important climate elements affecting local ambient air quality.

The prevailing wind direction in the Project vicinity is predominantly from the northwest. Desert regions are typically windy because minimal friction is generated between the moving air and the low, sparse vegetation. This allows the wind to maintain its speed crossing the desert plains. Additionally, the rapid daytime heating of the air closest to the desert surface leads to convective activity and the exchange of surface air for upper air, which accelerates surface winds during the warm part of the day.

Projects can be 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. The assessment takes into consideration whether a project forms part of the planned conditions and development assumptions identified in local plans (General Plan Land Use and Zoning) to determine whether the project adheres to the City's air quality goals and policies.

The vacant project site currently has a General Plan and zoning designation of Residential Low Density. Through a Change of Zone and General Plan Amendment, the proposed project would convert 19.44 acres of undeveloped land from Residential Low Density to Light Industrial uses. Light Industrial



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uses are allowable under the General Plan to accommodate the development of business parks and industrial uses. Examples include clean manufacturing operations, warehousing and distribution facilities, mini-warehouse storage, and a variety of light manufacturing businesses.

Table III-2 in the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan provides the statistical summary of land use category allocation within the jurisdiction. At the time of such land use assessment, the City of Desert Hot Springs included a total area of 36,959 acres. This source indicates that there are approximately 14,779 acres of land with a Low Density Residential designation, which represent the most abundant land use category by making up approximately 40 percent of the total land in the City. By comparison, there are approximately 900 acres of Light Industrial land uses, which represent approximately 2.4 percent of the City's total land. According to the City's General Plan, industrial lands in the City are deemed one of the most important and yet least utilized resources in the community. A growing need for the availability of land under this designation has prompted the proposed amendment in an effort to align the land use policies to the forecasted development in this locality, being adjacent to the existing Light Industrial district.

The proposed land use conversion of 19.44 acres would result in a 2.16 percent increase in the City's Light Industrial land use stock and concurrently a reduction of 0.13 percent in the land stock designated to Low Density Residential uses. The proposed General Plan Amendment will not include or amend any existing residential structures or industrial facilities. As such, the expected adjustments to the City's land use composition resulting from project implementation are expected to be relatively minor and therefore not considerably alter the previously planned land use considerations or buildout conditions that were factored in the local and regional air quality strategy. Future development proposals for industrial uses are required to provide a complete characterization of activities to avoid conflicts with the new General Plan designation or obstructions with implementation of its applicable air quality objectives.

The Final 2007 and 2012 Air Quality Management Plans (AQMP) serves as policy guides for decision-making related to air quality throughout the region. The most recent plan provides strategies for controlling air pollution, maintenance and attainment in order to achieve state and federal attainment levels. The small scale of land use changes is not expected to result in any increase in permanent population above the level projected in the adopted AQMP. Therefore, the project will not interfere with the ability of the region to comply with federal and state ambient air quality standards. As analyzed in the subsequent section, the Project would not result in or cause violations to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards or California Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Future light industrial development projects will be subject to environmental review to ensure that they maintain consistency with the local General Plan and the locally adopted air quality objectives. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures: None**



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|--|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Discussion:

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. Significance thresholds are recommended therein for both local and regional air quality impacts associated with short-term project construction and long-term operations.

As shown in Table III-1, the SCAQMD has established construction and operational mass daily significance thresholds, which are recommended for use by lead agencies in considering potential impacts on air quality. Project effects would be considered significant if the emissions exceed these thresholds. Project effects would also be considered potential significant if emissions affected sensitive receptors such as schools or nursing homes, or if the project conflicted with the regional AQMP and/or local air quality plans.

**Table III-1**  
**The following table illustrates SCAQMD's Air Quality Significance Thresholds:**

Emission Source	CO	VOC	NOx	SOx	PM10	PM2.5
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)

The proposed land use amendment does not include specific development, as this will be subject to a separate entitlement process and environmental review. To assess the potential short- and long-term emissions resulting from future development on each type of land use (existing and proposed), two development scenarios has been modeled using the potential maximum intensities allowed under each designation. For this purpose, the most current version of California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod Version 2016.3.1) was utilized to estimate the short-term construction-related emissions of criteria air pollutant emissions that would be associated with the construction activities necessary to implement those development scenarios. Under the existing designation of Low Residential Density, the project property of 19.44 acres could accommodate up to 97 dwelling units based on a maximum density of 5 units per acre. In comparison, the designation of Light Industrial would allow for a maximum lot coverage of 75 percent, which is equivalent to approximately 635,104 square feet of industrial building space. Default construction parameters incorporated in CalEEMod were assumed for those construction activities for which site-specific information is not currently available. It should be noted that this analysis does not preclude future development proposals from performing their required air emissions analysis tailored to the specific development.

The SCAQMD requires any emission reductions resulting from existing rules or ordinances to be included as part of the unmitigated project assumptions. Those measures that are legally mandated



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and therefore required of all developments by applicable ordinances, rules, and regulations are not considered mitigation. Once the unmitigated project emissions have been determined, additional mitigation measures may be applied to reduce any potentially significant air quality impacts to the maximum extent feasible and identify the net project emissions. Chapter 15.84 in the City of Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code outlines the minimum requirements for construction activities to reduce man-made fugitive dust and corresponding PM10 emissions. For future projects, 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 City of Desert Hot Springs minimum performance. These standards are consistent with SCAQMD Rule 403 and 403.1 and require implementation of Coachella Valley Best Available Control Measures (CVBACM), as identified in the SCAQMD publication Coachella Valley Fugitive Dust Control Handbook. Fugitive dust control measures that are required to comply with the City Municipal Code are generally not considered mitigation by the SCAQMD. Similarly, compliance with applicable SCAQMD Rules and Regulations is not considered mitigation by the SCAQMD.

Tables III-2 and III-3 summarize the unmitigated short-term emissions of the six criteria pollutants associated with the future construction activities for each scenario. The construction period includes all aspects of project development, including site preparation, grading, building construction, paving and architectural coating. Peak day emissions estimates are provided by construction phase type and reflect activities in the season or year with the highest daily emissions. As shown, the unmitigated peak day air pollutant emissions during the construction phase with the highest daily emissions are not projected to exceed any of the significance thresholds for short-term construction-related emissions recommended by the SCAQMD. Based upon the projected emissions of the criteria air pollutants, the construction activities necessary to carry out industrial development would result in higher emissions compared to future residential development, but both scenarios are expected to not exceed the short-term construction mass daily significant thresholds, therefore resulting in less than significant impacts.

**Table III-2  
Air Pollutant Emissions  
Associated With Future Residential Construction Under the Existing Land Use Designation  
(Pounds/Day)**

	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5
Total Emissions	13.8754	68.0771	40.4025	0.0645	21.1460	12.6332
SCAQMD Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded	No	No	No	No	No	No



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**Table III-3**  
**Air Pollutant Emissions**  
**Associated With Future Industrial Construction Under the Proposed Land Use Designation**  
**(Pounds/Day)**

	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5
Total Emissions	55.6058	90.3155	48.5199	0.0777	23.7935	14.2113
SCAQMD Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded	No	No	No	No	No	No

**Table III-4**  
**Operational Air Pollutant Emissions**  
**Associated With Future Residential Development Under the Existing Land Use Designation**  
**(Pounds/Day)**

Emission Source	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5
Total Area Sources, Energy Use, Mobile Sources	8.1970	27.1386	49.3646	0.1333	7.3175	2.1852
SCAQMD Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded	No	No	No	No	No	No

**Table III-5**  
**Operational Air Pollutant Emissions**  
**Associated With Future Industrial Development Under the Proposed Land Use Designation**  
**(Pounds/Day)**

Emission Source	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5
Total Area Sources, Energy Use, Mobile Sources	28.5064	98.6074	121.3750	0.3587	16.4884	4.9700
SCAQMD Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded	No	No	No	No	No	No

Furthermore, CalEEMod was utilized to estimate the long-term operational air pollutant emissions that would result from implementation of residential and industrial development. Operational emissions are ongoing emissions that would occur during the life of the project. They include area source emissions, emissions from energy demand, and mobile source (vehicle) emissions. As shown in Tables III-4 and III-5, the project-related emissions of criteria pollutants for both scenarios are not expected to exceed any of the SCAQMD recommended significance threshold criteria for operational impacts. Operation of industrial activities would be expected to generate higher emissions than residential activities without exceeding the daily thresholds





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Consequently, the proposed land use amendment would not contribute substantially to a significant individual or cumulative impact on existing or projected exceedances of the state or federal ambient air quality standards or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in the emissions of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is designated nonattainment. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

The Coachella Valley is designated by the California Air Resources Board as nonattainment for ozone, based on exceedances of both the state 1-hour and 8-hour standards; and for PM10, based on exceedances of the state 24-hour and annual average standards. Adherence to the SCAQMD rules and regulations and compliance with locally adopted AQMP and PM10 State Implementation Plan control measures will help reduce the pollutant burden contributed by the individual development project. Appropriate air quality measures are required by the City of Desert Hot Springs and implemented through enforcement of the *Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code (Chapter 15.84)*, consistent with SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1.

As mentioned, relative to PM10 threshold exceedance, construction associated with a future project 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 (PM10) 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.

Future project-related construction emissions of industrial development are not expected to exceed the SCAQMD mass daily regional significance thresholds. Therefore, such development would not be expected to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of NOx and ROG emissions during construction activities. Since project-related emissions would be consistent with the *Air Quality Management Plan*, the *Coachella Valley PM10 SIP*, and all SCAQMD Air Quality Significance



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Thresholds, long-term operational air quality impacts associated with the project should not be considered cumulatively considerable. Future development under the proposed land use designation is expected to emit criteria pollutants, including ozone precursors, in a region designated nonattainment of the national 8-hour ozone standards. However, the project-related emissions would not exceed the applicable SCAQMD quantitative significance thresholds for short-term construction-related or long-term operational emissions. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

- d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

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**Discussion:**

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 the following: residences, long-term health care facilities, schools, rehabilitation centers, playgrounds, convalescent centers, childcare centers, retirement homes, and athletic facilities. Residential areas are considered sensitive receptors because residents tend to be at home for extended periods of time and include children and the elderly. The undeveloped project site is adjoined to the south by an existing Light Industrial land use district. The project property is adjoined by vacant residential parcels along the west half of the northerly boundary. Three existing residential structures are located on the north side of Desert View Avenue, approximately 170 feet from the northerly boundary. Residential uses are also located on the west side of Little Morongo Road, outside of the City limits. Since the prevailing wind patterns in the region are from northwest to southeast, these residential uses are situated up-wind in relation to the project.

As previously noted, the future industrial development under the proposed land use designation is expected to result in a higher short- and long-term emissions compared to future residential development under the existing land use designation. Emissions associated with construction are temporary and localized in nature and would not exceed the SCAQMD mass thresholds of significance under either development scenario. Implementation of the required SCAQMD rules, best available dust control measures and the City's Fugitive Dust Control and Erosion 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 publication Coachella Valley Fugitive Dust Control Handbook. Fugitive dust control measures that are required to comply with the City Municipal Code are generally not considered mitigation by the SCAQMD. During the life of future projects, activities and operations related to the proposed facilities are not expected to generate



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emissions concentrations that exceed the SCAQMD mass thresholds. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

Objectionable odors can be associated with toxic or non-toxic emissions. While offensive odors seldom cause physical harm, they can be unpleasant and lead to considerable annoyance and distress among the public. The SCAQMD has compiled a list of facilities and operations that tend to produce offensive odors. Examples of such facilities that commonly generate odors include wastewater treatment plants, sanitary landfills, composting/green waste facilities, recycling facilities, petroleum refineries, chemical manufacturing plants, painting/coating operations, rendering plants, and food packaging facilities.

Certain facilities, land uses and populations are considered more likely to experience concern over 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. Residential areas are considered sensitive receptors because residents tend to be at home for extended periods of time and include children and the elderly.

As previously described, the vacant project property is situated contiguous to an existing industrial land use district to the south, but is partially bordered by undeveloped and developed residential uses to the north and west. These residential uses are situated upwind of the project property, therefore reducing the concern associated with proximity. The proposed project does not include a specific form of development, but is rather a land use policy amendment. Future project proposals will be required to properly demonstrate that their activities and facilities will adhere to the City's requirements for odor control. No operation or activity on-site shall cause the emission of any smoke, fly ash, dust, fumes, vapors, gases, odors, or other forms of air pollution, which exceed levels identified as acceptable by the SCAQMD or the City of Desert Hot Springs. Less than significant impacts related to objectionable odors are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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#### IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

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

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#### Discussion:

The proposed Project is approximately 19.44 acres of vacant desert land. Project implementation would result in a change of zone from its current land use designation of R-L/SP (Residential Low Density) to I-L (Light Industrial) and does involve development at this time. The Project property is presently vacant and predominantly flat with scattered vegetation coverage, primarily consisting of desert scrub. Two USGS drainage courses cross the northeast corner and lower westerly corner of the property, as it continues in a southeastern direction toward the confluence with Big Morongo Wash. This drainage is formed by ephemeral/intermittent low-flows along a shallow path that is minimally distinguished by slight slope breaks, soil erosion, and vegetative shifts. Per the National Wetlands inventory, these washes have been mapped and registered as riverine features.

The project lies within the boundary of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). According to the Habitat Conservation maps, the site is not designated for conservation purposes. However, the site's easterly property boundary is adjacent to the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area. Therefore, development of the project site is subject to the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines. These guidelines have been established to avoid or minimize indirect effect from development adjacent to Conservation Areas.

The project property is adjoined by vacant land to the north, east, and south. On the south, the undeveloped properties form part of a Light Industrial (I-L) District designation. To the west, the project is bordered by Little Morongo Road, the centerline of which delineates the City-County limits. Land on the west side of Little Morongo Road (unincorporated) includes undeveloped single-family residential lots with a Medium Density Residential land use designation under the County of Riverside General Plan.

Future development of the property from either residential or light industrial uses would be subject to a project specific biological analysis and further environmental review, to identify and minimize any potential impacts to native vegetation and habitat. Less than significant impacts to candidate, sensitive or special status species are anticipated to result from the proposed CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Discussion:

The property does not appear to contain or be 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. Two meandering washes course across the northeast corner and lower westerly corner of the property, as it continues in a southeastern direction toward the confluence with Big Morongo Wash. Both washes are formed by intermittent flows along shallow paths distinguished by varying slope breaks, soil erosion, and vegetative shifts. Portions of these paths have been informally outlined with man-made rock berms that rise one to two feet above ground.

No blue-line stream exists within the project property as depicted on the U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps or National Hydrography Dataset. The identification and mapping of these washes are reflected in the current and historic United States Geological Survey (USGS) Topographic Maps (Desert Hot Springs Quadrangle), the USGS National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), and the *Whitewater River Watershed MS4 Permit Area Facilities Map* published by the Riverside County Flood Control District. Moreover, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory identifies these two drainages as riverine features formed by ephemeral/intermittent low-flows along a shallow path that is minimally distinguished by slight slope breaks, soil erosion, and vegetative shifts. Per the National Wetlands inventory, these washes have been mapped and registered as riverine features.

The project lies within the boundary of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). According to the Habitat Conservation maps, the site is not designated for conservation purposes. However, the site's easterly property boundary is adjacent to the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area. Therefore, development of the project site is subject to the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines. These guidelines have been established to avoid or minimize indirect effect from development adjacent to Conservation Areas.

The project proposes a GPA and CZ from its current land use designation of low density residential (R-L) to light industrial uses (I-L). No development is currently proposed and the GPA and CZ are not anticipated to result in direct adverse effects on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community. Future development would require further environmental analysis, City review and a project specific biological report to further determine biological impacts and an appropriate mitigation plan as needed. Therefore, Less than significant impacts are anticipated as a result of the requested CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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

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**Discussion:**

As previously discussed, two drainage courses cross the northeast corner and lower westerly corner of the property, as it continues in a southeastern direction toward the confluence with Big Morongo Wash. This drainage is formed by ephemeral/intermittent low-flows along a shallow path that is minimally distinguished by slight slope breaks, soil erosion, and vegetative shifts. Per the National Wetlands inventory, these washes have been mapped and registered as riverine features.

There are also no wetlands, naturally occurring springs, or permanent aquatic habitats in or near the project site boundaries. The proposed project involves a CZ and GPA and development of the property is not proposed at this time. Because the project does not propose development, the CZ and GPA do not involve any direct activities, such as removal or filling, that would have an adverse impact on any resources related to the project area. At the time of entitlements, the project would be required to undergo further city review with an additional environmental analysis and a project specific biological report based on the project design. This biological assessment would be prepared by a qualified professional who can further determine biological impacts and an appropriate mitigation plan. Less than significant impacts are anticipated related to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

- 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?

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**Discussion:**

Per the Desert Hot Springs General Plan or CVMSHCP, no specific migratory wildlife corridors or native wildlife nursery are found on the project site or adjacent properties. The project is adjoined by vacant land to the north, east, and south. On the south, the undeveloped properties form part of a Light Industrial (I-L) District designation. To the west, the project is bordered by Little Morongo Road, the centerline of which delineates the City-County limits. Land on the west side of Little Morongo Road (unincorporated) includes undeveloped single-family residential lots with a Medium Density Residential land use designation under the County of Riverside General Plan.



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The Project would result in a change of zone from low density residential to light industrial uses and no project specific development is proposed at this time. The project's CZ and GPA are not anticipated to interfere with the goals or policies under the CVMSHCP. Future development of the property from either residential or light industrial uses would be subject to a project specific biological analysis and further environmental review. The change of zone process is not expected to interfere with the movement of any native resident, migratory fish or wildlife species. Therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

The proposed Project would result in a CZ and GPA of approximately 19.44 acres, currently designated as Residential Low Density (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L). There is no project specific development of this property at this time. At the time of entitlements, the project would be required to comply with relevant policies and ordinances related to biological resources within the City. Additionally, further City and environmental review would be required. The Project site is presently vacant with scattered vegetation and tree preservation policies would not be applicable. Impacts from the proposed CZ and GPA would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

- 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?

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**Discussion:**

The project lies within the boundary of the CVMSHCP, which outlines policies for conservation of habitats and natural communities. The project site is not located within a Conservation Area under this plan. However, the site's easterly boundary is bordered by the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area. Therefore, development of the project site is subject to the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines. These guidelines have been established to avoid or minimize indirect effect from development adjacent to Conservation Areas.

The CVMSHCP implements a habitat mitigation fee from all new development to support the acquisition of conservation lands. At the time of development, the fee would be applied per Chapter 3.040 of the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code (Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan Mitigation Fees). Based on these provisions, the applicable



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fees would be collected by the City and remitted to the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) at issuance of a certificate of occupancy or upon final inspection of the premises, whichever occurs first.

The proposed project involves a policy action to amend the zone and General Plan land use designation and does not involve approval of any development entitlements. All future development of the proposed project site would comply with the provisions of the CVMSHCP. Moreover, development of the subject property would be required to undergo further environmental review and a project specific biological analysis would need to be prepared. Therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated as a result of the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

#### V. CULTURAL RESOURCES –Would the project:

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

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**Discussion:**

The project site is approximately 19.44 acres of vacant land currently zoned for Residential Low (R-L). The project is proposing a zone change from the R-L designation to Light Industrial (I-L) and no development is currently proposed. 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 jurisdictional change. This includes known or observable objects, buildings, structures, sites, areas, places, records, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant.

Per the City of Desert Hot Springs Archaeological and Historic Resource Element of the General Plan, the Eastern Information Center's (EIC) 1994 cultural resources records search, show no National Register listed properties or California Historic Landmarks recorded within the City. Furthermore, there are no properties listed on the California Inventory of Historic Resources. Early government surveys recorded very little evidence of settlers in Desert Hot Springs before 1917 and the arrival of permanent settlers is believed to have begun around the 1920s.

The project site is presently vacant with scattered vegetation and 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 light industrial uses is 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 policy action to amend the zoning and General Plan land use designation and does not involve approval of any development entitlements. As a result, less than significant impacts to historical resources relative to the CZ and GPA are anticipated to result from the project.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion:**

Archeological resources are described as cultural resources, such as structures or objects that provide evidence to past human activity. They are important for scientific, historic, and/ or religious reasons to cultures, communities, groups or individuals. Per the Desert Hot Springs Draft General Plan EIR, there are a number of important archaeological sites, mainly Native American. Given the local Tribal historic patterns of settlement, mobility throughout the Coachella Valley and areas of Traditional Use, there is potential for the presence of archaeological resources.

The proposed project would only involve a policy action to amend the zoning and General Plan land use designation and does not involve approval of any development entitlements. Future development of residential or light industrial 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. Less than significant impacts relative to adverse change in archaeological resources are anticipated as a result of the proposed CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Discussion:**

As described in the RCIP General Plan, paleontological resources are fossilized biotic remains of ancient environments. They are valued for the information they yield about the history of the earth and its past ecological settings. The level of potential of finding paleontological resources is mapped in the Paleontological Sensitivity Resources map under the Multipurpose Open Space Element of the County's General Plan (2003). According to this map, the project site is recognized for having "Low" potential for Paleontological Sensitivity. These areas have a reduced likelihood of containing significant nonrenewable paleontological resources, including vertebrate or significant vertebrate fossils. Additionally, the site is not recognized as containing a unique paleontological or a unique geologic feature. Less than significant impacts are expected to result from project implementation of the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

d) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a Tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resource	
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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Code 21074?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion:**

Public Resource 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 CZ and GPA from Residential Low to (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L) and no development is proposed at this time. The City of Desert Hot Springs 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 CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

- e) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

The California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and the CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 require 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 within 24-hours of the Native American Heritage Commission. 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.

The project involves a zone change and GPA of 19.44 acres from Residential Low to (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L) uses. Development of the project site is not proposed at this time. As previously discussed the project site's existing zoning allows for residential development, the zone change to light industrial uses would have similar impacts to ground disturbance. As previously noted, the future development of the project site would require further environmental analysis and a project specific Cultural Analysis to be completed by qualified professionals.

Pursuant to the mentioned California Health and Safety Code, proper actions shall take place in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains during future project construction activities. Less than significant impacts are expected as result of the CZ and GPA.



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**Mitigation Measures:** None

**VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS --** Would the project:

- a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?

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**Discussion:**

According to the General Plan Geotechnical Section, during an earthquake ground rupture and ground shaking are the most significant seismic hazards that will impact the Desert Hot Springs planning area. Critical parameters include whether foundations and/or structures straddle the fault, distance between the fault and various portions in the City, the maximum credible earthquake each fault is capable of generating, the intensity of ground shaking expressed as a fraction of the acceleration of gravity (g), and the Modified Mercalli (MM) seismic intensity values that have been calculated for the City. In general, peak ground accelerations and seismic intensity values decrease with increasing distance from the causative fault. However, local site conditions, such as the top of ridges, may amplify the seismic waves generated by an earthquake, resulting in higher accelerations.

Per the General Plan EIR No known active faults traverse the project site or are found near it. GP EIR EXHIBIT V-1: Faults in the Desert Hot Springs General Plan Area, indicate that the nearest Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone is located approximately 1.0 mile to the northeast and labeled the Mission Creek Fault. Alquist-Priolo Maps are corroborated by the Riverside County Seismic Faults and Fault Zones database and by the Desert Hot Springs EIR Map. The nearest seismic feature to the project site is the Coachella Valley Segment of the San Andreas Fault Zone. This southwest trending zone (presumably the Zone also mapped in Alquist-Priolo maps) is located approximately 1.0 mile northeast of the site. Surface rupture occurs when movement on a fault deep within the earth breaks through to the surface. The GP EIR indicates that fault ruptures usually follow preexisting faults, which are zones of weakness.

The project site does not lie within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Surface fault rupture is considered to be unlikely at the project site because of the well-delineated fault lines through the Coachella Valley as shown on California Department of Mines and Geology (CDMG) maps. Less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion:**

As mentioned in the previous discussion, relative to properties that are not located on faults or within fault study areas, ground shaking is the primary seismic hazard that can be expected. Intensity can be affected based on distance from faults. Strong shaking from an earthquake can result in secondary actions including landslides, ground lurching, structural damage or destruction, and liquefaction (discussed subsequently in this Geotechnical section.)

Future proposed facilities will be required to be constructed in a manner that reduces the risk of seismic hazards (Title 24, California Code of Regulations). Future projects will be conditioned to comply with the most current seismic design coefficients and ground motion parameters and all applicable provisions of the California Building Code (CBC.) Remedial grading and construction will work to reduce exposure of people or structures to adverse effects to the greatest extent possible against seismic hazards. All grading and construction plans will be reviewed and approved by the City.

The GP EIR includes the following Mitigation Measure that the applicant will be conditioned to implement: The City shall require the preparation of soils and/or geotechnical studies for future development proposals in the community. Analyses shall include evaluation of seismic and soil conditions and provide recommendations that mitigate soils and geotechnical hazards or constraints. Following compliance with standard conditions relative to geotechnical studies and seismic design requirements, less than significant impacts are expected associated with future project submittals. Less than significant impacts are expected relative to the proposed CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Discussion:**

The General Plan Geotechnical Element indicates that when loose, unconsolidated, saturated, sandy soils are subjected to ground vibrations during a seismic event they may liquefy; this phenomenon is called liquefaction. This commonly occurs in areas where the ground water table is within 50 feet of the ground surface.

According to the Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) Draft 2010 Urban Water Management Plan, groundwater levels in the Mission Creek Subbasin, in which the project is located, average 300 feet below the ground surface.

The chance for hazards associated with liquefaction is considered low in the Desert Hot Springs area, principally because of the approximate depth to ground water. The exception includes lands located immediately adjacent to and on the north side of the Banning and Coachella Valley (Mission Creek) Faults, which dike ground water and allow it to rise within 50 feet of the surface. Effects of liquefaction



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include a loss of bearing strength, ground oscillations, lateral spread and slumping. The property is located approximately 1.0 mile from the nearest of the fault, the Mission Creek Fault.

Through the development review process of future project submittals, a site-by-site analysis will be required to assess building design and check that proposed structures meet existing regulations or applicable codes. No development is proposed as part of this project. Less than significant impacts are expected relative to the proposed CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

iv) Landslides?

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**Discussion:**

As discussed, no development is currently proposed as part of this project. Per the General Plan Geotechnical Element, The subject property is not located near an area of Seismically Induced Rock Falls and Landslide Susceptibility. Exhibit V-2 of the Geotechnical Element indicates that the closest area with moderate susceptibility to landsliding is approximately 2.25 miles to the southwest which is an isolated geological feature referred to as Devers Hill. Additionally, the hazard of landsliding is unlikely due to the relatively flat topography of the property; therefore, no impacts are expected relative to landslides.

As further discussed within Section IV Hydrology and Water Quality, the site is impacted by seasonal Stormwater runoff. Two primary drainage washes are located on the property. The need for and design of flood control devices and erosion protection is within the purview and design of the civil engineer. In general impacts related to flooding, erosion and debris flows should be mitigated by proper drainage design including collecting and disposal (conveyance) of water to approved points of discharge. Appropriate future project design, construction and maintenance will be necessary to mitigate the potential for site flooding and debris flow hazards. Less than significant impacts are anticipated related to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

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

☐☐☒☐

**Discussion:**

Remedial grading including over-excavation and re-compaction will be required for any future onsite development. Site soils are susceptible to wind and water erosion, standard construction measures to reduce seasonal flooding including waterborne erosion will be incorporated into the site grading plans. These include the onsite retention of 100 percent of the incremental increase of storm water. To address windborne soil erosion, adequate paving, landscape and other means of stabilization will be incorporated into future development projects.



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Relative to waterborne erosion, according to FIRM panel 06065C0885G, effective August 28, 2008, the entire project and its immediate surroundings are located within Zone AO and are therefore identified as being subject to inundation by the 1-percent-annual-chance storm. The entire project area of 19.44 acres is subject to three distinguished flooding conditions, based in part on the proximity to the Big Morongo Wash. In particular, the northeast 2.5 acres of the project can potentially be affected by an average flood depth of three (3) feet and a velocity of nine (9) feet per second. Central 13.6 acres of the project are subject to an average flood depth of three (3) feet and a velocity of eight (8) feet per second, while the southwest 3.3 acres are subject to an average flood depth of one (1) feet and a velocity of eight (5) feet per second. The average flood depths are derived from detailed hydraulic analyses by FEMA. Mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements and floodplain management standards apply to all development. See Section IX Hydrology and Water Quality for further discussion.

Future buildings will be required to be constructed with pads elevated well over 1-foot or 3-feet (based on average flood depth) above existing elevation or an engineer approved alternative. Grading should convey shallow flows across the site, and continue along the existing flow path without increasing the runoff, or impacting any of the adjacent properties. Following these design requirements, future construction projects would not alter the FEMA Flood Zone AO sheet flow or be impacted by the flood depth.

Any temporary impacts during construction of future projects will be addressed by the required preparation, approval and implementation of a project specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, further discussed in the Hydrology section of this document, as well as a Fugitive Dust (PM10) Control Plan, further discussed in the Air Quality section of this document.

Future development will be conditioned to comply with the recommendations and Design Criteria in the project specific Geotechnical Analysis required as a Condition in the City's General Plan. The proposed CZ and GPA are anticipated to have less than significant impacts relative to substantial soil erosion.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

- 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?

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**Discussion:**

The onsite area has an elevation drop of 30 feet, from the northwest to the southeast, at a 2.0% grade.

As discussed previously hazards associated with liquefaction, lateral spread and offsite landslides are not expected for the CZ and GPA.

The GP EIR states that ground subsidence is the gradual settling or sinking of the ground surface with little or no horizontal movement. This phenomenon is usually associated with the extraction of oil, gas



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or ground water from below the surface, but it may also occur as a result of an earthquake. The 4-meter high scarp on the west side of Devers Hill indicates that uplift has occurred within the Desert Hot Springs Area. Devers Hill is approximately 2.25 miles southwest of the subject property.

A USGS Scientific Investigations Report 2014-5075 "Land Subsidence, Groundwater Levels and geology in Coachella Valley, California, 1993-2010" indicates the following: While most of the Coachella Valley was relatively stable, land surfaces declined about nine inches to two feet in some areas of Palm Desert, Indian Wells, and La Quinta, between 1995 and 2010. An important recent exception was observed in La Quinta where groundwater levels have stabilized and risen, and the rate of land subsidence substantially decreased after groundwater replenishment systems were installed in 2009. Subsidence is considered a regional problem requiring regional mitigation not specific to the project vicinity.

According to the GP EIR soil collapse typically occurs in recently deposited soils in an arid or semi-arid environment. The alluvial sediments which comprise much of Desert Hot Springs are prone to collapse, which can result from surface irrigation. Remedial grading including proper preparation and compaction of project soil will be required and indicated in project specific grading plans which will be reviewed and approved by the City.

Future development will be conditioned to comply with the recommendations and Design Criteria within the required Project Specific Geotechnical Report. Less than significant impacts are anticipated as a result of the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

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

**Discussion:**

According to the General Plan Geotechnical Section, expansive soils are those, which include a significant amount of clay and are subject to swelling. Expansive soils can change in volume and can exert significant pressure on loads (such as buildings) that are placed on them. In the General Plan study area, expansive soils are not generally considered a hazard because of the relatively minor amount of clay present in the soils. Where expansive soils may occur is in the Qf3 and Qf4 soils, which generally occur north of the Mission Creek Fault and in the vicinity of Whitewater Hill. The property is approximately 1.0 miles southwest of the Mission Creek Fault and 5.0 miles northeast of Whitewater Hill. Less than significant impacts are anticipated relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures: None**



	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion:**

Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) does not currently provide sewer service in this area. Future development may be required to utilize a system of septic tanks and leech lines or seepage pits to dispose of wastewater or participate in the extension of existing sewer facilities/infrastructure. Future development would be required to undergo further City review; development would be required to meet the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requirements and compliance with MSWD, and Riverside County Environmental Health. Design for all disposal systems shall comply with industry regulations.

The CZ and GPA will not result in impacts to waste water disposal systems, therefore less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

**VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS --Would the project:**

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Discussion:**

Greenhouse gas (GHG) is a gaseous compound in the Earth's atmosphere that is capable of absorbing infrared radiation, thereby trapping and holding heat in the atmosphere. 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 to a lesser extent chlorofluorocarbons. Carbon dioxide is the main GHG thought to contribute to climate change. To address the long-term adverse impacts associated with global climate change, implementation of *The Governor's Executive Order S-3-05* would reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in California 80 percent below 1990 levels or 90 percent below current levels by the year 2050. Achieving this objective would contribute to efforts made around the globe to stabilize the global climate by capping GHG concentrations.

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. Additionally,



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in 2013, the City of Desert Hot Springs adopted their Climate Action Plan (CAP) that includes policies applicable to new development for the reduction of GHGs.

The proposed project is requesting a change of zone of 19.44 acres from Residential Low (RL) to Light Industrial (IL) and no development is proposed at this time. The current residential zoning designation allows for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow for 97 single family residential units and add 255 new residents (2.63 pph). In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows 75% percent lot coverage on a 20,000 square foot lot area, the projects 19.44 acres could potentially allow up eight (8) industrial lots at 2.46 acres and 79,388 sf per each industrial building.

CalEEMod (The California Emissions Estimator Model/CalEEMod Version 2013.2.2) was utilized to estimate the long-term operational air pollutant emissions and the greenhouse gas emissions that would result from the development of residential and light industrial. The annual GHG emissions associated with the operation of a residential development is 2,445.118 per year as summarized in Table VII-1. The annual associated GHG emissions for light industrial development (assuming max lot coverage) is 8,156.682 per year and summarized in Table VII-2. Related and operational emissions of Co2 equivalent are less than the SCAQMD interim threshold of 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year for stationary source emissions for small land use projects and 10,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub> for industrial facilities. At the time of development a project-specific GHG emissions report shall evaluate the project's consistency with applicable plans, policies and regulations in place for reducing GHGs. Less than significant impacts are anticipated relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Table VII-1  
Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions Summary  
Single Family Residential (R/L Zone)**

	Emissions (metric tons per year)			
	CO <sub>2</sub>	CH <sub>4</sub>	N <sub>2</sub> O	Total CO <sub>2</sub> E
Area	3.2258	1.1900e-003	4.000e-005	3.2668
Energy	481.6767	0.0156	6.0000e-003	48.38544
Mobile Sources	1,841.187	0.1281	0.0000	1,844.3893
Waste	26.0498	1.5395	0.0000	64.5374
Water Usage	42.3290	0.2076	5.2100e-003	49.0707
<b>Total CO<sub>2</sub>E (All Sources)</b>	2,445.118			

Source: CalEEMod™ output.

Note: Totals obtained from CalEEMod and may not total 100% due to rounding.



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**Table VII-2  
Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions Summary  
Light Industrial (IL Zone)**

	Emissions (metric tons per year)			
	CO <sub>2</sub>	CH <sub>4</sub>	N <sub>2</sub> O	Total CO <sub>2</sub> E
Area	0.0114	3.000e-005	0.0000	0.0122
Energy	3,232.5295	0.1091	0.0384	3,246.7037
Mobile Sources	3,693.598	0.3567	0.0000	3,702.5151
Waste	159.8594	9.4474	0.0000	396.0450
Water Usage	655.9109	4.8108	0.1182	811.4062
<b>Total CO<sub>2</sub>E (All Sources)</b>	<b>8,156.682</b>			

Source: CalEEMod™ output.

Note: Totals obtained from CalEEMod and may not total 100% due to rounding

**Mitigation Measures: None**

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

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**Discussion:**

California's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB32) required the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to establish a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions cap for the year 2020 and adopt the mandatory reporting rules for significant sources of GHG. The SCAQMD adopted the interim GHG significance threshold for stationary/industrial sources on December 5, 2008 which applies to projects where the SCAQMD is the lead agency. Additionally, the City of Desert Hot Springs has adopted a climate action plan (CAP) for the purpose of reducing the emission of GHGs. The proposed project is requesting a change of zone of 19.44 acres from Residential Low (RL) to Light Industrial (IL) and no development is proposed at this time. At the time of development, a project-specific GHG emissions report shall evaluate the project's consistency with applicable plans, policies and regulations in place for reducing GHGs. Less than significant impacts are anticipated relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures: None**



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**VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS** --Would the project:

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

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**Discussion:**

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR Title 40, Part 261) defines hazardous materials based on ignitability, reactivity, corrosivity, and/or toxicity 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 federal, state 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.

The Project proposes a GPA and CZ from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L). The Project encompasses approximately 19.44 acres of vacant land situated east of Little Morongo Road and north of the unimproved alignment of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The proposed land use amendment would result in a northward extension of the existing Light Industrial sector located east of Little Morongo Road. The Project property is adjoined by primarily vacant land with some residential development to the north. To the east, is vacant desert land and Big Morongo Wash. On the south, the undeveloped properties form part of a Light Industrial (I-L) District designation. To the west, the project is bordered by Little Morongo Road, the centerline of which delineates the City-County limits. The unincorporated land to the west of Little Morongo Road includes primarily undeveloped single-family residential lots zoned for Medium Density Residential according to the County of Riverside General Plan. The GPA and CZ does not involve any development at this time. Additionally, any future development of the subject property would be subject to further city review and supplementary environmental analysis.

The current residential zoning is intended to promote the development of low-density, single-family detached residential units. This zone allows for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow for approximately 97 single family residential units on the subject property. Per the U.S. Census Bureau, the City has 2.63 persons per household (2010-2014 estimates). Using this number, a single family development of 97 units could generate approximately 255 new residents. In comparison, the proposed light industrial zoning designation provides for business parks and the development of any industrial uses operating entirely in enclosed buildings. Foreseeable land uses in the light industrial zone include manufacturing operations, warehousing and distribution facilities, storage, and a variety of light manufacturing businesses. This zone allows a maximum of 75% percent lot coverage on a lot minimum of 20,000 square feet for new subdivisions. For a conceptual example, the Project's 19.44 acres could potentially allow up to eight (8) industrial lots of 2.46 acres each with a total of 79,388 square feet. Hazardous materials that are commonly associated with residential land use include paints, grease and rust solvents, household polishes and cleaners, insecticides, herbicides, rat poison,



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antifreeze, and batteries. These hazardous materials are also commonly associated with industrial land use although industrial uses transport, use, and dispose of these materials in greater quantities. A variety of specialized hazardous materials may be utilized in some light industrial activities.

The proposed amendment would not produce a significant hazard to the public because the vicinity of the Project site is relatively undeveloped and/or vacant desert land. The CZ and GPA would be an extension of an already existing Light-Industrial zone and therefore will not inhibit any developed residential or public land. Furthermore, when handled properly by trained individuals and consistent with the manufacturer's instructions and industry standards, there is a reduced risk when handling hazardous materials. Any transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials associated with residential or industrial operations is subject to federal state, and local regulations. Less than significant impacts are expected. Following the proposed land use policy amendment, future development would be required to implement a site plan and architectural design, subject to project-specific CEQA review. Less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

- 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?

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**Discussion:**

The Project involves a General Plan Amendment and Change of Zone from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L) for approximately 19.44 acres of vacant land situated east of Little Morongo Road and north of the unimproved alignment of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The current residential zoning designation allows for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow for approximately 97 single family residential units on the subject property. Per the U.S. Census Bureau, the City has 2.46 persons per household (2010-2014 estimates). Using this number, a single family development of 97 units could generate approximately 255 new residents. In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows 75% percent lot coverage on a 20,000 square foot lot area, the projects 19.44 acres could potentially allow up to eight (8) industrial lots at 2.46 acre each with a total of 79,388 square feet of industrial buildings. The Light Industrial zoning provides for business parks and the development of any and all industrial uses operating entirely in enclosed buildings. Future development in the light industrial zone may include, manufacturing operations, warehousing and distribution facilities, storage, and a variety of light manufacturing businesses.

Materials stored on site will be stored and applied according to manufacturer's instructions to mitigate the potential for incidental release of hazardous materials, explosive reactions, injury and contamination. Moreover, all hazardous materials associated with any future construction and operation of an industrial facility will be subject to federal, state, and local regulations. All future projects ensuing from the land use policy amendment would be required to implement a site plan and architectural



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design, subject to project-specific CEQA review. With proper care and adherence to industry standards, the Project does not pose a significant hazard to the public. Less than significant impacts related to the release of hazardous materials into the environment are expected relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

The project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. The nearest existing school is Desert Hot Springs High School located approximately 1.1 miles northeast of the subject property. Another school, Two Bunch Palms Elementary is located approximately 1.6 miles southeast of the subject property.

The current residential zoning designation allows for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow for approximately 97 single family residential units on the subject property. Per the U.S. Census Bureau, the City has 2.63 persons per household (2010-2014 estimates). Using this number, a single family development of 97 units could generate approximately 255 new residents. In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows 75% percent lot coverage on a 20,000 square foot lot area, the projects 19.44 acres could potentially allow up to 8 industrial lots at 2.46 acres each with a total of 79,388 square feet of industrial buildings. The Light Industrial zoning provides for business parks and the development of any and all industrial uses operating entirely in enclosed buildings. Future development in the light industrial zone may include, manufacturing operations, warehousing and distribution facilities, storage, and a variety of light manufacturing businesses. All hazardous materials associated with any future construction and operation of an industrial facility will be subject to federal, state, and local regulations.

Materials stored on site will be stored and applied according to manufacturer's instructions to mitigate the potential for incidental release of hazardous materials, explosive reactions, injury and contamination. Moreover, all hazardous materials associated with any future construction and operation of an industrial facility will be subject to federal, state, and local regulations. All future projects ensuing from the land use policy amendment would be required to implement a site plan and architectural design, subject to project-specific CEQA review. With proper care and adherence to industry standards, the Project does not pose a significant hazard to the public and is not within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. The CZ and GPA are expected to result in less than significant impacts related to the release of hazardous materials into the environment.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Discussion:

Record searches on the project property were performed within multiple database platforms compiled 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 October of 2016, a search was performed on all three database platforms. The search results did not identify any records or sites in connection with the subject property. The *EnviroStor* and *ECHO* database results did not identify any Land Disposal Sites, Military Sites, DTSC Hazardous Waste Permits, or DTSC Cleanup Sites on or around the subject property. From the three database platforms, the nearest registered facility is a LUST Clean-Up site associated with the Desert Hot Springs City Yard, which is located approximately 3,700 feet east of the project site. The leak was first reported in February of 2000 and proper site assessments were conducted so that the case was closed in August in 2000. As previously stated, the facility is approximately 3,700 feet away from the subject Project site. Future development will be reviewed by the City and less than significant impacts are anticipated relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion:**

The project is not located near an existing airport or airport land use plan. The nearest airport facility to the project is the Palm Springs International Airport, located approximately 11.5 miles to the south. No impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**Discussion:**

The project is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip and no impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Discussion:**

The Emergency Preparedness Element of the City's General Plan is designed to address concerns regarding the City's capability to respond to potential natural or man-made disasters. The Element sets forth goals, policies and programs to ensure an effective response. Critical Facilities, Emergency Transportation and Circulation, Emergency Medical Facilities, Emergency Operations Center, Emergency Organization and Chain of Command, and Extended Organizational Structure and Assistance are identified as important components of that strategy.

The City of Desert Hot Springs contracts with Riverside County Fire Department/Cal Fire (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.





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They operate 96 fire stations that serve 1,360,000 residents over 6,970 miles of Riverside County. The City of Desert Hot Springs has two RCFD fire stations; Battalion 10, Station 36 is located at 11535 Karen Avenue which is approximately 3.5 miles from the project site, and Battalion 10, Station 37 is the City's busiest fire station is located at 65-958 Pierson Blvd which is approximately 2 miles from the project site. Both stations are staffed by 8.2 full time personal and each shift has 3 professionals consisting of a Fire Captain/and or engineer and one or two Firefighter II / licensed paramedic on duty at all times. Each station is also equipped with a Type I, 1500 GPM fire engine.

In addition to the other RCFD facilities located in the Coachella Valley, the department maintains a cooperative mutual aid agreement with other agencies and communities to assist in suppressing fire or controlling emergency incidents. Mutual aid is an agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictions provided resources are available and is not to the detriment of their own service area. Per the City's General Plan, agreements are in place with Palm Springs and Cathedral City. Both of these cities provide their own fire services and do not contract with RCFD/Cal Fire.

As previously described, the Project does not involve any construction; however any future development would be subject to a standard review process by the Riverside County Fire Department to ensure that the site-specific emergency access, water pressure, and other pertinent criteria are met by the project. The nature of the Project is not expected to introduce operations that would hinder the City's ability to implement its emergency response goals, policies or programs. Less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☒☐

**Discussion:**

Large areas of Southern California are susceptible to Wildfires all year round due to the region's weather, topography and vegetation conditions. The Coachella Valley's hot dry summer and autumn weather is ideal to generate the dry vegetation that fuels most wildfires. The California Board of Forestry (CDF) ranks fire hazard of wildland areas of the State using four main criteria: fuels, weather, assets at risk, and level of service. Although the project site and its general surroundings are undeveloped with scattered vegetation, these conditions have not been recognized to meet the criteria of high or very high fire hazard zones.

Wildland fire protection in California is the responsibility of either the State, local government, or the 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 City of Desert Hot Springs contracts with Riverside County Fire



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Department/Cal Fire (RCFD) for a full range of fire protection services provided 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The responsibility for fire prevention and suppression outside of the City boundaries is under the State and federal agencies.

The Riverside County RCIP and the Cal Fire Maps for Western Riverside County indicate that project and its surroundings are located outside of the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) for Local Responsibility Area and outside of the Very High/High/Moderate FHSZ for State and Federal Responsibility Areas. The project site is not located on or near any wildfire areas. As previously discussed, the project will include the on-site fire protection facilities necessary to satisfy the local Fire Department requirements. Less than significant impacts related to wildland fire are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

**IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY** -- Would the project:

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

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**Discussion:**

The Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1972 establishes regulations pertaining to the discharge of pollutants to waters of the U.S. from point sources. Subsequent amendments to the CWA in 1987 established a framework for regulating non-point source stormwater discharges under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and nine California Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) administer the regulation, protection and administration of water quality pursuant to the NPDES. The project property and entire City of Desert Hot Springs is located within the Whitewater River Watershed in the Colorado River Region (Region 7). The City is a Permittee of the Whitewater River Watershed Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), where the urban runoff management strategy is established to provide the greatest protection of the receiving water quality. The existing regulations apply to construction activities and the post-construction operation of development based on the size, type, and intensity of land uses.

The proposed general plan amendment and change of zone does not pursue or involve the approval of any specific development entitlements. As such, the regulations established to comply with the local water quality objectives and discharge requirements are not prompted by the proposed policy change. Future projects seeking construction and development would not be precluded from meeting their specific compliance obligations and standards during construction and during the life of the project (post-construction), as described below.

The proponent of any future development resulting in temporary and permanent disturbance of one acre or greater on the project property is required to comply with the State of California's most current NPDES 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 preparation and implementation of



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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 must identify the locations and types of construction activities requiring best management practices (BMPs) and other necessary measures to prevent soil erosion and stormwater runoff pollution conditions, both on-site and in its surroundings. The plan is required to identify the limits of allowable construction-related disturbance in order to properly contain the activities and prevent any off-site impacts.

The proponent of future development that meets the criteria and thresholds of a Priority Development Project under the Whitewater River Region MS4 is required to prepare and implement Project-Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) through the lifetime to the project to comply with the most current standards of the Whitewater River Region Water Quality Management Plan for Urban Runoff. The WQMP must identify the specific manner in which the development complies with the City's Stormwater Management and Discharge Controls per Chapter 13.08 of the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code (Ordinance #1997-03).

Regarding compliance with water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, less than significant impacts are anticipated relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

- b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

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**Discussion:**

Groundwater is the principal source of municipal water supply in the Coachella Valley. The project area is underlain by the Mission Creek groundwater sub-basin, which along with the Garnet Hill sub-basin occupies the northern portion of the Coachella Valley and forms part of the larger Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin. This basin is managed under the Mission Creek and Garnet Hill Subbasins Water Management Plan, operated by the Coachella Valley Water District, the Desert Water Agency and the Mission Springs Water District. The Water Management Plan identifies long-term strategies to address current and future water demands in this area. The project is located within the service boundary of the Mission Springs Water District.

As previously mentioned, the proposed general plan amendment and change of zone does not involve any specific development entitlements that would result in the interference with groundwater recharge



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or with the local groundwater table conditions. However, project implementation would convert the existing land use designation from single family residential to light industrial, therefore increasing the future allowable intensity of site utilization and the associated use of local groundwater resources. For example, under the existing land use designation, an estimated maximum of 97 units could be developed on the property's 19.44 acres.

A development scenario under the proposed land use designation could allow for multiple light industrial buildings with a combined building coverage of approximately 635,104 square feet on the same property, which could potentially require more water resources for facility operations based on facility type. As a standard condition, future project-specific development will be subject to an independent entitlement process and environmental review to assess the nature and intensity of water use, as well as all of the opportunities to incorporate water conservation measures. Future light industrial development is 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.

Additional domestic water improvements necessary to serve future development would be identified by MSWD and included as conditions of approval by the City of Desert Hot Springs during the City's standard review process. Furthermore, under a future environmental review, a project will be required to demonstrate the proper implementation of stormwater management facilities, which can include retention facilities that would facilitate groundwater recharge through infiltration. Less than significant impacts are expected from the proposed CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

The project property consists of undeveloped land with partial vegetation coverage and a relatively flat terrain. As previously discussed, the project property is traversed by two meandering washes in-flowing from the north and west respectively before exiting through the easterly parcel boundary in a southeastern direction toward the off-site confluence with the Big Morongo Wash. Both washes are formed by intermittent flows along shallow paths distinguished by varying slope breaks, soil erosion, and vegetative shifts. Portions of these paths have been informally outlined with man-made rock berms that rise one to two feet above ground.

The identification and mapping of these washes are reflected in the current and historic United States Geological Survey (USGS) Topographic Maps (Desert Hot Springs Quadrangle), the USGS National



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Hydrography Dataset (NHD), and the *Whitewater River Watershed MS4 Permit Area Facilities Map* published by the Riverside County Flood Control District. Moreover, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory identifies these two drainages as riverine features with a classification of R4SBJ, corresponding to washes or intermittently flooded streambeds and decoded as riverine, intermittent, streambed, intermittently flooded.

As previously mentioned, the proposed CZ and GPA does not involve any specific 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. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

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

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**Discussion:**

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 light industrial designation could potentially involve a relatively more ample utilization of the project site compared to the current policy in part because the current residential development standards allow for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units per acre and a 40 percent maximum building lot coverage, while the existing development standards for light industrial uses establish a maximum lot coverage of 75 percent and up to two stories. A greater proportion of impervious cover (buildings, hardscape, pavement) allowable under light industrial development standards would typically result in a potential increase in surface runoff rates and amounts. However, as a standard condition, the site plan considerations for light industrial projects incorporate strict controls pertaining to grading, hydrology and drainage design, subject to approval by the City Engineer.



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These improvements would prove to be more stringent than what is expected from residential development. For example, future new 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 13.08 of the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code (Ordinance #1997-03). In complying with these standard conditions, expectation is that post-construction drainage is implemented in a manner that does not alter the existing patterns or result in increases in the runoff characteristics. Less than significant impacts are anticipated relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☒☐

**Discussion:**

The undeveloped project property presently is not served by any private or municipal stormwater drainage facilities, but is located within the Whitewater River Watershed Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), of which the City of Desert Hot Springs is a permittee. 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 MS4.

Compared to single-family residential uses, future new development under the proposed light industrial designation is expected to involve a more extensive use of the property to accommodate the types of buildings, facilities and operations allowable by the proposed policy. As such, the site plan, grading, and hydrology functionality of future new development would be required to properly handle runoff with a private on-site storm drain system sized proportionally to the site size and characteristics. Any proposed improvement plans will be subject to agency review and approval to ensure that the proposed grading and drainage conditions are acceptable to the City standards. The particular manner in which stormwater management is achieved under the proposed light industrial designation will be the subject of a separate environmental review and entitlement process. Less than significant impacts are anticipated relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

- f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

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#### Discussion:

The existing undeveloped condition of the project property does not exhibit any concerns over water quality. The proposed change in land use and zoning designation from residential to light industrial does not involve any improvements that would individually raise water quality concerns.

Future new development on the project site will be required 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*. This form of compliance would be expected of development occurring under both the existing residential and the proposed light industrial land use policies because both can reach the threshold of Priority Development Project under the MS4 regulations. In particular, proponents of future development will be required to develop and implement a Project-Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP). The Project-Specific WQMP must identify a strategy of site design, source controls, and treatment controls with a maintenance and monitoring program that, throughout the life of the project, will address post-construction runoff quality and quantity conditions.

The site plan, grading design, storm drain design, and any necessary drainage features of the project must be factored in the Project-Specific WQMP. As a standard condition for new development projects, the Project-Specific WQMP must be submitted and approved prior to the first discretionary project approval or permit. The Project-Specific WQMP and other improvement plans (grading, hydrology, storm drain) will be subject to the various methods and standards for controlling stormwater volumes, rates, and quality, as deemed necessary for approval by the City's Director of Public Works.

Through this required compliance, future projects will prevent impacts to the local receiving waters and avoids project violations to the established water quality standards and waste discharge requirements. Less than significant impacts relative to the substantial degradation of water quality are expected as they relate to the CZ and GPA.

#### Mitigation Measures: None

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

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#### Discussion:

The entire property is mapped within the 100-year flood hazard area (Zone AO) by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Based on the existing land use designation, any residential development proposals on the property, whether individual or combined, would result in the placement of housing within a 100-year flood hazard area. Such residential development would trigger the need for mitigation measures (site design and engineering) to reduce the hazards associated with the existing flood zone. The proposed CZ and GPA would remove the residential component from future on-site development and in its place would accommodate light industrial uses. As such, the flood



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protection requirements for industrial facilities would be considered more stringent than those for residential development because each future light industrial facility (or group of facilities) would be required to set aside ample space for an engineered storm drain and retention facilities with the proper capacity to serve the site and any off-site tributary areas. The storm drain design and retention infrastructure associated with light industrial development is typically more comprehensive than what may be expected from private single family residential development. The proposed improvement plans will be subject to agency review and approval ensure that the proposed grading and drainage conditions are acceptable to the City standards. No impacts relative to placing housing in a 100-year flood hazard area are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) evaluates potential flood hazards for the City. The FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) serve as the basis for identifying those potential hazards and determining the need for and availability of federal flood insurance. According to FIRM panel 06065C0885G, effective August 28, 2008, the entire project and its immediate surroundings are located within Zone AO and are therefore identified as being subject to inundation by the 1-percent-annual-chance storm. The entire project area of 19.44 acres is subject to three distinguished flooding conditions, based in part on the proximity to the Big Morongo Wash. In particular, the northeast 2.5 acres of the project can potentially be affected by an average flood depth of three (3) feet and a velocity of nine (9) feet per second. Central 13.6 acres of the project are subject to an average flood depth of three (3) feet and a velocity of eight (8) feet per second, while the southwest 3.3 acres are subject to an average flood depth of one (1) feet and a velocity of eight (5) feet per second. The average flood depths are derived from detailed hydraulic analyses by FEMA. Mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements and floodplain management standards apply to both residential and industrial uses.

As previously discussed, the proposed project involves a CZ and GPA from Residential Low Density (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L), but does not involve the entitlement of any specific form of development. Therefore, no physical changes will occur on-site, such that would alter the existing flood zone characteristics identified by FEMA. Future development on the property would be subject to a separate environmental review process to assess the site specific considerations pertaining to this topic and any required flood protection. Less than significant impacts are anticipated to result from the proposed land use conversion.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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

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**Discussion:**

The undeveloped project property is not located near an existing dam or levee. The proposed project involves a general plan amendment and change of zone from Residential Low Density (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L), but does not include the entitlement of any specific form of development. Based on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps, local flooding is characterized by unconfined sheet flow with varying depths and velocities under the designation of Zone AO. The proposed CZ and GPA does not preclude future site design proposals from implementing the necessary engineered grading, storm drain design, and flood controls to protect future facilities and human use. Less than significant impacts are anticipated to result from the land use conversion.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

- j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami or mudflow?

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**Discussion:**

The project property is not located near a body of water that would pose a potential seiche or tsunami risk. The proposed project would change the allowable uses of the property from residential to light industrial, but any future development would be subject to the City's design review. The potential for debris or mud flow would be analyzed at that time. No impacts are anticipated from the projects proposed CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

**X. LAND USE AND PLANNING** - Would the project:

- a) Physically divide an established community?

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**Discussion:**

The Project proposes a GPA and CZ from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L) on approximately 19.44 acres of vacant land situated east of Little Morongo Road and north of the unimproved alignment of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The subject property and land to the north and east has zoning designation of R-L. Land to the south of the subject property is zoned I-L. To the west of the subject property is Little Morongo Road of which the centerline delineates the City boundary. County land west of Little Morongo includes partially developed single-family residential lots zoned for Medium Density



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Residential according to the County of Riverside General Plan.

The current residential zoning designation allows for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow for 97 single family residential units on the subject property. Per the U.S. Census Bureau, the City has 2.63 persons per household (2010-2014 estimates). Using this number, a single family development of 97 units could generate approximately 255 new residents. The existing residential zone in the area is primarily vacant land with scattered development.

In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows 75% percent lot coverage on a 20,000 square foot lot area which would allow for up to eight (8) industrial lots at 2.46 acres each with a total of 79,388 square feet of industrial building space. Buildout of this size when fully staffed could generate approximately 200 employees with a normal work week of approximately 40 hours. The proposed I-L zoning designation would be compatible with the existing industrial sector given that the southerly portion of the subject Property adjoins the existing industrial zone.

The Project would result in a northward extension of the existing Light Industrial sector into a primarily vacant residential sector. There is no established community pattern in the project vicinity that would be divided by the proposed Project. Less than significant impacts relative to the division of an established community are expected.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

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

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**Discussion:**

The Project involves a CZ and GPA from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L). The Project site sits on approximately 19.44 acres of vacant land east of Little Morongo Road and north of the unimproved alignment of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Surrounding land use consists primarily of vacant undeveloped land.

The existing zoning designation of Residential Low allows for up to 5 dwelling units per acre and 40-percent maximum building lot coverage. Under this zoning a total of 97 units could be developed on the project site. The proposed zoning designation of Light Industrial allows for 75-percent maximum building lot coverage, on a 20,000 sq. ft. lot area. The Project's 19.44 acres could potentially allow up to



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8 industrial lots at 2.46 acres each for a total of 79,388 sq. ft. of industrial buildings. The adjacent mapped conservation area will not conflict with the proposed policy change.

The Light Industrial land use and zoning designation was established to support the development of business parks and industrial uses operating in enclosed buildings. Examples of Light Industrial development include clean manufacturing operations, warehousing and distribution facilities, mini-warehouse storage, and a variety of light manufacturing businesses. The proposed land use conversion would result in the northward extension of the existing Light Industrial District that is situated south of the project site and east of Little Morongo road. The existing GP land use and zoning designation is R-L however the site is vacant and the surrounding area consists of low density scattered development.

The proposed GPA and CZ does not change the City's process to review and approve future development of the site. Development of either land use would be an allowed use by zone or through an amendment to the zoning and GPA land use designation. Future development would be required to implement a site plan and architectural design, and other improvement plans may be subject to further environmental review. Therefore, less than significant impacts are expected relative to the GPA and CZ.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

The Project lies within the boundary of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). According to the Habitat Conservation maps, the site is not designated for conservation purposes; however the site is bordered to the east by the Morongo Wash Special Provisions Area. Therefore any development of the Project site is subject to the Land Use Adjacency guidelines which have been established to minimize the effects of development adjacent to Conservation Areas.

As previously discussed, the current residential zoning would allow for a maximum of 97 units on the Project site which could generate approximately 255 new residents. In comparison, the proposed Light Industrial zone allows for up to eight (8) industrial lots at 2.64 acres each with a total of 79,388 square feet of industrial building space. The proposed Project would ultimately extend the existing industrial sector northwards in place of the undeveloped low residential sector.

Any future development of the subject Property will require additional environmental review as well as adhere to the CVMSHCP Land Use Adjacency Guidelines. City review and approval of the CZ and GPA is not expected to result in the conflict with a plan that avoids or mitigates an environmental effect. Therefore, less than significant impacts to candidate, sensitive or special status species are anticipated to result from the proposed CZ and GPA.



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**Mitigation Measures:** None

**XI. MINERAL RESOURCES** -- Would the project:

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

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**Discussion:**

In accordance with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA), mineral land classification maps and reports have been developed to assist in the protection and development of mineral resources.

Local agencies, including the City of Desert Hot Springs, utilize the existing information on mineral classifications for land use plan development and decision-making. In the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan Mineral Resource Element, and the SMARA map of Desert Hot Springs, the Project and its surroundings are located within Mineral Resource Zone 3 (MRZ-3), which applies to areas where the significance of mineral deposits cannot be evaluated from the available data. There are no specific known mineral resource deposits or facilities on or near the Project.

The Project site is adjacent to the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Wash. These drainage courses have conditions where sand and gravel deposits may occur, but they are located within designated Conservation Areas of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) and therefore are not an accessible mineral resource site. The Project will not involve physical disturbance to these drainages or conservation areas and will not disturb any potential mineral resources found therein. The nature of the Project does not involve construction or the extraction of mineral deposits. Less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

- 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?

☐☐☒☐

**Discussion:**

Mineral resources that are known to exist in the Coachella Valley region primarily consist of sand and gravel (aggregate) typically deposited along and near local drainages. Aggregate material is deemed necessary to the local building industry as a component of asphalt, concrete, road base, stucco and plaster. Local or regional construction industries tend to be dependent on readily available aggregate deposits within reasonable distance to the market region. The project site is not recognized as a mineral resource recovery site delineated in the County of Riverside General Plan, City of Desert Hot





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Springs General Plan or the resource maps prepared pursuant to SMARA. Less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

**XII. NOISE** -- Would the project result in:

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

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**Discussion:**

Noise is defined as unwanted sound that disrupts normal activities or that diminishes the quality of an environment. It is usually caused by human activity that adds to the existing acoustic setting of a locale. Noise is measured on a logarithmic scale of sound pressure level known as a decibel (dB). The human ear does not respond uniformly to sounds at all frequencies, being less sensitive to low and high frequencies than to medium frequencies that correspond with human speech. In response to this, the A-weighted noise level or scale has been developed to correspond better with peoples' subjective judgment of sound levels. This A-weighted sound level is called the "noise level" referenced in units of dB(A).

The City of Desert Hot Springs has the authority to establish land use noise standards and corresponding restrictions under the City's Noise Ordinance. A range of noise standards apply to different receiving land uses based on sensitivity and compatibility. In general, land uses with a higher sensitivity to noise (residential, schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, nursing homes and recreation) are assigned lower ambient noise thresholds than land uses deemed less sensitive (industrial and commercial). In Table V-2 of the Noise Element, the current project land use designation corresponds to a residential setting (including single and multi-family dwellings). For residential uses, the normally acceptable noise levels are 50 to 60 CNEL, while levels up to 70 CNEL are considered conditionally acceptable, up to 75 CNEL are considered generally unacceptable, and higher levels are discouraged for compatibility.

Since the acceptable noise exposure levels corresponding to light industrial uses are higher than those for residential uses, the proposed land use policy conversion has the potential to result in future development that increases the on-site noise settings. In particular, the future acceptable noise thresholds can potentially increase by 15 CNEL while maintaining compliance with the local noise standards and ordinance. The generally unacceptable noise levels would range from 70 and 80 CNEL, while the discouraged noise levels would be those exceeding 75 CNE. It is worth noting that the potential increase in on-site noise exposure levels does not imply that future proposed facilities will actually generate the maximum increases.



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The Noise Element of the City's General Plan identifies vehicular traffic as the principal source of noise in the community. The project is not located adjacent to any high-traffic roadways, such as freeways, that are known to be primary noise generators. Table V-3 of the Noise Element indicates that along Little Morongo Road (south of Pierson Boulevard), the exterior noise levels of 70 and 65 dBA are contained within the road right-of-way. The 60 dBA levels extend approximately 96 feet from the street centerline and affect the western edge of the project property. The existing low-ambient noise setting to the north and west is characterized by residential activities, such as intermittent noise during landscape maintenance, building maintenance, trash pick-up, deliveries, vehicular circulation, and air conditioning unit operation. The undeveloped land to the north, west and south does not constitute an existing source of noise for the local setting.

The proposed land use conversion does not include any specific form of development, such that would introduce an actual increase in the noise levels. Under the proposed land use designation, future development may include business parks or the development of light industrial uses operating in enclosed buildings. The potential exposure of persons to noise level increases, whether short- or long-term, will be the subject of a separate environmental review when specific development proposals are assessed. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☒☐

**Discussion:**

Groundborne vibration, also referred to as earthborne vibration, can be described as perceptible rumbling, movement, shaking or rattling of structures and items within a structure. Groundborne vibration can generate a heightened disturbance in residential areas. These vibrations can disturb residential structures and household items while creating difficulty for residential activities such as reading or other tasks. Although groundborne vibration is sometimes perceptible in an outdoor environment, it is not a problem to the degree it is when this form of disturbance is experienced inside a building. Groundborne vibration can be measured in terms of amplitude and frequency or vibration decibels (VdB). Trains, buses, large trucks and construction activities that include pile driving, blasting, earth moving and heavy vehicle operation commonly cause these vibrations. Other factors that influence the disturbance of groundborne vibration include distance to source, foundation materials, soil and surface types.

The project property is adjoined by vacant residential parcels along the west half of the northerly boundary. Three existing residential structures are located on the north side of Desert View Avenue, approximately 170 feet from the northerly boundary. Residential uses are also located on the west side of Little Morongo Road, outside of the City limits. The existing source of groundborne vibration is attributed to the circulation of large vehicles and trucks along Little Morongo Road.



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The proposed project does not involve a specific development project or facility that can be particularly assessed for the generation of short- or long-term groundborne vibration increases. Any future development would be subject to city review. Construction activities associated with existing or proposed land use are expected to result in similar vibration impacts. Less than significant impacts related to excessive groundborne vibration noise levels are expected to result from the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

**Discussion:**

The Project property and most of its surroundings are undeveloped. Therefore, this setting does not represent an existing source of ambient noise. Existing traffic on Little Morongo Road represents a source of ambient noise for this locale and is known to affect the westerly edge of the property. The proposed land use amendment does not include a specific form of development and would maintain the project property in an undeveloped condition until future development proposals are implemented and undertake their appropriate assessment of the project-specific ambient noise increases. Industrial projects will be reviewed on a case by case basis and potential noise level exceedances associated with the existing on-site and neighboring land uses must be addressed appropriately. Less than significant impacts related to permanent increase in ambient noise levels are expected relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

**Discussion:**

In general, the existing residential land use designation is deemed to have a higher sensitivity to ambient noise exposure and therefore is subject to lower noise level thresholds. The nature of light industrial uses is deemed to be less sensitive and therefore is allowed higher noise level thresholds. For example, an industrial facility can be exposed to 15 dBA higher than a residential setting while still maintaining its respective normally acceptable compatibility under the General Plan guidelines. Following the proposed land use amendment, the project parcels will remain in an undeveloped condition until future project proposals undertake their separate entitlement and environmental review process. As discussed previously, construction activities and certain industrial land uses have the potential to impact ambient noise levels. The stand-alone land use conversion would not involve temporary or long-term noise generating activities. Less than significant impacts related to temporary or periodic ambient noise levels are expected relative to the CZ and GPA.



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**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☐☒

**Discussion:**

The project is located approximately 11.4 miles south of the Palm Springs International Airport and is not located within its airport land use plan. No impacts are expected to result related to projects located within an airport land use plan.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☐☒

**Discussion:**

The project is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. No impacts are expected to result the project located in the vicinity of a private airstrip and no mitigation measures are required.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

**XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING** – Would the project:

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

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**Discussion:**

The Project proposes a GPA and CZ from the current Residential Low (R-L) land use designation to Light Industrial (I-L). The project encompasses approximately 19.44 acres of vacant land in a primarily undeveloped sector of the city. The land surrounding the Project property consists of primarily vacant land with scattered development.

The current residential zoning designation allows for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow for 97 single family residential units on the subject property. Per the U.S. Census



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Bureau, the City has 2.63 persons per household (2010-2014 estimates). Using this number, a single family development of 97 units could generate approximately 255 new residents. In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows 75% percent lot coverage on a 20,000 square foot lot area which would allow for up to eight (8) industrial lots at 2.46 acres each with a total of 79,388 square feet of industrial building space.

Residential land use could directly induce population growth through the development of homes. Light industrial land use could result in population growth by encouraging relocation for employment. A light industrial land use does not directly generate new residents. Furthermore the project would not result in any major extensions of roads and other infrastructure that would directly or indirectly attract population to the area. Any future development would be subject to further city review and additional environmental analysis. Less than significant impacts are expected relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☐☒

**Discussion:**

The project involves a GPA and CZ from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L). Although the Project does not propose development at this time, future development of the subject site would not displace any housing given the site's vacancy. Any future development would be subject to further City review and additional environmental analysis. Less than significant impacts are expected from the proposed land use change.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☐☒

**Discussion:**

The site has a Residential Low land use and zoning designation and is currently undeveloped, vacant desert land. Although the Project does not propose any development at this time, future development of the subject site would not displace any people. No impacts are expected relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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#### XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

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

Fire protection?

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#### Discussion:

The City of Desert Hot Springs contracts with Riverside County Fire Department/Cal Fire (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 Desert Hot Springs has two RCFD fire stations, Battalion 10, Station 36; located at 11535 Karen Avenue is approximately 3.3 miles from the project site. Battalion 10, Station 37 is the City's busiest fire station and is located at 65-958 Pierson Blvd, approximately 2.2 miles from the proposed project. Both stations are staffed by 8.2 full time personal and each shift has 3 professionals consisting of a Fire Captain/and or engineer and one or two Firefighter II / licensed paramedic on duty at all times. Each station is also equipped with a Type I, 1500 GPM fire engine.

In addition to the other RCFD facilities located in the Coachella Valley, the department maintains a cooperative mutual aid agreement with other agencies and communities to assist in suppressing fire or controlling emergency incidents. Mutual aid is an agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictions provided resources are available and is not to the detriment of their own service area. Per the City's General Plan, agreements are in place with Palm Springs and Cathedral City. Both of these cities provide their own fire services and do not contract with RCFD/Cal Fire.

The project proposes a CZ and GPA of approximately 19.44 acres from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L). The current residential zoning designation allows for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow for 97 single family residential units. Per the U.S. Census Bureau, the City has 2.63 persons per household (2010-2014 estimates). Using this number, a single family development of 97 units could generate approximately 255 new residents. In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows 75% percent lot coverage on a 20,000 square foot lot area, the projects 19.44 acres could potentially allow up eight (8) industrial lots at 2.46 acres and 79,388 sf per each industrial building.



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Development of the existing residential zoning or the proposed light industrial would increase the demand on fire services, however, based on the sites proximity to the City's existing fire stations, development of the project site could be adequately served without the expansion of a new fire facility and adequate response times would be met. Additionally, future development would be required to implement all applicable and current California Fire Code Standards. This would include installation of fire hydrants and sprinkler systems inside any structures and potentially pay a fair share contribution to existing services.

Furthermore, this GPA and CZ is only a policy change and would not change the City's process to review and approve any future development of the project site. Project specific plans would undergo City and Cal Fire review to ensure adequate fire services and response times are maintained. Moreover, any future development would also be required to comply with the City's Development Impact Fees (DIF) to assist with the funding of public facilities and services, including fire services. Therefore, less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures: None**

Police protection?

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**Discussion:**

Police services are provided to the project area by the Desert Hot Springs Police Department. The police department operates out of a single location and is located at 65-950 Pierson Blvd, approximately 2.8 miles from the project site. Per communication with City of DHS police department, the DHSPD has 27 sworn officers and 6 support staff, totaling 33 positions. Based on the 2013 City population of 27,903 persons, the resulting officer to resident ratio is 0.96 per 1,000 populations.

The project proposes a CZ and GPA of approximately 19.44 acres from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L). The current residential zoning designation allows for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow for 97 single family residential units. Per the U.S. Census Bureau, the City has 2.63 persons per household (2010-2014 estimates). Using this number, a single family development of 97 units could generate approximately 255 new residents. In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows 75% percent lot coverage on a 20,000 square foot lot area, the projects 19.44 acres could potentially allow up eight (8) industrial lots at 2.46 acres and 79,388 sf per each industrial building. Employment would be based on a particular industrial use.

Development of either residential or light industrial uses could increase the demand on police services, however, based on the site proximity to the City's existing police station and current staffing, the proposed project could be adequately served without the expansion of a new facility and adequate response times would be met.

Furthermore, the GPA and CZ request does not change the City's process to review and approve any future development of the project site, regardless of the designated land use. Any project proposing development would undergo City and Police review to ensure public safety. Moreover, future



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development would also be required to comply with the City's Development Impact Fees (DIF) to assist with the funding of public facilities and services, including police services, therefore, the CZ and GPA are expected to result in less than significant impacts.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

Schools?

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**Discussion:**

The proposed project area falls under the Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD). The District operates 8 schools in the City of Desert Hot Springs; 5 elementary, 2 middle schools and 1 high school. As previously discussed, the current land use designation of Residential Low (R-L) allows for 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow up to 97 single family residential units. At 2.63 per persons per household, a single family development on the proposed project site could generate approximately 255 new residents. Using the 2015 PSUSD student generation factors (Table 12-1); a total of 25 students would be added into the local schools.

**Table XIV-1  
PSUSD Student Generation Rates**

School Level	Proposed Units	Land Use Type	*Student Generation Factor	Total Students Generated
Elementary School (Grades K-5)	97	SFD	0.1338	12
Middle School (Grades 6-8)	97	SFD	0.0611	5
High School (Grades 9-12)	97	SFD	0.0875	8
<b>Total New Students</b>				<b>25</b>

\*Source: Student Generation Factor provided by Palm Springs Unified School District 2015

In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows 75% percent lot coverage on a 20,000 square foot lot area, the projects 9.4 acres could potentially allow up eight (8) industrial lots at 2.46 acres each with a total of 79,388 square feet of industrial buildings. Staffing would be based on specific industrial use.

Employment generated by this land use change would not be expected to draw a substantial number of new residents that would require school age children requiring public education. The incremental increase of students from either development scenario would not substantially alter school facilities or the demand for public education and no new facilities would need to be constructed. Additionally, any future development will be required to pay school impact fees to assist in offsetting impacts to school facilities. At the time of writing, current development fees are \$3.48 a square foot for residential and \$.56 a square foot for commercial projects. Moreover, any plans proposed for future development would require additional entitlements and City review. Less than significant impacts to school services related to the proposed CZ and GPA are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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**Discussion:**

As previously discussed, the subject property is 19.44 acres and currently zoned for low density residential at 5 dwelling units an acre (R-L). Approval of a residential development on the property could introduce 97 new single family homes, and result in an increase of approximately 255 new residents into the City (2.63 pph). Per the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan, the City currently operates 7 existing parks, with a mix of neighborhood, community and pocket parks. Therefore, the moderate increase of new residents associated with the any potential residential development of the project site would not cause a substantial impact to the City's existing recreational facilities, nor result in the need to modify existing or construct new park facilities. Additionally, a residential project would be required to comply with the City's local requirements for park and recreation dedications (QUIMBY Act) and both land uses would be subject to development impact fees (DIF).

A land use change to light industrial uses is not expected to create additional demand for public park facilities and would not result in the additional demand for public services. Therefore, less than significant impacts are expected as they relate to the CZ and GPA.

Further discussion can be found in the Recreation Section XV(a) and XV(b) of this Initial Study.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

Other public facilities?

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**Discussion:**

No increase in demand for government services and other public facilities is expected beyond those discussed in this section. No impacts to other public facilities are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

**XV. RECREATION**

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

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**Discussion:**

The Project involves a CZ and GPA from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L). Per the City General Plan, there are 7 existing and operating public parks with additional neighborhood, community and pocket parks. As discussed in the Population and Housing Section XIII of this Initial Study, if the



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zoning designation remained R-L there would be potential to generate 255 new residents to the area which would moderately increase activity of neighborhood parks. If the zoning designation were changed to I-L there would be no significant generation of population in the area aside from employment. Industrial uses are not expected to create additional demand for public park facilities. No residential land uses are proposed and no employment will be generated by the Project. Therefore no substantial increase to the existing neighborhoods or regional parks is expected as they relate to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

- 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?

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**Discussion:**

The Project involves a GPA and CZ, of which no construction is proposed. Industrial uses are not expected to create additional demand for public parks. Construction is not proposed as part of the Project, and any future construction will be subject to further environmental review. No impacts are expected

**Mitigation Measures:** None

**XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC** -- Would the project:

- a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or Policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?

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**Discussion:**

The project applicant proposes to process a CZ and GPA for approximately 19.44 acres. The property is currently zoned Single Family Residential with a density of 5 units/acre and proposed to be changed to Light Industrial with a maximum FAR of 75%. The project site is largely segregated from the City's intense residential and commercial uses and would function as an extension of the existing Light Industrial designated property that currently ends at its southern border.

The property is located east of Little Morongo Road, between Pierson Boulevard and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Little Morongo Road serves as the property's primary source of access. This roadway is currently



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paved with two lanes and no curb and gutter and forms the western boundary of the project.

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 categorized as LOS "A" through LOS "F", where LOS "A" represents the most favorable free flow condition 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 period 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 Desert Hot Springs has defined Level of Service "D" as the minimum adequate intersection service level during peak hours for planning and design purposes.

Little Morongo Road is designated as a Major Collector. Major Collector streets include a 110 ft. right-of-way, with 6 lanes, a 14 ft. median and on-street parking. 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 landscaped parkway. Final Street Improvement Plans will be reviewed and approved by the City.

According to the Coachella Valley Association of Governments 2015 Traffic Census Report, Little Morongo Road south of Pierson Boulevard had an ADT of 3,719 in 2015. According to the GP EIR, at the Preferred Land Use Alternative Daily Traffic Volumes at Buildout, Little Morongo Road, north of Hacienda Avenue is projected to have an ADT of 29,600 with a V/C of 0.95 for a LOS of D. This would result in an overall capacity of approximately 31,100 for the adjacent portion of Little Morongo Road.

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Rates - 9th Edition was utilized to compare the potential maximum trip generation of the approved land use, Single Family Residential, and the proposed land use, General Light Industrial. The guidance provides the following Rates for the two land uses:



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**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	Dwelling Unit (DU)	9.52	0.75	1.00
General Light Industrial /110	1000 Square Feet (KSF)	6.97	0.92	0.97

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

**Table XVI- 2**  
**Project Assumptions**

Land Use	Allowable Density	Acreage	Units
Single Family Residential	5 DU/Acre	19.44	97 DU
Light Industrial	75% FAR	19.44 (846,806.4 SF)	635 KSF

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

Description/ITE Code	ITE Trip Generation Rates		
	Weekday	AM	PM
Single Family Homes/210	923	73	97
General Light Industrial /110	4,426	584	616
Difference	3,503	511	519

As shown in Table XVI-3, if a future Light Industrial Project is submitted with the maximum estimated FAR, average daily trips are estimated to be more than four times higher than a Single Family Residential project of maximum allowable density. If the difference in trips attributed to the maximum allowable Light Industrial Density (3503) is added to the City's estimated buildout total (29,600) the resultant total would be 33,103. Based on the Level of Service Descriptions in the GP EIR, this would result in a V/C (33,103/31,100) of 1.07 and a LOS of E.

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 mitigation as determined by the reviewing agencies.

Prior to approval, future development projects, including offsite street design standards and the project's 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





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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 or mitigation 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.

The proposed CZ and GPA are expected to result in less than significant impacts relative to applicable plans, ordinance or policies.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

The Congestion Management Program (CMP,) prepared by the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC,) is intended to link land use, transportation and air quality with reasonable growth management methods, strategies and programs that effectively utilize new transportation funds to alleviate traffic congestion and related impacts. As the designated Congestion Management Agency (CMA), the RCTC prepares the CMP that designates a system of highways and roadways to include all State Highway facilities within Riverside County and a system of "principal arterials" to be included as the Congestion Management System (CMS.) Program updates include consultation with local agencies, the County of Riverside, transit agencies and sub-regional agencies like the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG).

It is the responsibility of local agencies, when reviewing and approving development proposals to consider the traffic impacts to the CMS. All development proposals and circulation projects to be included within the City of Desert Hot Springs are required to comply with the current policies and



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procedures set forth by the RCTC's CMP. The CMA provides a uniform database of traffic impacts for use in a countywide transportation computer model. The RCTC has recognized use of the Coachella Valley Area Transportation System (CVATS) sub-regional transportation model and the Riverside Transportation Analysis Model (RIVTAM) to analyze traffic impacts associated with development proposals or land use plans. The methodology for measuring LOS must be that contained in the most recent version of the Highway Capacity Manual. Traffic standards must be set no lower than LOS E for any segment or intersection on the CMP system unless the current LOS is lower (i.e., LOS F).

The project is located approximately 3.5 miles northeast of the Indian Canyon westbound on-ramp to the Interstate 10 Freeway (I-10). Interstate 10 is identified as a CMP corridor. At the time of future development submittal, traffic resulting from proposed Light Industrial operations is not anticipated to individually or cumulatively contribute to an exceedance of a level of service standard established in the CMP. The CZ and GPA are not anticipated to result in significant impacts to any applicable Congestion Management Program. Impacts are expected to be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

The project is not located within proximity to an airport and therefore would not result in impacts to air traffic patterns. No impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☒☐

**Discussion:**

In its current condition, the undeveloped project property is bordered by the paved alignment of Little Morongo Road to the west. To provide proper access to future development, off-site design and proposed off-site improvements would include street paving on portions of Little Morongo Road along the project's frontage. 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 serve as an extension of existing adjacent land use to the south. No incompatible uses will result from future development.



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The proposed CZ and GPA will not result in hazards due to design features or incompatible uses. Impacts are expected to be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

e) Result in inadequate emergency access? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

**Discussion:**

Future Development projects will be required to provide adequate access to emergency response vehicles, as required by the City of Desert Hot Springs 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 Little Morongo Road. 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 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 Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code (California Fire Code.) Off-site project improvements will involve paving on Little Morongo Road within the required rights-of-way and according to the City's designated street standards.

Following implementation of conditions defined by a traffic analysis if required and/or City review, future development projects are anticipated to result in less than significant impact related to emergency access.

The proposed CZ and GPA will not result in impacts relative to emergency access. Less than significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

**Discussion:**

SunLine Transit Agency provides bus services to the City of Desert Hot Springs through Lines 14 and 15. Line 20 is available on weekdays only. The nearest bus stop is found at the intersection of West Drive and Pierson Boulevard. It is located approximately 1.25 miles in driving/biking distance to the northeast.



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SunLine Transit Agency buses are wheelchair accessible and include bicycle racks that can accommodate either two or three bicycles. The potential use of local bus services by employees of future development is not expected to conflict with or substantially increase the demand for this transit service. Project implementation is not anticipated to interfere with the existing service or performance at bus stop facilities.

If future demand warrants, expansion of available services may be appropriate. Transit services are monitored by both the City and SunLine. Additional services are periodically considered in response to anticipated increase in use.

Future development would improve pedestrian mobility by incorporating pedestrian sidewalks along the frontage of Little Morongo Road, where currently none exist. The widening and improvements of the roadways do not include bicycle lanes however improvements resulting from the project are expected to enhance, rather than obstruct or conflict with, the City's established goals on bicycle transportation or with any existing facilities. Less than significant impacts are expected relative to the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

#### **XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- Would the project:**

- a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

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#### **Discussion:**

The project site falls under the Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) sewer service area. The project site is vacant and undeveloped land and does not have access to wastewater services through MSWD. Moreover, MSWD does not currently have infrastructure in place for sewer services. MSWD operates two wastewater treatment plants serving 7,300 parcels and a population of approximately 20,400. The Horton Waste Treatment Plant located on Verbena Drive has capacity of 2.3 million gallons per (mgd) (2,800 AFY).

The project proposes a CZ and GPA of approximately 19.44 acres from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L). The current residential zoning designation allows for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow for 97 single family residential units and a population of 255 new residents (2.63 pph). In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows 75% percent lot coverage on a 20,000 square foot lot area, the projects 19.44 acres could potentially allow up eight (8) industrial lots at 2.46 acres and 79,388 sf per each industrial building. Both development scenarios would add to the demand of wastewater services, however, the demand would be incremental and would not exceed the requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

In the absence of sewer connection, future development would need to install/utilize a septic system or potentially participate in the extension of existing sewer lines or systems. Per MSWD, more than 55%



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of the districts households use individual septic systems to treat their wastewater. This has been the predominant method of wastewater disposal in the City for over five decades. This septic system would be required to be designed to accommodate the size and type of development for the project's wastewater needs. Future development would be required to undergo further City and environmental review; development would be required to meet the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requirements and compliance with MSWD, and Riverside County Environmental Health. Additionally, the City of Desert Hot Springs complies with all standards defined by the Clean Water Act. Less than significant impacts are expected as a result of the GPA and CZ land use change.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

MSWD provided domestic water and wastewater service to the City of Desert Hot Springs. The subject property is approximately 19.44 acres and is currently vacant and undeveloped land and not served by existing utilities at this time. As previously discussed throughout this document, the project is requesting a GPA and CZ from its current land use designation of Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L) and no entitlements for development are proposed at this time. Under the existing residential land use, it is estimated that a maximum of 97 SFR units could be developed on the project site. Development under the proposed light industrial designation could allow up to eight (8) industrial lots at 2.46 acres and 79,388 sf per each industrial building.

Groundwater is the primary source of domestic water supply in the Coachella Valley; MSWD provides potable water to the City by extracting groundwater from the Mission Creek sub-basin. The existing MSWD distribution system consists of three independent water distribution systems. Per the MSWD 2010 Urban Water Management Plan, the MSWD system has approximately 1.26 million linear feet of pipeline. The District's service area currently includes 10 wells that supply the Desert Hot Springs System and two wells each for the Palm Springs Crest System and West Palm Springs Village System.

The 2007 MSWD Sewer Master Plan identifies the need for a Regional Waste Water Treatment Plant (RWWTP). With the installation of this facility a majority of the MSWD service area can be served by sewer connection and wastewater would be collected and conveyed to this system. The District is in process of implementing this treatment plant and construction is anticipated to begin in early 2018.

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



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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 MSWD and included as conditions of approval by the City of Desert Hot Springs during the City's standard review process. The CZ and GPA currently being processed through the City would not trigger the need for the construction of additional new water or wastewater treatment facilities of expansion of these facilities. Less than significant impacts are expected as a result of the proposed CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

The undeveloped 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 MS4. Compared to single-family residential uses, future new development under the proposed light industrial designation is expected to involve a more extensive use of the property to accommodate the types of buildings, facilities and operations allowable by the proposed policy.

The site plan, grading, and hydrology functionality of future new development would be required to properly handle runoff with a private on-site storm drain system sized proportionally to the site size and characteristics. Any proposed improvement plans will be subject to agency review and approval to ensure that the proposed grading and drainage conditions are acceptable to the City standards. Standard engineering procedures currently in place require that all final grading and hydrology plans be submitted to the City of Desert Hot Springs for review and approval prior to the issuance of a grading permit. The particular manner in which stormwater management is achieved will be the subject of a separate environmental review and entitlement process. Less than significant impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Discussion:

MSWD provides potable water to the City by extracting groundwater from the Mission Creek subbasin. The existing MSWD distribution system consist of three independent water distribution systems: 1) Desert Hot Springs and surrounding area system – encompasses the City of DHS, a portion of the City of Palm Springs and surrounding unincorporated area of Riverside County, 2) Palm Springs Crest System, and 3) West Palm Springs Village System.

Per the MSWD 2015 Urban Water Management Plan, the MSWD system, inclusive of all three distribution systems, has approximately 1.26 million linear feet of pipeline. The District's service area currently includes 10 wells that supply the Desert Hot Springs System and two wells each for the Palm Springs Crest System and West Palm Springs Village System. The MSWD 2015 UWMP states the Mission Springs subbasin is currently in overdraft condition. The Mission Creek Settlement Agreement (Dec.2004) and the 2003 Mission Creek Groundwater Replenishment Agreement between CVWD and DWA specify that the available imported water supplies from the State Water Project (SWP) will be allocated between the Mission Creek and Whitewater River subbasins in proportion to the amount of water produced or diverted from each subbasin during the preceding year. As required by the policies of the General Plan, the City will continue to cooperate with MSWD and other agencies/jurisdictions in implementing a groundwater replenishment program capable of ensuring the viability of the Mission Creek subbasin.

The project proposes a CZ and GPA of approximately 19.44 acres from Residential Low (R-L) to Light Industrial (I-L). The current residential zoning designation allows for a maximum density of 5 dwelling units an acre which would allow for 97 single family residential units and a population of 255 new residents (2.63 pph). In comparison, the Light Industrial zone allows 75% percent lot coverage on a 20,000 square foot lot area, the projects 19.44 acres could potentially allow up eight (8) industrial lots at 2.46 acres and 79,388 sf per each industrial building. Development of either nature will add to the demand of water supplies, however, the 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 MSWD and included as conditions of approval by the City of Desert Hot Springs during the City's standard review process. Less than significant impacts are expected as a result of the proposed CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



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- e) 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?

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**Discussion:**

Waste water services are provided by Mission Springs Water District (MSWD). Sewer service is currently unavailable to the undeveloped project site. As part of the existing conditions at this time, development would most likely install/utilize a septic system. Per MSWD, more than 55% of the districts households use individual septic systems to treat their wastewater. Septic systems in the City are the responsibility of individual owners to maintain and would not add to the demand of the existing wastewater capacity.

However, the 2007 MSWD Sewer Master Plan identifies the need for a Regional Waste Water Treatment Plant (RWWTP). With the installation of this facility a majority of the MSWD service area can be served by sewer connection and wastewater would be collected and conveyed to this system. The District is in process of implementing this treatment plant and construction is anticipated to begin in early 2018. Therefore, sewer infrastructure could be in place depending on the timing of future development of the project site. Future development may be required to contribute to these improvements.

The proposed CZ and GPA currently being processed through the City do not include plans for development. As discussed throughout this document, the CZ and GPA is only a policy change in land use from Residential Low (R/L) to Light Industrial (LI). Prospective on-site development would be subject to further City and agency review to determine wastewater impacts and proper treatment. Less than significant impacts are expected as a result of the CZ and GPA.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

Solid waste disposal and recycling services for the City of Desert Hot Springs are provided by Desert Valley Disposal (DVD). The proposed project does not currently involve any entitlements for development. However, solid waste generated by future residential or light industrial 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



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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 indicates 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, and impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

☐☐☐☒

**Discussion:**

The City of Desert Hot Springs contracts with Desert Valley Disposal 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 project 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

**XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS  
OF SIGNIFICANCE --**

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

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**Discussion:**

Based upon the information and mitigation measures provided within this Initial Study approval and implementation of the project is not expected to substantially alter or degrade the quality of the environment, including biological, cultural or historical resources. Less than significant impacts are expected.



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**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

As discussed throughout various areas of this document, the proposed project is proposing a CZ and GPA from Residential Low (R/L) to Light Industrial (LI). Development of either land use would be an allowed use by zone or through an amendment to the zoning and GPA land use designation. Therefore, development of the Project site would be compatible with the existing and future land uses zoned for the area. Based upon the analysis provided within this Initial Study, approval of the CZ and GPA will have less than significant impacts.

**Mitigation Measures:** None

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

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**Discussion:**

As discussed in the various sections throughout this Initial Study, the proposed project involves a land use change from low density residential (R-L) to Light Industrial (LI) uses and no development is proposed at this time. Future project-specific development will be subject to the City's entitlement process and further environmental review. Development of either land use would not include any uses that would result in substantial adverse effects on human beings. The City of Desert Hot Springs has established development regulations to ensure it does not conflict with the City's General Plan, its surrounding uses, or become detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare. The City's detailed review process will ensure that the regulations are fully implemented. Based upon the findings provided in this document, less than significant impacts are expected.

**Mitigation Measures:** None



City of Desert Hot Springs

Date: January 2017

Project Title: Application for Chang of Zone ZMA 02-16 General Plan Amendment 02-16

Project Name: Feliks Akopyan

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## Sources

City of Desert Hot Springs Comprehensive General Plan, adopted September 5, 2000

City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan Draft EIR, 2000

City of Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code

Riverside County General Plan (RCIP), adopted October 7, 2003

2015 Mission Springs Water District Urban Water Management Plan



City of Desert Hot Springs

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Project Title: Application for Change of Zone ZMA 02-16 General Plan Amendment 02-16

Project Name: Feliks Akopyan

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