



COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

Planning and Development

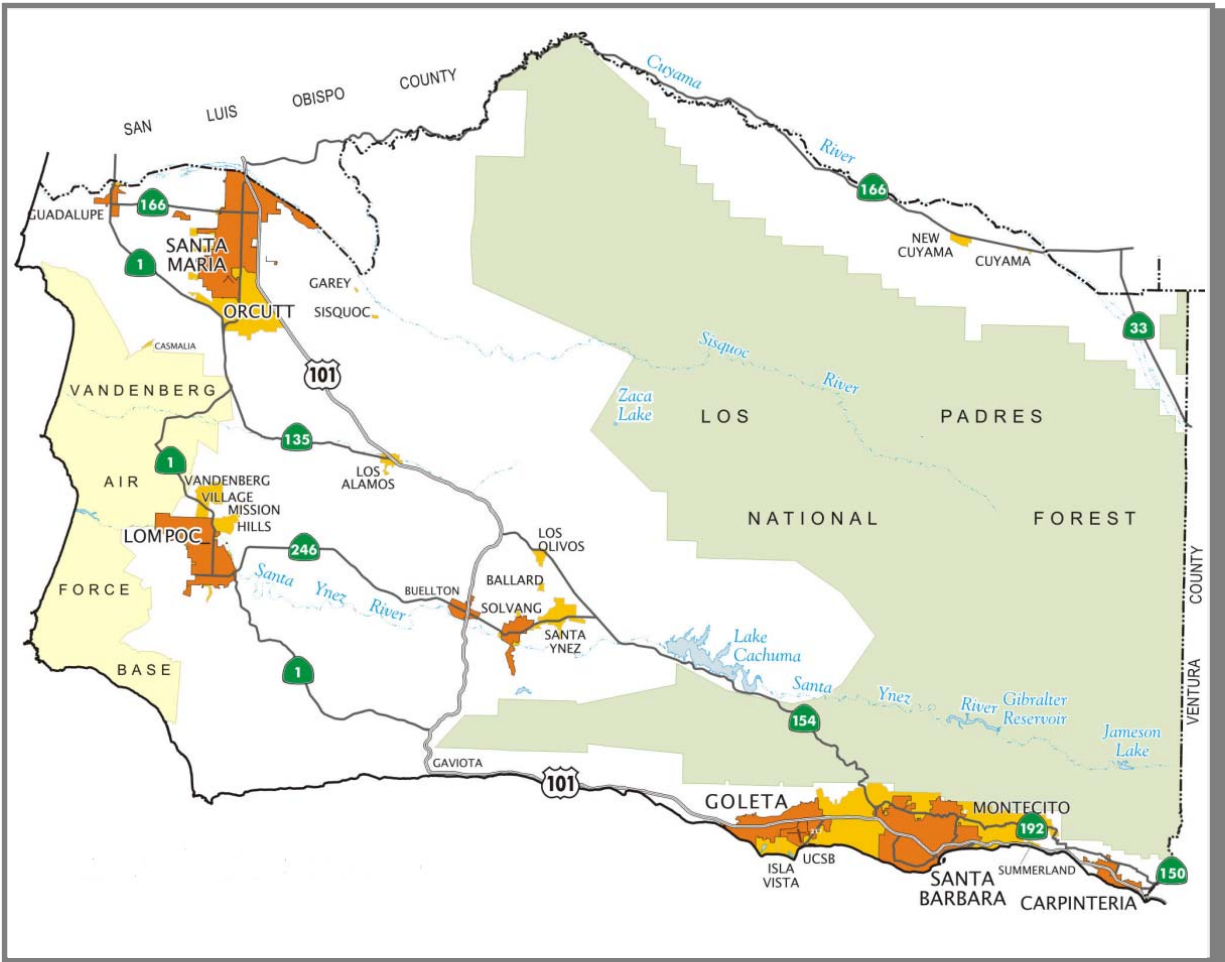
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Proposed Final Negative Declaration

14GPA-00000-00008
14NGD-00000-00014

2015-2023 Housing Element Amendment

October 14, 2014



**County of Santa Barbara
Long Range Planning Division
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1.0 REQUEST/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Housing Element is one of seven state-mandated elements of the County of Santa Barbara's (County) Comprehensive Plan. The principal purposes of the Housing Element include meeting the existing and projected housing needs for all income levels of persons and households living in the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County. Particular attention is given to accommodating the County's share of the regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) and addressing the special needs of seniors, disabled persons, farmworkers, and homeless and extremely low income persons and families. The Housing Element establishes goals, policies, and programs to address these housing needs consistent with state housing element law.

Government Code Section 65588(a) states that each local government shall periodically review and, as appropriate, revise its housing element to evaluate the following:

1. The appropriateness of the housing goals, objectives, and policies in contributing to the attainment of the state housing goal.
2. The effectiveness of the housing element in attainment of the community's housing goals and objectives.
3. The progress of the city, county, or city and county in implementation of the housing element.

The purpose of this project (Case Number 14GPA-00000-00008) is to update and amend the County's 2009-2014 Housing Element to address existing and projected housing needs in the unincorporated areas of the county throughout the eight-year 2015-2023 Housing Element planning period. The project builds on what was effective in the past with amendments to the 2009-2014 Housing Element. As a result, the project focuses on (1) deleting completed goals, policies, and programs; (2) amending outdated goals, policies, and programs; and, as necessary, (3) adding new goals, policies, and programs.

The 2015-2023 Housing Element contains six chapters. The title and a brief description of each chapter follow below. In summary, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 provide information and/or analysis of state housing element law; housing needs; governmental and non-governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing; and land suitable for residential development. Together, these chapters serve as a framework for Chapter 5, which contains goals, policies, and specific programs to offset governmental and non-governmental constraints and enhance housing production consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and state housing element law.

Chapter 1 – Introduction. Provides a general introduction to the Housing Element.

Chapter 2 – Housing Needs. Contains a housing needs assessment based on the results of public outreach and review of current population, demographic, and employment trends that contribute to housing demand throughout the unincorporated county.

Chapter 3 – Constraints and Mitigating Opportunities. Analyzes market factors, environmental and physical factors, and local and state regulations that serve as barriers to affordable and adequate housing.

Chapter 4 – Evaluation of the County of Santa Barbara's 2009-2014 Housing Element. Evaluates the success of the housing goals, policies, and programs included in the County's 2009-2014 Housing Element.

Chapter 5 – Housing Goals, Policies, and Programs. Contains goals, policies, and programs to address the housing needs of the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County.

Chapter 6 – Land Inventory and Quantified Objective. Includes (1) the land inventory and analysis, and (2) the quantified objective. The land inventory identifies vacant and underutilized sites that are zoned and suitable for new residential development. The quantified objective is a forecast of the number of new housing units anticipated to be produced over the 2015-2023 Housing Element planning period.

Chapters 1 to 4 and Chapter 6 focus on the background data and analysis that serve as the basis for the goals, policies, and programs of the 2015-2023 Housing Element. These five chapters are informational in nature and will not result in physical development or environmental impacts. Chapter 5, on the other hand, could facilitate future physical development that may result in environmental impacts. Therefore, Chapter 5 is the main focus of this Negative Declaration.

Chapter 5 consists of six goals, 14 policies, and 37 programs. The amendment builds upon the 2009-2014 Housing Element by retaining existing goals, policies, and programs with minor wording clarifications; combining programs to reduce redundancy; amending programs to reflect changes; and adding new policies and programs to promote affordable housing. Table 1 includes each goal and policy, and lists the title of each program included in Chapter 5. Attachment A is the complete version of Chapter 5, including the full text of each program. Table 1 also identifies which goals, policies, and programs are new and those that have been revised or continued without change from the 2009-2014 Housing Element.

**Table 1 – Goals, Policies, and Programs
2015-2023 Housing Element**

No Revisions	Goal 1: Enhance the Affordability, Diversity, Quantity, and Quality of the Housing Supply
No Revisions	Policy 1.1: Promote new housing opportunities adjacent to employment areas and the revitalization of existing housing to meet the needs of all economic segments of the community, including extremely low income households, while bolstering the County’s rural heritage and supporting each unincorporated community’s unique character.
New	Policy 1.2: Encourage large employers, including corporations, government, institutions, and schools to collaborate with local governments, non-profits, and private interests to fund, develop, and maintain high quality affordable housing to accommodate the region’s workforce.
Minor Text Revisions	Program 1.1 – Regional Planning
Major Program Revisions	Program 1.2 – Inclusionary Housing ordinance effectiveness
Major Program Revisions	Program 1.3 – Community Plan Rezones adoption
Minor Text Revisions	Program 1.4 – Tools to Incentivize High-Quality Affordable Housing
Major Program Revisions	Program 1.5 – Infrastructure Constrains and Priorities for Disposal of County Land (Program 1.5 combines Programs 1.5 and 4.2 of the 2009-2014 Housing Element.)
Minor Text Revisions	Program 1.6 – Housing Design through project review
Major Program Revisions	Program 1.7 – Isla Vista Master Plan adoption
Minor Text Revisions	Program 1.8 – Permit Streamlining for Energy Efficiency
Minor Text	Program 1.9 – Energy Efficiency Policy and Financing - ECAP, emPower

Revisions	
No Revisions	Program 1.10 – State Density Bonus Law Consistency Amendments – Article II
No Revisions	Program 1.11 – Density Bonus Consultations
Minor Text Revisions	Program 1.12 – Affordable and Quality Housing Development Incentives
Minor Text Revisions	Program 1.13 – Isla Vista Monitoring
New	Program 1.14 – Supplemental Density Bonus
New	Program 1.15 – Mixed Use Zone
New	Program 1.16 – Design Residential (DR) Zone Modifications
New	Program 1.17 – Minimum Density Residential Zone
New	Program 1.18 – Water and Sewer Service Priority for Affordable Housing

Minor Text Revisions	Goal 2: Promote, Encourage, and Facilitate Housing for Special Needs Groups
No Revisions	Policy 2.1: Encourage housing that meets the requirements of special needs households, as identified per state law, and promote housing diversity (i.e., size, type, tenure, location, and affordability levels).
Minor Text Revisions	Program 2.1 – Applicant Consultations
Major Program Revisions	Program 2.2 – Special Needs Housing Regulations
Major Program Revisions	Program 2.3 – Farmworker Employee Housing Law Consistency Amendments
Major Program Revisions	Program 2.4 – Farmworker Housing
Major Program Revisions	Program 2.5 – Fair and Safe Special Needs Housing
New	Program 2.6 – Senior Housing and Support Uses
New	Program 2.7 – Definition of Family
New	Program 2.8 – Transitional and Supportive Housing

No Revisions	Goal 3: Provide Fair and Safe Access to Housing
No Revisions	Policy 3.1: Promote equal housing opportunities for all persons in all housing types (ownership and rental, market-rate, and assisted).
Minor Text Revisions	Program 3.1 – Fair Housing Legal Services
Minor Text Revisions	Program 3.2 – Fair and Safe Housing

Minor Text Revisions	Goal 4: Preserve the Affordable Housing Stock and Cultivate Financial Resources for the Provision of Affordable Housing in Santa Barbara County
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No Revisions	Policy 4.1: Preserve the affordable housing stock, maintain its affordability, improve its condition, and prevent future deterioration and resident displacement. Participate in available federal and state housing subsidy and assistance programs and use the County’s own resources in order to leverage maximum funding for the provision of affordable housing.
Minor Text Revisions	Program 4.1 – Government Funding Continuum
Major Program Revisions	Program 4.2 – Avoid Conversion of Affordable Housing to Market Rate
Major Program Revisions	Program 4.3 – Improve and Rehabilitate Existing Housing Stock
Major Program Revisions	Program 4.4 – Soft Second Mortgages
New	Program 4.5 – Code Enforcement

No Revisions	Goal 5: Foster Cooperative Relationships and Efficient Government
No Revisions	Policy 5.1: Form collaborative professional working relationships with the public and providers of housing; and assist with the process of accessing and/or providing affordable housing opportunities. Identify and, where feasible, eliminate or reduce governmental constraints to the development of housing.
No Revisions	Program 5.1 – Cooperative Partnerships
Minor Text Revisions	Program 5.2 – Regional Housing Programs Participation
Minor Text Revisions	Program 5.3 – Housing Programs Outreach
Minor Text Revisions	Program 5.4 – Use Technology to Monitor Programs

No Revisions	Goal 6: Promote Home Ownership, Owner Occupancy, and/or the Continued Availability of affordable housing units through programs and implementing ordinances for all economic segments of the population including very-low, low, moderate, and/or workforce income households to assure that existing and projected needs for affordable housing are accommodated in residential development
No Revisions	Policy 6.1: The County shall designate appropriate land and/or provide programmatic strategies (e.g., fee waivers or reductions, regulatory incentives) for the development of affordable housing when preparing and amending land-use and/or community plans, the zoning ordinance, and growth management plans.
No Revisions	Policy 6.2: To reduce the negative environmental, economic, and social effects of commuting, the County shall promote the inclusion of affordable housing units as part of residential land use and development.
No Revisions	Policy 6.3: To achieve efficient, compact, and cost effective use of buildable land, the County shall promote the inclusion of affordable housing units as part of residential land use and development.
No Revisions	Policy 6.4: To provide for economic vitality, the County shall promote the inclusion of housing that is affordable to all economic segments of workers, as part of residential land use and development.

No Revisions	Policy 6.5: To provide for affordable housing needs that are generated by new housing development, the County shall promote the inclusion of affordable housing units as part of residential land use and development.
No Revisions	Policy 6.6: To increase the supply of affordable housing units and retain the long term affordability of these housing units, the County shall require specified types of discretionary residential projects to provide a portion of the development as price restricted affordable housing units, the construction of onsite residential second units (RSU), and/or the payment of in-lieu fees for use in the development of affordable housing. Specified projects shall comply with the requirements set forth for inclusionary housing in Chapter 46 – Affordable Housing Enforcement and Chapter 46A - Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO) of the Santa Barbara County Code.
No Revisions	Policy 6.7: The County shall provide incentives to the greatest extent feasible for projects subject to the inclusionary housing requirements, including bonus density increases and/or modifications to zoning requirements.
No Revisions	Policy 6.8: Affordable housing units constructed to satisfy inclusionary housing requirements shall have exterior designs that blend in architecturally with the market rate housing units and shall be dispersed within the development to the extent feasible. Development along the perimeter of the site should reflect the general design of surrounding neighborhoods and be compatible with the character of adjacent land uses.

The Draft 2015-2023 Housing Element, Draft Negative Declaration and all documents referenced in the Draft Negative Declaration may be reviewed at P&D offices located at 123 E. Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara and 624 Foster Road, Suite C, Santa Maria, and on our website at:

http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/programs/housing/housing_element.php.

2.0 PROJECT LOCATION

The 2015-2023 Housing Element applies to the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County. The county is located on the west coast of the United States in the southern half of the State of California. It has a rectangular shape and measures approximately 65 miles west to east and 40 miles north to south. The county is bounded by San Luis Obispo County to the north, Ventura County to the east, Kern County to the northeast, and the Pacific Ocean to the south and the west. The center of the county is near the Santa Ynez Valley and the Intersection of the U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 154 and is located approximately 125 miles north of Los Angeles and approximately 300 miles south of San Francisco.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Santa Barbara County has a total land area of 2,735 square miles. Of the total land area, 1,290 square miles make up the unincorporated land of the county. The 2010-2013 American Community Survey estimates the population of Santa Barbara County to be 435,697. *The Regional Growth Forecast 2010-2040* (SBCAG 2012) estimates that 134,433 people lived in the unincorporated areas of the county in 2010.

Santa Barbara County contains five main geographical subregions: South Coast, Santa Maria Valley, Lompoc Valley, Santa Ynez Valley, and Cuyama Valley. These subregions coincide with the geographic boundaries of the County's five Housing Market Areas (HMAs). HMAs are geographic areas that generally provide the social and economic services to a community and provide its population with facilities such that commuting to another housing market area in order to work or shop is elective. The boundaries of the HMAs generally coincide with County Census Divisions, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Each HMA is briefly described below.

South Coast HMA:

The South Coast HMA is the largest urbanized area in the county. It covers approximately 245 square miles and includes the incorporated cities of Santa Barbara, Goleta, and Carpinteria. This coastal area is characterized by numerous canyons and coastal plains located between the foothills of the Santa Ynez Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. The unincorporated communities of the South Coast include Summerland, Montecito, and Isla Vista. The communities in this region are desirable places to live given their breathtaking views and beaches, mild climate, and robust economy. Consequently, the housing supply is constrained, resulting in some of the highest median sales prices for homes in the nation.

Santa Maria HMA:

The Santa Maria HMA is situated in the northwest corner of the county. It is largely rural in character but includes the Santa Maria Valley, an urbanized area with the largest retail trade center in the North County. The valley is bounded by the Santa Maria River to the north, the Casmalia Hills to the west, the San Rafael Mountains to the east, and the Solomon Hills to the south. The Santa Maria HMA includes the incorporated cities of Santa Maria and the city of Guadalupe and the unincorporated communities of Orcutt, Casmalia, Sisquoc, and Garey. This HMA has abundant and relatively inexpensive land available for new development. The housing supply is significantly less constrained in this HMA, resulting in housing that is generally affordable to lower and moderate income families.

Lompoc HMA:

The Lompoc HMA is located in the mid-western portion of the county, adjacent to Vandenberg Air Force Base. It is separated from the rest of the county by the Purisima, Santa Rita, Santa Rosa, and White hills. The Santa Ynez River traverses the Lompoc HMA in a westerly direction and eventually drains into the Pacific Ocean. This area includes the incorporated city of Lompoc and the unincorporated communities of Vandenberg Village and Mission Hills. These communities reflect the agricultural heritage of the county. Similar to the Santa Maria HMA, the housing supply is significantly less constrained in this HMA and is attainable to some lower and moderate income families.

Cuyama HMA:

The Cuyama HMA is in the far northeastern portion of the county and is a large agricultural area bounded by the Caliente Mountain Range to the north and the Sierra Madre Mountains to the south. The San Andreas Fault is located to the east of the Cuyama Valley and travels in a northwestern direction. The Cuyama Valley is bisected by the Cuyama River and includes the unincorporated communities of Cuyama, New Cuyama, and Ventucopa. These communities are rural and isolated, resulting in very low land costs compared to the other HMAs.

Santa Ynez HMA:

The Santa Ynez HMA is located in the central portion of the county at the base of several converging mountain ranges, including the San Rafael and Santa Ynez mountains and the Purisima and Santa Rita hills. The Santa Ynez River is located to the south of this HMA. This HMA includes the cities of Solvang and Buellton and the unincorporated communities of Los Olivos, Ballard, Los Alamos, and Santa Ynez. These areas are rural in character, flourishing on agriculture and tourism industries. Land use plays a key role in housing availability and cost in the Santa Ynez HMA. The County has designated/zoned approximately 95% of the Santa Ynez HMA as agriculture. These lands are characterized by large parcels, large-scale agricultural uses, and low-density development. In contrast, most residents live in the two cities and four unincorporated communities which comprise a small percent of this HMA. Consequently, land for new residential development is limited. The area's remarkable scenery, diverse recreation opportunities, and mild climate make it a popular location for visitors and year-round and part-time residents. These factors – limited land and attractive setting – contribute to the Santa Ynez HMA's high housing costs, which are only second county-wide to the South Coast HMA.

4.0 POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS CHECKLIST

The following checklist indicates the potential level of impact and is defined as follows:

Potentially Significant Impact: A fair argument can be made, based on the substantial evidence in the file, that an effect may be significant.

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation: Incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from a Potentially Significant Impact to a Less Than Significant Impact.

Less Than Significant Impact: An impact is considered adverse but does not trigger a significance threshold.

No Impact: There is adequate support that the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to the subject project.

4.1 AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. The obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public or the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?			X	
b. Change to the visual character of an area?			X	
c. Glare or night lighting which may affect adjoining areas?			X	
d. Visually incompatible structures?			X	

Setting:

The Open Space Element of the County Comprehensive Plan includes the following description of Santa Barbara County’s aesthetics and visual resources:

Santa Barbara County is renowned world-wide for the scenic beauty of its seascapes and mountains. The coastal shelves, nestled between ocean and mountains, and the scenic inland valleys provide natural settings that are difficult to rival. The large expanses of cultivated farmlands and grazing lands on the valley floors and gently rolling hillsides provide a green or golden pastoral setting, depending on the season, that delights the eye of resident and traveler.

Visual resources are not limited to rural landscapes. Summerland, Santa Ynez Valley, Orcutt, and other unincorporated communities in Santa Barbara County include notable architecture, neighborhoods, parks, and other features that create a distinctive and attractive visual character.

County Environmental Thresholds:

The County’s “Visual Aesthetics Impact Guidelines” classify coastal and mountainous areas, the urban fringe, and travel corridors as “especially important” visual resources. A project may have the potential to create a significantly adverse aesthetic effect if (among other potential impacts) it would impact important visual resources, obstruct public views, remove significant amounts of vegetation, substantially impact the natural character of the landscape, or involve extensive grading visible from public areas. The guidelines address public, not private views.

Impact Discussion:

(a-d) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that would facilitate new housing or other physical development and potentially obstruct views seen from highways and other public viewing places, change the visual character of neighborhoods, introduce glare or night lighting, or otherwise impact aesthetics and visual resources. For example, Programs 1.10, 1.14, and 1.17 could increase the allowed density of some affordable residential projects. Program 1.16 could reduce existing open space requirements in the Design Review (DR) zone for affordable, special needs, and senior housing projects. Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 could allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development (commercial/residential), combined residential and treatment facilities and multi-level care senior housing facilities.

Several factors minimize the potential that new housing or other physical development stemming from the proposed programs would have significant effects on aesthetics and visual resources. Specifically, some of the proposed programs contain provisions that recognize and address potential impacts to aesthetics and visual resources. For example, Program 1.6 requires that new residential projects undergo review by

one of the four regional Boards of Architectural Review (BAR) for consistency with applicable design guidelines. The *Quality Housing Design and Development Incentives*, included in Appendix C of the 2015-2023 Housing Element, encourage new development to be compatible with surrounding structures and the existing setting. Furthermore, the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances contain policies and development standards that minimize and/or avoid the impacts of new development on aesthetics and visual resources. For instance, the zoning ordinances restrict outdoor lighting, contain height and size limits, and require the design review, in some cases, by the BAR. A principal purpose of design review is to enhance the visual quality of the environment. The Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan contains visual resource policies guiding development in urban and rural areas. In part, these policies require new structures to conform to the scale and character of the surrounding area and community. The community plans provide additional policies to preserve and enhance the visual resources within each community plan area.

In addition to these factors, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements for development or include site-specific proposals. It also does not amend existing land-use designations, change existing zoning districts, reduce existing open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan, including the Coastal Land Use Plan and applicable community plans. The existing Comprehensive Plan policies and zoning ordinance development standards would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on aesthetics and visual resources. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards are insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors discussed above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on aesthetic and visual resources.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at densities and locations that may incrementally impact aesthetics and visual resources. However, any subsequent projects would be relatively small-scale, limited, and dispersed, and, as a result, would not significantly affect overall aesthetics and visual resource values. In addition, according to County policies and development standards, individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant impacts to aesthetics and visual resources. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on aesthetics and visual resources, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on aesthetics and visual resources.

4.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. Convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use, impair agricultural land productivity (whether prime or non-prime) or conflict with agricultural preserve programs?			X	
b. An effect upon any unique or other farmland of State or Local Importance?			X	

Setting:

Agriculture plays a critical economic and environmental role in Santa Barbara County. Agricultural lands support a range of agricultural operations, including row crops, orchards, and vineyards. Agriculture is the county’s major producing industry with a gross production value of over \$1.4 billion (Santa Barbara County, Agricultural Commissioner’s Office 2014). In addition to the creation of food, jobs, and economic value, agricultural land provides valuable open space and helps maintain the county’s rural character. Approximately 96% (792,960 acres or 1,239 square miles) of unincorporated land of the county (excluding the Los Padres National Forest and Vandenberg Air Force Base) is zoned for agricultural uses.

County Environmental Thresholds:

The County’s “Agricultural Resource Guidelines” provide that proposed development may result in a significant adverse effect on agricultural resources if it would cause a parcel to not be viable for crop production or livestock grazing, or if it would substantially degrade or remove Prime Farmland or farmland of State or Local Importance. The guidelines include a point system to evaluate the agricultural capability of parcels before and after the construction of a proposed project. However, the point system is intended for site specific projects and/or subdivisions and is not structured for programmatic actions such as adoption of the Housing Element.

Impact Discussion:

(a-b) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development potentially impair agricultural productivity if the selected sites are agricultural land or adjoin agricultural operations. For example, Program 1.3 states the County will consider rezoning land for new affordable housing in areas where such development is currently not allowed. Rezones and subsequent development could theoretically convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use. Programs 1.10 and 1.11 could increase the density of residential development allowed on certain sites, including sites near agricultural operations.

Based on two key factors, any new housing or other physical development stemming from the proposed programs would be unlikely to have significant effects on agricultural resources. First, the proposed programs promote infill, redevelopment, mixed-use, and other types of development in designated urban areas that are largely developed and, except for the Goleta Valley plan area, contain no agricultural lands. In regards to the Goleta Valley plan area, the Goleta Community Plan (1993) and proposed Goleta Valley Community Plan for Eastern Goleta Valley (adoption expected in Summer 2015) contain strict policies to preserve agricultural lands within urban areas. Second, the Agricultural Element, Land Use Element, and Environmental Resource Management Element of the County Comprehensive Plan contain goals and policies to preserve and minimize impacts on agricultural resources. For example, Agricultural Element policies protect agricultural operations from recreational and other non-compatible uses, discourage the conversion of highly productive agricultural lands, and support programs which encourage the retention of

highly productive agricultural lands. Coastal Land Use Plan (CLUP) policies protect parcels designated for agricultural use from subdivision and conversion to non-agricultural uses if such development would diminish long-term agricultural productivity of the property.

Besides the factors discussed above, the proposed Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend existing land-use designations, change existing zoning districts, or otherwise change existing policies regarding agricultural land. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan policies and zoning ordinance development standards would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on agricultural resources. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors discussed above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on agricultural resources.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at locations that could potentially have direct or indirect impacts on agricultural resources. However, any subsequent projects would likely occur in urban areas and would be relatively small-scale, and limited, and, as a result, would not have significant impacts on agricultural productivity or land. In addition, according to County policies and development standards, individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant effects to agricultural resources. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on agricultural resources, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on agricultural resources.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. The violation of any ambient air quality standard, a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation, or exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (emissions from direct, indirect, mobile and stationary sources)?			X	
b. The creation of objectionable smoke, ash or odors?			X	
c. Extensive dust generation?			X	
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
d. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
e. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	

Setting:

Air Quality: The Air Resources Board (ARB), California Environmental Protection Agency, has established California Ambient Air Quality Standards (State standards) to identify outdoor pollutant levels considered safe for the public. State law requires the ARB to designate areas of California as attainment, nonattainment, or unclassified for each state standard. The area designations are based on the most recent monitoring data (June 2013) and indicate the healthfulness of air quality throughout the state.

ARB makes state area designations for ten criteria pollutants: ozone (O₃), particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), sulfates (SO₄), lead, hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), vinyl chloride, and visibility reducing particles. Santa Barbara County is currently classified as non-attainment area for two of the criteria pollutants: PM₁₀ and O₃. Sources of PM₁₀ include grading, road dust, and vehicle exhaust. Ozone comes from chemical reactions among ozone precursors in the atmosphere. The major sources of ozone precursor emissions in the county are motor vehicles, solvents, and the petroleum industry.

In addition to State standards, the Federal Clean Air Act requires the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards. U.S. EPA makes national area designations for six criteria pollutants: ozone (O₃), PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and sulfur dioxide (SO₂). Santa Barbara County is currently classified as an attainment area for these criteria pollutants.

Greenhouse Gases and Global Climate Change: Greenhouse gases (GHGs) include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆), and nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃). Combustion of fossil fuels constitutes the primary source of GHGs. GHG emissions have the potential to adversely affect the environment because they contribute, on a cumulative basis, to global climate change. The quantity of GHGs that it takes to ultimately result in climate change is not precisely known; however, it is clear that the quantity is enormous, and no single project alone would measurably contribute to a noticeable incremental change in the global average temperature, or to global, local, or micro climate. Therefore, from the standpoint of CEQA, GHG impacts to global climate change are inherently cumulative. Potential effects include

reduced water supplies in some areas, ecological changes that threaten some species, reduced agricultural productivity in some areas, and increased coastal flooding.

County Environmental Threshold:

Air Quality: County's "Air Quality Thresholds" provide that a proposed project would not have a significant impact on air quality if operation of the project would:

- Emit (from all project sources, mobile and stationary), less than the daily trigger for offsets for any pollutant (currently 55 pounds per day for NO_x and ROC, and 80 pounds per day for PM₁₀);
- Emit less than 25 pounds per day of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) or reactive organic compounds (ROC) from motor vehicle trips only;
- Not cause or contribute to a violation of any California or National Ambient Air Quality Standard (except ozone);
- Not exceed the APCD health risk public notification thresholds adopted by the APCD Board; and
- Be consistent with the adopted federal and state Air Quality Plans.

No thresholds have been established for short-term impacts associated with construction activities. However, the County Grading Code (Santa Barbara County Code, Chapter 14) requires all projects with a building or grading permit to include dust control best management practices (BMPs) to prevent the short-term generation of dust. Long-term/operational emissions thresholds have been established to address mobile emissions (i.e., motor vehicle emissions) and stationary source emissions (i.e., stationary boilers, engines, paints, solvents, and chemical or industrial processing operations that release pollutants).

Greenhouse Gases and Global Climate Change: The County's methodology to address global climate change in environmental (CEQA) documents is evolving. The County is developing an Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP) consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 (Tiering and Streamlining the Analysis of Greenhouse Gas Emissions). The County expects to adopt the ECAP in Fall 2014/Winter 2015. In the meantime, the County generally uses the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District's (SLOAPCD) criteria for guidance on determining when GHG emissions would cause significant environmental impacts under CEQA. However, these criteria are intended for individual projects, not comprehensive plans, community plans, or other programmatic-level projects. As a result, the County typically calculates air pollution emissions, obtains information regarding the health impacts of air pollutants, and identifies potential mitigation measures for plan or programmatic-level projects.

Impact Discussion:

(a-e) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development and potentially impact air quality and climate change. For example, Programs 1.10, 1.14, and 1.17 would increase the density of some affordable housing projects. Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 would allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development, combined residential and treatment facilities and multi-level care senior housing facilities. The resulting development could generate short-term pollutants and emissions from grading (PM₁₀) and construction related-vehicle trips. It could also potentially increase vehicle trips as a result of allowing higher density development than currently allowed under the existing Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances.

Several factors make it unlikely that new housing or other physical development stemming from the proposed programs would have significant effects on air quality. For instance, the proposed programs encourage infill and mixed-use development within close proximity to urban employment areas. This type of development would decrease vehicle miles traveled and, in turn, reduce fossil fuel emissions, improve overall

air quality, and minimize GHG emissions. In addition, the County Comprehensive Plan and other plans and regulations contain provisions to minimize air pollution and climate change. The Air Quality Supplement to the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan contains policies that encourage mixed-use development, transit-oriented development, and multimodal transportation aimed at reducing air pollutant emissions. As previously mentioned, the ECAP is the second phase of the County's Climate Action Strategy. It will include reduction measures to achieve a GHG reduction target of 15% below the 2007 baseline emissions by the year 2020. The County Grading Code states that all projects with a building or grading permit must use construction site BMPs to prevent short-term generation of dust, including wetting, covering, and/or planting all graded surfaces and materials, whether filled, excavated, transported or stockpiled.

Besides these factors, the proposed Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend existing land-use designations, change existing zoning districts, or otherwise change existing policies. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and all applicable regulations. The Comprehensive Plan, County Code, and Energy and Climate Action Plan would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on air quality and climate change. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors discussed above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on air quality and climate change.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at densities and locations that could potentially have direct and indirect impacts on air quality and climate change. However, any subsequent projects would likely be relatively small-scale, limited, and dispersed, and, as a result, would not cause significant impacts on air quality and climate change. In addition, according to County plans and other regulations, individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant effects to air quality and climate change. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on air quality and climate change, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on air quality and climate change.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
Flora				
a. A loss or disturbance to a unique, rare or threatened plant community?			X	
b. A reduction in the numbers or restriction in the range of any unique, rare or threatened species of plants?			X	
c. A reduction in the extent, diversity, or quality of native vegetation (including brush removal for fire prevention and flood control improvements)?			X	
d. An impact on non-native vegetation whether naturalized or horticultural if of habitat value?			X	
e. The loss of healthy native specimen trees?			X	
f. Introduction of herbicides, pesticides, animal life, human habitation, non-native plants or other factors that would change or hamper the existing habitat?			X	
Fauna				
g. A reduction in the numbers, a restriction in the range, or an impact to the critical habitat of any unique, rare, threatened or endangered species of animals?			X	
h. A reduction in the diversity or numbers of animals onsite (including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish or invertebrates)?			X	
i. A deterioration of existing fish or wildlife habitat (for foraging, breeding, roosting, nesting, etc.)?			X	
j. Introduction of barriers to movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species?			X	
k. Introduction of any factors (light, fencing, noise, human presence and/or domestic animals) which could hinder the normal activities of wildlife?			X	

Setting:

The term "biological resources" refers to plant and animal species and habitats that support plant and animal species. Santa Barbara County has a wide diversity of habitats that range from coastal scrub, to valley oak woodland, to mountain hardwood and coniferous forest. These habitats support many unique, rare, and endangered plant and animal species. Biological resources provide many important values, such as watershed protection, scientific and medical research, education, recreation, aesthetics, and the intrinsic value of vegetation and wildlife and their natural ecosystems.

County Environmental Threshold:

The County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual includes guidelines for the assessment of biological resource impacts. It requires an evaluation of the plant and animal species and habitats on the project site and an analysis of project impacts according to a series of assessment factors. Developments that disturb habitats or species are considered to be significant if they substantially impact resources in any of the following ways:

- Conflict with adopted environmental plans and goals of the community where it is located;

- Substantially affect a rare or endangered species of animal, plant, or the habitat of the species;
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species;
- Substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife, or plants.

Above and beyond these general guidelines, habitat-specific guidelines protect and preserve habitats such as wetlands, riparian areas, native grasslands, and oak woodlands.

Impact Discussion:

(a-k) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development and potentially impact biological resources. For example, Program 1.3 states the County will “...identify new potential housing sites...which are approximately 2-10 acres in size...” Program 1.6 would reduce existing open space requirements in the Design Review (DR) zone for affordable, special needs, and senior housing projects.

Based on two key factors, any new housing or other physical development stemming from the proposed programs is unlikely to reduce or result in a significant loss of biological resources. First, the proposed programs promote infill, redevelopment, mixed-use, and other types of development in urban areas that are largely developed and contain few or no biological resources. Second, numerous County, federal, and state laws and regulations protect natural habitats and associated plant and animal species from the potential impacts of new development. For example, the Conservation Element of the County Comprehensive Plan and the zoning ordinances designate some sensitive biological resources as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat (ESH) and contain policies and development standards that may require developers to site structures apart from biological resources, apply buffer zones between structures and biological resources, and prepare assessments and management plans that avoid or minimize direct and indirect impacts to biological resources. Federal and state laws that protect biological resources include the U.S. Endangered Species Act (Federally-listed threatened and endangered species), U.S. Clean Water Act (lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands), U.S. Migratory Bird Treaty Act (migratory birds), California Endangered Species Act (state-listed species), California Native Plant Protection Act (rare and endangered plants), and California Fish and Game Code (certain species).

In addition to these factors, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and all applicable regulations. The Comprehensive Plan policies and zoning ordinance development standards would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on biological resources. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on biological resources.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are

currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at locations that may incrementally impact biological resources. However, any subsequent projects occur in urban areas and would be relatively small-scale, and limited, and, as a result, would not substantially impact overall biological resource values. In addition, according to the County policies and development standards, individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant impacts to biological resources. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects biological resources, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on biological resources.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
Archaeological Resources			X	
a. Disruption, alteration, destruction, or adverse effect on a recorded prehistoric or historic archaeological site (note site number below)?			X	
b. Disruption or removal of human remains?			X	
c. Increased potential for trespassing, vandalizing, or sabotaging archaeological resources?			X	
d. Ground disturbances in an area with potential cultural resource sensitivity based on the location of known historic or prehistoric sites?			X	
Ethnic Resources				
e. Disruption of or adverse effects upon a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or property of historic or cultural significance to a community or ethnic group?			X	
f. Increased potential for trespassing, vandalizing, or sabotaging ethnic, sacred, or ceremonial places?			X	
g. The potential to conflict with or restrict existing religious, sacred, or educational use of the area?			X	

Setting:

Santa Barbara County is one of California’s richest areas for archaeological and ethnic resources. For at least 10,000 years, Chumash Indians and their ancestors have occupied parts of the county. Chumash settlements were located along the coastline, creeks, and rivers as well as on the Channel Islands. Hundreds of archaeological sites have been formally recorded throughout the county. Unknown and unrecorded sites are encountered on a regular basis. Grading and other construction activities can destroy or severely damage these irreplaceable cultural resources.

County Environmental Threshold:

The “Cultural Resources Guidelines” in the County’s Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual generally rely on the processes and criteria in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (Determining the Significance of Impact to Archeological and Historical Resources) for evaluating and mitigating potential impacts on archaeological sites. In summary, Section 15064.5 includes criteria for determining if an archaeological site is “unique” or an “historical resource.” For instance, an archaeological site is considered to be a historical resource if it “[h]as yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.” Projects that may cause a “substantial adverse change” in the significance of a unique or historical resource may have a significant adverse impact on the environment. In part, substantial adverse change means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings. In these cases, the County’s guidelines and Section 15064.5 require potentially feasible measures to mitigate or avoid the substantial adverse change. As a result, siting and designing a project to avoid the archaeological site and, therefore, avoid a significant adverse impact, generally eliminates the need for costly and time consuming surveys and site evaluation activities.

The County’s guidelines also contain provisions for evaluating whether a project may result in a significant impact on a community, ethnic, or social group. A project may have a significant effect on ethnic resources if it would cause one of the following: (1) disrupt or adversely affect a prehistoric or historical archaeological site or a property or historical or cultural significance to a community or ethnic or social group, or (2) conflict with established recreational, educational, religious, or scientific uses of the area.

Impact Discussion:

(a-g) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development. The associated construction and ground-disturbing activities could potentially impact archaeological or ethnic resources. For example, Program 1.3 could identify new sites for housing projects in areas where such development is currently not allowed. Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 could allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development (commercial/residential), combined residential and treatment facilities, and multi-level care senior housing facilities.

The County Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances establish strict policies and standards for protecting archaeological and ethnic resources. As a starting point, these provisions may require a systematic survey of the project area in order to help identify and protect cultural resources. The policies and standards state “When developments are proposed for parcels where archaeological or other cultural sites are located, project design shall be required which avoids impacts to such cultural sites if possible.” Data collection, placement of fill on top of an archaeological, or other mitigation measures may only be considered if sufficient planning flexibility does not permit avoiding construction on the affected archaeological or ethnic resource.

The impacts on cultural resources raised in questions *a-g* generally apply to site-specific projects, where the location, use, and existing conditions are known. However, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. It also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and all applicable regulations. The Comprehensive Plan policies and zoning ordinance development standards would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on archaeological and ethnic resources. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on cultural resources.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities in locations that may incrementally impact cultural resources. However, any subsequent projects would be subject to existing County policies

and development standards, which would require projects to avoid or mitigate any significant impacts to cultural resources. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on archaeological or ethnic resources, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on cultural resources.

4.6 ENERGY

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. Substantial increase in demand, especially during peak periods, upon existing sources of energy?			X	
b. Requirement for the development or extension of new sources of energy?			X	

Setting:

Private electrical and natural gas utility companies, such as Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), provide service to customers in central California, including the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County. Historically, the consumption of energy after World War II increased at an unprecedented level while increasing the demand for cheap energy. Efficient use of energy emerged as an issue and resulted in actions to increase the energy efficiency of appliances and buildings. Programs and policies at the local, state, and national levels have emerged to bolster trends toward energy efficiency. The local efforts that support energy efficiency include the use of Smart Build Santa Barbara Program (SB²) and the adoption of the County Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP) expected in Winter 2014/2015.

County Environmental Threshold:

The County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual does not identify significance thresholds for electrical and/or natural gas service impacts.

Impact Discussion:

(a-b) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, some of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development that potentially increase the demand for energy resources. For example, Programs 1.10, 1.14, and 1.17 would increase the allowed density of some affordable residential projects. Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 would allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development (commercial/residential), combined residential and treatment facilities, and multi-level care senior housing facilities. Such development would require energy resources for heating and cooling of the buildings and the use of appliances associated with residential, special care, and commercial uses.

Several factors minimize the potential that new housing or other physical development stemming from the proposed programs would have significant impacts on energy resources. First, the proposed programs promote infill, redevelopment, mixed-use, and other types of development in urban areas that are largely developed. This type of development would use existing electric and natural gas services. Second, some of the Housing Element programs support energy efficient development. For example, Program 1.8 supports the use of SB², which provides incentives to applicants to incorporate energy-efficient and green building techniques into their building plans. Program 1.9 supports various energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements for affordable housing, such as the prioritization of County affordable housing funds for projects that encourage energy efficiency improvements and adoption of the ECAP scheduled for Winter 2014/2015. The ECAP includes strategies to improve energy efficiency, reduce GHG emissions, and ensure long-term access to affordable energy. Third, numerous County provisions minimize potential effects from new development on energy resources. For example, the Energy Element of the Comprehensive Plan contains policies that encourage retrofitting of existing buildings and passive solar for new and existing developments. These types of policies help minimize new demand on existing sources of energy. Lastly, Title 24, known as the California Building Standards Code, contains the energy conservation standards applicable to most new and remodeled residential and non-residential buildings.

In addition to these factors, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with Title 24 and all County provisions, including the County Comprehensive Plan, that include energy efficiency requirements. These state and local requirements would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on energy resources. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on energy resources.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at densities and locations that may incrementally increase the demand upon energy resources. However, any subsequent projects would be subject to state and County energy efficiency policies and standards. Individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant impacts to energy resources. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on energy resources, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on energy resources.

4.7 FIRE PROTECTION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. Introduction of development into an existing high fire hazard area?			X	
b. Project-caused high fire hazard?			X	
c. Introduction of development into an area without adequate water pressure, fire hydrants or adequate access for firefighting?			X	
d. Introduction of development that will hamper fire prevention techniques such as controlled burns or backfiring in high fire hazard areas?			X	
e. Development of structures beyond safe Fire Dept. response time?			X	

Setting:

Santa Barbara County experiences annual cycles of elevated fire danger. Due to low annual precipitation (approximately 15 inches per year), highly flammable vegetation, and high velocity “sundowner” and “Santa Ana” winds, the county has routinely experienced major wildfires which threaten residents’ safety and property, including homes. According to Santa Barbara County Fire Department, 33 major fires have occurred in the county between 1922 and 2013, burning close to one million acres. Chaparral provides the most widespread wildland fuel threat in Santa Barbara County.

County Environmental Threshold:

The following County Fire Department standards are applied in evaluating impacts associated with proposed development:

- The emergency response thresholds include Fire Department staff standards of one on-duty firefighter per 4,000 persons (generally one engine company per 12,000 people, assuming three firefighters/station). The emergency response time standard is approximately five to six minutes.
- Water supply thresholds include a requirement for 750 gpm at 20 psi for all single family dwellings.
- The ability of the County’s engine companies to extinguish fires (based on maximum flow rates through hand held line) meets state and national standards assuming a 5,000 square foot structure. Therefore, in any portion of the Fire Department’s response area, all structures over 5,000 square feet are an unprotected risk (a significant impact) and therefore should have internal fire sprinklers.
- Access road standards include a minimum width (depending on number of units served and whether parking would be allowed on either side of the road), with some narrowing allowed for driveways. Cul-de-sac diameters, turning radii and road grade must meet minimum Fire Department standards based on project type.
- Two means of egress may be needed and access must not be impeded by fire, flood, or earthquake. A potentially significant impact could occur in the event any of these standards is not adequately met.

Impact Discussion:

(a-e) *Less than significant effect.* The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental

impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development that could be susceptible to fire hazards and increase the demand on existing fire protection services. For example, Program 1.3 could identify new sites for housing projects in areas where such development is currently not allowed. Programs 1.10, 1.14, and 1.17 could increase the allowed density of some affordable residential projects. Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 could allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development (commercial/residential), combined residential and treatment facilities, and multi-level care senior housing facilities.

Any new housing or other physical development stemming from the proposed programs is unlikely to result in a significant increase in fire hazards. For instance, the proposed programs promote infill, redevelopment, mixed-use, and other types of development in urban areas. Designated urban areas are typically located outside the High Fire Hazard Areas and have established fire protection services and infrastructure (e.g., fire hydrants, fire stations). This type of development discourages expansion into undeveloped areas and, as a result, does not create more wildland-urban interface. Furthermore, numerous County development standards and California Building Code, some of which are listed below, minimize the impacts of fire hazards from new development.

- California Fire Code establishes the minimum requirements to safeguard the public from fire hazards in new and existing buildings.
- California Building Code establishes building standards for high fire hazard areas, including standards for roof coverings, construction materials, and structural components.
- County Building Code Construction Standards establish standards for residential development within designated high fire hazard areas.
- County Fire Department development standards establish standards for private roads and driveways, fire hydrant spacing and flow rates, stored water fire protection systems, fire sprinkler systems, alarm systems, defensible spaces, and access gates.
- Seismic Safety and Safety Element of the Comprehensive Plan includes goals, policies, and implementation measures which demonstrate compliance with fire prevention and protection requirements outlined in state law.
- Land Use Element and the Coastal Land Use Plan of the Comprehensive Plan require adequate public or private services to serve new development, including water and fire protection services.

In addition to these factors, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan, and all applicable County and state regulations. The Comprehensive Plan policies and zoning ordinance development standards combined with County and state building codes would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects from fire hazards. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant from fire hazards.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at densities and locations that may be susceptible to fire hazards. However, any subsequent projects would be relatively small-scale and in designated urban areas that are typically outside of the High Fire Hazard Area and already have existing fire protection services and infrastructure. In addition, according to the County policies and development standards, individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant impacts from fire hazards. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not significantly increase fire hazards, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects from fire hazards.

4.8 GEOLOGIC PROCESSES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. Exposure to or production of unstable earth conditions such as landslides, earthquakes, liquefaction, soil creep, mudslides, ground failure (including expansive, compressible, collapsible soils), or similar hazards?			X	
b. Disruption, displacement, compaction or overcovering of the soil by cuts, fills or extensive grading?			X	
c. Exposure to or production of permanent changes in topography, such as bluff retreat or sea level rise?			X	
d. The destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic, paleontologic or physical features?			X	
e. Any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?			X	
f. Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands or dunes, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river, or stream, or the bed of the ocean, or any bay, inlet or lake?				X
g. The placement of septic disposal systems in impermeable soils with severe constraints to disposal of liquid effluent?			X	
h. Extraction of mineral or ore?				X
i. Excessive grading on slopes of over 20%?			X	
j. Sand or gravel removal or loss of topsoil?			X	
k. Vibrations, from short-term construction or long-term operation, which may affect adjoining areas?			X	
l. Excessive spoils, tailings or over-burden?				X

Setting:

Santa Barbara County contains various geologic conditions and some of these conditions constitute a hazard to public health and safety. Such geologic hazards include, but are not limited to, seismic activity, landslides, liquefaction, soil creep, high groundwater, expansive soils, and compressible/collapsible soils. The County's Seismic Safety and Safety Element contains county-wide and area-specific maps of geologic hazards.

County Environmental Threshold:

Pursuant to "Geologic Processes" in the County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, impacts related to geological resources may have the potential to be significant if a proposed project involves any of the following characteristics:

- The project site or any part of the project is located on land having substantial geologic constraints, as determined by the County's Planning & Development or Public Works Departments. Areas constrained by geology include parcels located near active or potentially active faults and property underlain by rock types associated with compressible/collapsible soils or susceptible to landslides or severe erosion. "Special Problems" areas designated by the Board of Supervisors have been established based on geologic constraints, flood hazards, and other physical limitations to development.
- The project results in potentially hazardous geologic conditions such as the construction of cut slopes exceeding a grade of 1.5 horizontal to 1 vertical.

- The project proposes construction of a cut slope over 15 feet in height as measured from the lowest finished grade.
- The project is located on slopes exceeding 20% grade.

Impact Discussion:

(a-e, g, i-k) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, a few of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances and could facilitate new housing or other physical development that has the potential to impact or be impacted by geologic processes. For example, Program 1.3 could identify new sites for housing projects in areas where such development is currently not allowed.

Numerous County and state regulations and codes minimize the impacts to geologic resources from new development. For example, the Seismic Safety and Safety Element of the Comprehensive Plan provides data regarding geologic, soil, seismic, fire and flood hazards, and includes a comprehensive study of geologic conditions within the county. It also contains goals, policies, and implementation measures, which require new development to comply with geologic and seismic protection requirements outlined in state law. The California Building and Residential codes require special foundation engineering and geologic and soil investigations for development proposed in geologic hazards areas. These codes also contain seismic safety standards outlining design and construction requirements.

The impacts related to geologic processes raised in questions *a-e, g, and i-k* generally apply to site-specific projects, where the location, use, and existing conditions are known. However, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with building codes and County provisions, including the County Comprehensive Plan, that include geologic hazard requirements. These state and local standards would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects to geologic resources. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant to geologic resources.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

(f, h, l) No Impacts. The Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs facilitate development of affordable housing in urban areas of unincorporated Santa Barbara County. Any such development would not include or result in deposition or erosion of beach sands or dunes, changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify a body of water, extraction of mineral or ore, excessive spoils and tailings, or over-burden. Therefore, no effects are attributable to adoption of the Housing Element.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at locations that may incrementally impact geologic resources. However, any subsequent projects would be relatively small-scale, limited, and dispersed, and, as a result, would not substantially impact overall geologic resources. In addition, according to the County policies and development standards, individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant impacts to geologic resources. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on geologic resources, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on geologic resources.

4.9 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/RISK OF UPSET

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. In the known history of this property, have there been any past uses, storage or discharge of hazardous materials (e.g., fuel or oil stored in underground tanks, pesticides, solvents or other chemicals)?			X	
b. The use, storage or distribution of hazardous or toxic materials?			X	
c. A risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (e.g., oil, gas, biocides, bacteria, pesticides, chemicals or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions?				X
d. Possible interference with an emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?				X
e. The creation of a potential public health hazard?				X
f. Public safety hazards (e.g., due to development near chemical or industrial activity, producing oil wells, toxic disposal sites, etc.)?			X	
g. Exposure to hazards from oil or gas pipelines or oil well facilities?			X	
h. The contamination of a public water supply?				X

Setting:

The county contains various sources of hazardous waste/materials, such as industrial facilities, landfills, mineral extraction facilities, gas stations, and produce coolers which use anhydrous ammonia. Residential uses can also generate small amounts of hazardous waste in the form of paint, cleaning solutions, and batteries.

County Environmental Threshold:

The County’s “Public Safety Thresholds” address involuntary public exposure from projects involving significant quantities of hazardous materials. The threshold addresses the likelihood and severity of potential accidents to determine whether the safety risks of a project exceed significant levels. This threshold is a color coded system ranging from Red (high probability of significant risk to the public from hazardous materials upset) to Green (low probability). This ranking system is primarily applied to land uses that use large quantities of hazardous materials. Such land uses commonly located in the county are produce cooling facilities (which utilize potentially hazardous amounts of anhydrous ammonia) and petroleum extraction facilities (which sometimes produce hazardous amounts of hydrogen sulfide, also known as sour gas).

Impact Discussion:

(a-b, f-g) *Less than significant effect.* The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development that has the potential to impact or be impacted by hazardous materials. For example, Program 1.3 could identify new sites for housing projects in areas where such development is currently not allowed.

Numerous federal, state, and County regulations extensively regulate the management of hazardous materials on potential development sites. Examples of regulations indented to minimize the potential impacts from hazardous materials as a result of new development are as follows:

- National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP), established by the EPA, includes specific regulations regarding asbestos, including the management and abatement of asbestos-containing materials in buildings.
- Title 22 of the California Code of Regulation establishes a unified hazardous waste and hazardous materials management program for hazardous waste generators, treatment of hazardous waste, risk management and prevention plans, and hazardous materials management plans and inventory statements required by the Uniform Fire Code. When asbestos is identified during demolition, removal procedures are required to be developed.
- Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District Regulations (APCD) has implemented the California Air Resources Board's Airborne Toxic Control Measure for Emissions of Asbestos from Construction, Grading, Quarry, and Surface Mining Operations in lieu of adopting a county-specific rule. This rule is designed to limit asbestos emissions from building demolition/renovation activities.
- The Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan includes policies that encourage flexible design concepts, including clustering of units and mixture of dwelling types in order to avoid development areas which are not suited to development because of known hazardous materials.

The impacts related to hazardous materials raised in questions *a-b and f-g* generally apply to site-specific projects, where the location, use, and existing conditions are known. However, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with all County, state, and federal requirements. These requirements would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects from hazardous materials. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant from hazardous materials.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

(c-e, h) No Impacts. The Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs facilitate development of affordable housing in urban areas of unincorporated Santa Barbara County. Any such development would not include or result in a risk of explosion or release of hazardous substances (e.g., oil, gas, biocides, bacteria, pesticides, chemicals or radiation) in the event of an accident, interfere with an emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan, create a public health hazard, or contaminate a public water supply. Therefore, no effects are attributable to adoption of the Housing Element.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at locations where hazardous materials, if present, could impact the environment and public health. However, any subsequent projects would be required to mitigate any significant impacts from hazardous materials. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not significantly impact or be impacted by hazardous materials, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects from hazardous materials.

4.10 HISTORIC RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. Adverse physical or aesthetic impacts on a structure or property at least 50 years old and/or of historic or cultural significance to the community, state or nation?			X	
b. Beneficial impacts to an historic resource by providing rehabilitation, protection in a conservation/open easement, etc.?			X	

Setting:

Santa Barbara County contains numerous historic structures and properties, some which date back to Spain’s colonization of Alta California in the 1700s. Within the unincorporated county, some of these resources have been designated as Historic Landmarks or Places of Historic Merit. Currently, there are 50 Historic Landmarks and 21 Places of Historic Merit within the unincorporated county. The County’s Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) is responsible for reviewing any proposed work that may affect these designated resources and for making recommendations to the Board of Supervisors as to whether additional resources should be designated as Historic Landmarks or Places of Historic Merit.

County Environmental Threshold:

Historic resources are evaluated and addressed in a manner similar to archaeological and ethnic resources. (For more details, see Subsection 4.5 (Cultural Resources) above). Any structure or property 50 years or older is considered potentially significant and is subject to a formal evaluation of significance using the criteria in Chapter 8 (Cultural Resources Guidelines) of the County’s Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (Determining the Significance of Impact to Archeological and Historical Resources). Structures and properties determined to be significant are considered to be an “historical resource” under CEQA. Projects that may cause a “substantial adverse change” in the significance of a historical resource may have a significant adverse impact on the environment. In part, substantial adverse change means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings. In these cases, Chapter 8 and Section 15064.5 require potentially feasible measures to mitigate or avoid the substantial adverse change. For example, a project that follows the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* or the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* will generally be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on the historical resource.

Impact Discussion:

(a-b) *Less than significant effect.* The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development and potentially impact historic resources. For example, Program 1.3 could identify new sites for housing projects in areas where such development is currently not allowed. Program 4.3 could facilitate rehabilitation of existing residential structures that are 50 years or older. Such development could directly diminish on-site historic structures or indirectly introduce new uses that alter the character of historic structures on adjacent properties.

Numerous County policies and regulations protect historic resources from the potential impacts of new development. For example, the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan includes policies that

encourage all available measures, including purchase, tax relief, and purchase of development rights to be explored to avoid development on significant historic sites. The County also has a Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission that keeps the inventory of structures and properties designated as Historic Landmarks or Places of Historic Merit. The commission also reviews any projects that could potentially affect designated structures or properties.

The impacts on historical resources raised in questions *a-b* generally apply to site-specific projects, where the location, use, and existing conditions are known. However, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan policies would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on historic resources. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on historic resources.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at locations that may incrementally impact historic resources. However, any subsequent projects would be subject to existing County policies and regulations which would require projects to avoid or mitigate any significant impacts to historic resources. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on historic resources, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on historic resources.

4.11 LAND-USE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. Structures and/or land-use incompatible with existing land-use?			X	
b. Conflict with any applicable Land Use Plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?			X	
c. The induction of substantial growth or concentration of population?			X	
d. The extension of sewer trunk lines or access roads with capacity to serve new development beyond this proposed project?			X	
e. Loss of existing affordable dwellings through demolition, conversion or removal?			X	
f. Displacement of substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	
g. Displacement of substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	
h. The loss of a substantial amount of open space?			X	
i. An economic or social effect that would result in a physical change? (i.e. Closure of a freeway ramp results in isolation of an area, businesses located in the vicinity close, neighborhood degenerates, and buildings deteriorate. Or, if construction of new freeway divides an existing community, the construction would be the physical change, but the economic/social effect on the community would be the basis for determining that the physical change would be significant.)			X	
j. Conflicts with adopted airport safety zones?			X	

Setting:

Santa Barbara County encompasses approximately 1,634,000 acres of land. Federal landholdings account for 748,000 acres, most of which are in the Los Padres National Forest (637,000 acres) and Vandenberg Air Force Base (91,000 acres). The State of California, including the University of California, owns another 18,000 acres, and incorporated cities account for 42,000 acres. The County has regulatory jurisdiction over most of the remaining 826,000 acres.

County Environmental Threshold:

The County’s Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual contains no specific thresholds for land use. Generally, a significant impact may occur if a proposed project would be potentially inconsistent with policies and standards adopted by an agency for the purposes of environmental protection or would result in substantial growth inducing effects.

Impact Discussion:

(a-j) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, a few of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing and other physical development that potentially impact existing land uses. For example, Programs 1.10, 1.14, and 1.17 would increase the allowed density of some affordable residential projects. Program 1.16 would reduce existing open space requirements in the Design Review (DR) zone for affordable, special needs, and senior housing projects. Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 would allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development (commercial/residential), combined residential and treatment facilities, and multi-level care senior housing facilities in areas where these uses are not currently allowed.

Several factors minimize the potential that new housing or other physical development stemming from the proposed programs would have significant effects on existing land uses. Specifically, some of the proposed programs contain provisions that recognize and address potential impacts to existing land uses. For example, Program 1.3 promotes infill and adaptive reuse development and Program 1.6 promotes quality housing design and neighborhood compatibility. Some of the programs promote smaller, dispersed, urban development. Such development should not induce substantial growth or concentration of population or cause a loss of a substantial amount of open space. Instead, the programs would help preserve rural areas for recreation, agriculture, open space, and biological diversity. Furthermore, County regulations protect existing land uses from the potential effects of new development. For example, the Comprehensive Plan and community plans specify the land uses (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial) and the maximum density allowed within each zone district. In essence, zoning determines the amount of growth that can be expected to occur through potential subdivision of land or infill development.

In addition to these factors, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and good planning and zoning practices. The Comprehensive Plan policies and zoning ordinance development standards would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on existing land uses. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on existing land uses.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at densities and locations that may incrementally impact existing land uses. However, any subsequent projects would be relatively small-scale, limited, and dispersed, and, as a result, would not substantially impact overall land use. In addition, according to the County policies and development standards, individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant impacts to existing land uses. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on existing land uses, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on existing land uses.

4.12 NOISE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. Long-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds (e.g. locating noise sensitive uses next to an airport)?			X	
b. Short-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds?			X	
c. Project-generated substantial increase in the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas (either day or night)?				X

Setting:

The county includes several significant noise generators, including airports, major highways, and industrial facilities. Due to their linear nature, major highways with substantial traffic volumes, such as Highway 101, Highway 246, and Highway 154, have the most widespread noise generation.

County Environmental Threshold:

Noise is generally defined as unwanted or objectionable sound that is measured on a logarithmic scale and expressed in decibels (dB(A)). The duration of noise and the time it occurs are important values in determining impacts on noise-sensitive land uses. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) and Day-Night Average Level (Ldn) are noise indices that account for differences in intrusiveness between day- and night-time uses. The County’s “Noise Thresholds” specify the following: (1) 65 dB(A) CNEL maximum for exterior exposure, and (2) 45 dB(A) CNEL maximum for interior exposure of noise-sensitive uses. The thresholds identify noise-sensitive land uses to include: residential dwellings, transient lodging, hospitals and other long-term care facilities, public or private educational facilities, libraries, churches, and places of public assembly.

Impact Discussion:

(a-b) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development. For example, Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 would allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development (commercial/residential), combined residential and treatment facilities, and multi-level care senior housing facilities. Program 1.3 could identify new sites for housing projects in areas where such development is currently not allowed. Such development could potentially generate in short-term noise associated with construction activities, and potentially expose the new residential development to exterior and stationary noise from significant near-by noise generators (e.g., major highways, airports, industrial facilities).

Any potential short-term noise impacts from construction activities would be mitigated by the County’s standard conditions of approval for development projects, which limit the developer to specific construction hours and require stationary construction equipment that generates noise which exceeds 65 dBA at the project boundaries to be shielded with appropriate acoustic shielding to P&D’s satisfaction.

Any potential long-term potential noise impacts from significant near-by noise generators could be mitigated by numerous County policies and standards, some of which include:

- The County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) was developed to promote compatibility between airports and land uses that surround them. It contains noise, safety,

airspace, and overflight compatibility guidelines for the Santa Barbara Airport as well as other airports in the region including Lompoc Airport, New Cuyama Airport, Santa Maria Public Airport, Santa Ynez Valley Airport, and Vandenberg Air Force Base Airport.

- The noise Element of the Comprehensive Plan sets a 65dB standard for a day-night average sound level to be regarded as the maximum exterior noise exposure that is compatible with noise-sensitive uses unless noise mitigation features are included in the project designs.
- The noise Element of the Comprehensive Plan includes a policy to avoid residential uses within the 65 dB CNEL contour of any airport.
- County's standard conditions of approval for development projects require an onsite noise study to be performed by an acoustical engineer. All construction techniques and recommendations in this report shall be incorporated into the project design to reduce exterior noise to at or below 65 dBA and interior noise to at or below 45 dBA.

The impacts related to noise levels raised in questions *a-b* generally apply to site-specific projects, where the location, use, and existing conditions are known. However, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with all County Comprehensive Plan policies and standard conditions of approval. These policies and conditions would typically ensure that noise impacts from construction related activities, and exposure of the new development to exterior and stationary noise would be reduced to less than significant. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and conditions may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant regarding noise levels.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

(c) No Impacts. The Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs could facilitate development of housing and social support facilities in urban areas of unincorporated Santa Barbara County. Any such development would not generate a substantial increase in the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas (either day or night). Therefore, no effects are attributable to adoption of the Housing Element.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at locations that may be exposed to noise levels that exceed the County noise level thresholds. However, according to the County policies and conditions of approval, individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant impacts from

noise levels. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects regarding noise levels, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects regarding noise levels.

4.13 PUBLIC FACILITIES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. A need for new or impacted police protection and/or health care services?			X	
b. Student generation exceeding school capacity?			X	
c. Significant amounts of solid waste or breach any national, state, or local standards or thresholds relating to solid waste disposal and generation (including recycling facilities and existing landfill capacity)?			X	
d. A need for new or impacted sewer system facilities (sewer lines, lift-stations, etc.)?			X	
e. The construction of new storm water drainage or water quality control facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	

Setting:

Major public services include emergency services, law enforcement, fire protection, schools, library, solid waste management, water, wastewater, and specialized facilities such as landfills and jails. Recreation and transportation related impacts are addressed in sections 4.14 – *Recreation* and 4.15 – *Transportation/Circulation*, respectively, and are therefore excluded from this section. The County currently owns and operates 16 fire stations (7 in the South County, 3 in the Santa Ynez Valley, and 6 in the North County) and 7 sheriff substations (2 in the South County, 2 in the Santa Ynez Valley, and 3 in the North County).

County Environmental Threshold:

According to the CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, a project may have significant environmental impacts associated with public services if it creates a need for new construction or physical alteration of governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives. The County’s Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual includes thresholds for schools and solid waste as follows:

Schools: Impacts to County schools are generally considered significant when a project would generate sufficient students to require an additional classroom.

Solid Waste: A project is considered to result in significant impacts to landfill capacity if it would generate 196 tons per year of solid waste. This volume represents 5% of the expected average annual increase in waste generation, and, therefore, is considered a significant portion of the remaining landfill capacity. In addition, construction and demolition waste from new construction, remodels, and rebuilds is considered significant if it exceeds 350 tons. A project that generates 40 tons per year of solid waste is considered to have an adverse cumulative effect on solid waste generation, and mitigation via a solid waste management plan is recommended.

Impact Discussion:

(a-e) *Less than significant effect.* The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, some of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development that potentially increase the demand on public facilities. For example, Programs 1.10, 1.14, and 1.17 would increase the

allowed density of some affordable residential projects. Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 would allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development (commercial/residential), combined residential and treatment facilities, and multi-level care senior housing facilities. Such development could potentially create the need for additional police protection, school capacity, or water and sewer systems.

Numerous County policies and regulations preserve public facilities from the potential effects of new development. Examples of such policies and regulations include the following:

- The Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan requires a finding that there are adequate public facilities to serve new development.
- The County Fire Department sets a standard of a firefighter-to-population ratio of one firefighter on duty 24 hours a day for every 2,000 in population, although a ratio (including rural areas) of one firefighter per 4,000 population is the maximum population that can be adequately served. In addition, a fire facility impact fee is imposed on new development in order to mitigate impacts and finance fire facilities necessary to serve new development.
- The County Sheriff's Office has established a service goal of one officer per 1,200 people.
- The school districts impose Statutory Fees on residential, commercial and industrial development for the purpose of financing school facilities construction.

The impacts on public facilities raised in questions *a-e* generally apply to site-specific projects, where the location, use, and existing conditions are known. However, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with all County policies and regulations. These provisions would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on public facilities. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant impacts to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on public facilities.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at densities and locations that may incrementally impact public facilities. However, any subsequent projects would be relatively small-scale, limited, and dispersed, and, as a result, would not substantially impact overall public facilities. In addition, according to the County policies and regulations, individual projects would be required to

mitigate any significant impacts to public facilities. Therefore, significant cumulative impacts are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on public facilities, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on public facilities.

4.14 RECREATION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. Conflict with established recreational uses of the area?			X	
b. Conflict with biking, equestrian and hiking trails?			X	
c. Substantial impact on the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities (e.g., overuse of an area with constraints on numbers of people, vehicles, animals, etc. which might safely use the area)?			X	

Setting:

The Santa Barbara County Community Services Department, Parks Division, offers a wide range of recreational opportunities with day use parks, beaches, pools, trails, campgrounds, and its largest facility the Cachuma Lake Recreation Area. More specifically, the park system has 21 day use parks (11 in the South County, 2 in the Santa Ynez Valley, and 8 in the North County), 2 camping parks, 45 open spaces, and 12 beach areas for a total of 8,595 acres. In accordance with the County’s Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual discussed below, current recreation facilities and open space exceed the minimum number of acres necessary to meet the needs of county population. Additionally, the county contains a 637,000 acre portion of the Los Padres National Forest. This forest land contains trails, campgrounds, and other recreational opportunities beyond those allowed in typical parks.

County Environmental Threshold:

The County’s Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual contains no thresholds for park and recreation impacts. However, the Board of Supervisors has established a minimum standard ratio of 4.7 acres of recreation/open space per 1,000 people to meet the needs of a community. In addition, according to the CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, a project would have significant environmental impacts associated with recreational opportunities if it would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated, or if a project would require the construction or expansion of existing recreational facilities.

Impact Discussion:

(a-c) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development and potentially impact the quality or quantity of established recreational opportunities. For example, Program 1.3 could identify new sites for housing projects in areas where such development is currently not allowed.

Numerous state and County regulations minimize the potential impacts to recreational opportunities from new development. For example, the Quimby Act gives the County the authority to require the dedication of land or payment of in-lieu fees for park and recreational purposes as a condition of approval of a tract map or parcel map. The Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan establishes a baseline of park and recreation services, provides an inventory of existing park and recreation facilities, makes specific recommendations for the acquisition of additional sites and development of existing sites to meet indoor and outdoor recreation needs, and identifies possible school park joint use opportunities.

The impacts on recreational opportunities raised in questions *a-c* generally apply to site-specific projects, where the location, use, and existing conditions are known. However, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space

requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and applicable standards and impact fees. These policies, standards, and fees would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects to recreational opportunities. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies, standards, and fees may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing policies and impact fees and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on recreational opportunities.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at locations that may incrementally impact recreational opportunities. However, any subsequent projects would be relatively small-scale, limited, and dispersed, and, as a result, would not substantially impact overall recreational opportunities. In addition, according to the County policies and standards, individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant impacts to recreational opportunities. Therefore, significant cumulative impacts are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on recreational opportunities, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on recreational opportunities.

4.15 TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. Generation of substantial additional vehicular movement (daily, peak-hour, etc.) in relation to existing traffic load and capacity of the street system?			X	
b. A need for private or public road maintenance, or need for new road(s)?			X	
c. Effects on existing parking facilities, or demand for new parking?			X	
d. Substantial impact upon existing transit systems (e.g. bus service) or alteration of present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods?			X	
e. Alteration to waterborne, rail, or air traffic?				X
f. Increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists or pedestrians (including short-term construction and long-term operational)?			X	
g. Inadequate sight distance?			X	
Ingress/egress?			X	
General road capacity?			X	
Emergency access?			X	
h. Impacts to Congestion Management Plan system?			X	

Setting:

The unincorporated portions of Santa Barbara County are served by a network of state highways and county primary and secondary streets. This road network contains approximately 1,688 lane miles of major roads and local streets, 112 bridges, 48 signalized intersections, and 20,000 street signs. The major state routes and highways include Highway 1, Highway 101, Highway 154, Highway 166, and Highway 246. County infrastructure is maintained by the County Public Works Department and state infrastructure is maintained by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

County Environmental Threshold:

According to the County’s Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, a significant traffic impact would occur when:

- a. The addition of project traffic to an intersection increases the volume to capacity (V/C) ratio by the value provided below, or sends at least 15, 10 or 5 trips to an intersection operating at LOS D, E or F.

LEVEL OF SERVICE (including project)	INCREASE IN VOLUME/CAPACITY GREATER THAN
A	0.20
B	0.15
C	0.10
	Or the addition of:
D	15 trips
E	10 trips
F	5 trips

- b. Project access to a major road or arterial road would require a driveway that would create an unsafe situation, or would require a new traffic signal or major revisions to an existing traffic signal.
- c. Project adds traffic to a roadway that has design features (e.g., narrow width, road side ditches, sharp curves, poor sight distance, inadequate pavement structure) or receives use which would be incompatible with substantial increases in traffic (e.g. rural roads with use by farm equipment, livestock, horseback riding, or residential roads with heavy pedestrian or recreational use, etc.) that will become potential safety problems with the addition of project or cumulative traffic. Exceeding the roadway capacity designated in the Circulation Element may indicate the potential for the occurrence of the above impacts.
- d. Project traffic would utilize a substantial portion of an intersection(s) capacity where the intersection is currently operating at acceptable levels of service (A-C) but with cumulative traffic would degrade to or approach LOS D (V/C 0.81) or lower. Substantial is defined as a minimum change of 0.03 for intersections which would operate from 0.80 to 0.85 and a change of 0.02 for intersections which would operate from 0.86 to 0.90, and 0.01 for intersections operating at anything lower.

Impact Discussion:

(a-d, f-h) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances that could facilitate new housing or other physical development that potentially increase vehicle trips and, in turn, traffic and congestion on highways, streets, and intersections. For example, Programs 1.10, 1.14, and 1.17 would increase the allowed density of some affordable residential projects, increase vehicle trips, and, in turn, traffic and congestion on highways, streets, and intersections. Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 would allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development (commercial/residential), combined residential and treatment facilities, and multi-level care senior housing facilities.

Several factors minimize the chance that new housing or other physical development stemming from the proposed programs would have significant effects on transportation/circulation. First, some of the proposed programs promote housing opportunities near employment centers to help reduce commute pressures and vehicle trips. Other programs promote infill, redevelopment, mixed-use, and other types of development in urban areas. Facilitating development in these locations would produce housing in close proximity to jobs and public transit and, therefore, decrease the commute distances and traffic loads. Second, numerous County regulations minimize the potential effects of new development on transportation/circulation facilities. For example, the Circulation Element of the Comprehensive Plan includes policies that encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation. The Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan includes transportation/circulation policies for each of the community plan areas. The Land Use Element and zoning ordinances also require all future site-specific development proposals to provide sufficient onsite parking to meet anticipated demands.

The impacts on transportation/circulation raised in questions *a-d* and *f-h* generally apply to specific projects where the location, proposed use, and existing conditions are known. Based on this information, a traffic and circulation study is typically prepared to document/model pre- and post project conditions, analyze potential impacts, and, if necessary, propose mitigation measures to address significant traffic and circulation impacts. However, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan policies and zoning ordinance development standards would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on transportation/circulation. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review

process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing policies and development standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on transportation/circulation.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

(e) No Impacts. The Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs could facilitate new affordable housing and social support facilities. These types of development would typically occur in urban areas on land zoned for residential, commercial, or institutional areas. They would not rely on or impact waterborne, rail, or air traffic. Therefore, no effects are attributable to adoption of the Housing Element.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at densities and locations that may incrementally impact transportation/circulation. However, any subsequent projects would be subjects to existing County policies and development standards, which would require projects to avoid or mitigate any significant effects to transportation/circulation. Therefore, significant cumulative impacts are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on transportation/circulation, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on transportation/circulation.

4.16 WATER RESOURCES/FLOODING

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
a. Changes in currents, or the course or direction of water movements, in either marine or fresh waters?				X
b. Changes in percolation rates, drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface water runoff?			X	
c. Change in the amount of surface water in any water body?			X	
d. Discharge, directly or through a storm drain system, into surface waters (including but not limited to wetlands, riparian areas, ponds, springs, creeks, streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, tidal areas, bays, ocean, etc) or alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, or thermal water pollution?			X	
e. Alterations to the course or flow of flood water or need for private or public flood control projects?			X	
f. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding (placement of project in 100 year flood plain), accelerated runoff or tsunamis, sea level rise, or seawater intrusion?			X	
g. Alteration of the direction or rate of flow of groundwater?			X	
h. Change in the quantity of groundwater, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations or recharge interference?			X	
i. Overdraft or over-commitment of any groundwater basin? Or, a significant increase in the existing overdraft or over-commitment of any groundwater basin?			X	
j. The substantial degradation of groundwater quality including saltwater intrusion?			X	
k. Substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies?			X	
l. Introduction of storm water pollutants (e.g., oil, grease, pesticides, nutrients, sediments, pathogens, etc.) into groundwater or surface water?			X	

Setting:

Santa Barbara County includes four major rivers: Santa Ynez River, Cuyama River, Sisquoc River, and Santa Maria River. The Jameson, Gibraltar, and Cachuma reservoirs on the Santa Ynez River help meet the needs of communities on the South Coast. The Twitchell reservoir on the Cuyama River helps reduce threats from floods and replenishes groundwater important to agriculture in the Santa Maria Valley.

Groundwater makes up nearly 75% of the total water used in the county. The county (including incorporated cities) contains fifteen groundwater basins, which are replenished by rainfall. The average annual rainfall for the county is approximately 15 inches. The Percentage of Normal Rainfall Graph shows a percent of normal rainfall for water year September 1, 2013 – August 31, 2014 to be 41% (Santa Barbara County Flood Control District 2014). Thus, all of the groundwater basins are in various levels of overdraft, except for the Santa Ynez River Riparian basin.

County Environmental Threshold:

The County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual identifies project specific impacts that would be considered significant. A project's effect on water quality and hydrology are considered significant if the project:

- Is located within an urbanized area of the county and the project construction or redevelopment individually or as a part of a larger common plan of development or sale would disturb one (1) or more acres of land;
- Increases the amount of impervious surfaces on a site by 25% or more;
- Results in channelization or relocation of a natural drainage channel;
- Results in removal or reduction of riparian vegetation or other vegetation (excluding non-native vegetation removed for restoration projects) from the buffer zone of any streams, creeks or wetlands;
- Is an industrial facility that falls under one or more of categories of industrial activity regulated under the NPDES Phase I industrial storm water regulations (facilities with effluent limitation; manufacturing; mineral, metal, oil and gas, hazardous waste, treatment or disposal facilities; landfills; recycling facilities; steam electric plants; transportation facilities; treatment works; and light industrial activity);
- Discharges pollutants that exceed the water quality standards set forth in the applicable NPDES permit, the Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) Basin Plan or otherwise impairs the beneficial uses¹ of a receiving water body;
- Results in a discharge of pollutants into an "impaired" water body that has been designated as such by the State Water Resources Control Board or the RWQCB under Section 303 (d) of the Federal Water Pollution Prevention and Control Act (i.e., the Clean Water Act); or
- Results in a discharge of pollutants of concern to a receiving water body, as identified by the RWQCB.

Impact Discussion:

(a) No Impact. The Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs facilitate development of affordable housing in urban areas of unincorporated Santa Barbara County. Any such development would not change the current, course, or direction of water movements in marine or fresh waters. Therefore, no effects are attributable to adoption of the Housing Element.

(b-1) Less than significant effect. The Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs provide general housing and land-use strategies that would not result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. However, several of the programs propose general changes to the County Comprehensive Plan and/or zoning ordinances and could facilitate new housing or other physical development that potentially impact water resources and flooding. For example, Programs 1.10, 1.14, and 1.17 would increase the allowed density of some affordable residential projects. Program 1.16 would reduce existing open space requirements in the Design Review (DR) zone for affordable, special needs, and senior housing projects. Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 would allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development (commercial/residential), combined residential and treatment facilities, and multi-level care senior housing facilities. In part, the resulting construction activities and development could change drainage patterns, discharge polluted storm-water into surface waters, impact direction or rate of flow of groundwater, and/or increase impervious surfaces and, in turn, increase storm-water runoff and flooding.

¹ Beneficial uses for Santa Barbara County are identified by the Regional Water Quality Control Board in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin, or Basin Plan, and include (among others) recreation, agricultural supply, groundwater recharge, fresh water habitat, estuarine habitat, support for rare, threatened or endangered species, preservation of biological habitats of special significance.

Numerous federal, state, and County provisions protect water resources and mitigate flood hazards from the potential effects of new development. Examples of provisions applicable to new development include the following:

- In July 2013, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board adopted Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements for Development Projects. The post-construction requirements establish performance requirements and stormwater control measures (e.g., best management practices) for new and redevelopment projects. The County and other local governments in the Central Coast Region must apply these requirements and measures to ensure that development reduces pollutant discharges and prevents stormwater discharges from causing or contributing to a violation of water quality standards under the Statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal General Permit.
- The County Flood Control District administers the Flood Plain Management Program. Through this program, it reviews proposed development for conformance with the County Floodplain Management (County Code, Chapter 15A), setback from major watercourses, adequacy of drainage plans, regional drainage planning, and protection of existing development.
- The Project Clean Water, administered by the County of Santa Barbara, Water Resources Division requires that sediment and other construction related pollutants are prevented from entering the storm drain system. The County regulates discharges of storm water pollutants into groundwater or surface water from construction activities through permits, including Grading Permits and Land Use Permits issued by P&D.
- The Seismic Safety and Safety Element of the County Comprehensive Plan identifies major flood hazards and flood goals, policies, and implementation/mitigation measures to limit the negative effects of flooding.
- The Land Use Element and the Coastal Land Use Plan of the County Comprehensive Plan include flood hazard area policies to help avoid exposing new development to flood hazards and to reduce the need for future flood control protective works.
- The County Land Use and Development Code includes Flood Hazard Development Standards that prohibit generally all development in the floodway, including residential construction. Development within the floodway fringe may be permitted upon compliance with the Floodplain Management Code.
- The County Land Use and Development Code and Coastal Zoning Ordinance include the Flood Hazard Overlay Zone which alerts the public to “areas of special flood hazard” that are subject to the Floodplain Management Code.
- Floodplain Management Code includes standards of construction for new structures within “areas of special flood hazards,” such as for anchoring, elevation, and floodproofing.

The impacts in regards to water resources and flooding raised in questions *b-1* generally apply to site-specific projects, where the location, use, and existing conditions are known. However, the Housing Element is a program-level document that does not grant any entitlements or include site-specific proposals. The Housing Element also does not amend land-use designations, change zoning districts, reduce open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. Rather, any such changes would occur through possible future actions which County decision-makers would first need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations and environmental review (CEQA). In part, any such changes would have to be found consistent with all federal, state, and County standards. These standards would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on water resources and flooding. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing federal, state, and County standards may be insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors described above, including existing federal, state, and County standards and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the effects attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant on water resources and flooding.

The proposed goals, policies, and programs are general in nature and, as a result, specific details on potential plan and zoning ordinance amendments and potential sites for subsequent development are currently unknown. Therefore, further environmental review and plan consistency analyses and conclusions would be speculative at this time.

Mitigation and Residual Impact:

As potential impacts are less than significant, mitigation is not necessary and residual impacts would not occur.

Cumulative Impacts:

Adoption of the Housing Element would establish housing and land-use strategies but would not include any physical development or changes to existing land-use regulations (e.g., zone districts, land uses, density limits, open space requirements). Subsequent implementation of some programs may facilitate new affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities at densities and locations that may incrementally impact water resources and flooding. However, any subsequent projects would be relatively small-scale, limited, and dispersed, and, as a result, would not substantially impact overall water resources and flooding. In addition, according to the federal, state, and County standards, individual projects would be required to mitigate any significant impacts to water resources and flooding. Therefore, significant cumulative effects are not anticipated. As the proposed Housing Element would not have significant effects on water resources and flooding, it would not have cumulatively considerable effects on water resources and flooding.

5.0 INFORMATION SOURCES

5.1 County Departments Consulted

Agricultural Commissioner, Sherriff, Fire, Public Works, Flood Control, Parks.

5.2 Comprehensive Plan

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Seismic Safety/Safety Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conservation Element
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Open Space Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Noise Element
<input type="checkbox"/>	Coastal Plan and Maps	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Circulation Element
<input type="checkbox"/>	ERME	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Land Use Element
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coastal Land Use Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Resource Management Element
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Energy Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agricultural Element

5.3 Other Sources

<input type="checkbox"/>	Field work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ag Preserve maps
<input type="checkbox"/>	Calculations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Flood Control maps
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other technical references (reports, survey, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Traffic studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planning files, maps, reports
<input type="checkbox"/>	Records	<input type="checkbox"/>	Zoning maps
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grading plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	Soils maps/reports
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elevation, architectural renderings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plant maps
<input type="checkbox"/>	Published geological map/reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	Archaeological maps and reports
<input type="checkbox"/>	Topographical maps	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

5.4 Bibliography and References

Association of Environmental Professionals, *2014 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statute and Guidelines (CEQA Guidelines)*, 2014.

California Environmental Protection Agency, California Ambient Air Quality Standards, website accessed September 2014: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/caaqs/caaqs.htm>

Santa Barbara County, Agricultural Commissioner's Office, *Agricultural Production Report 2013*, 2014.

Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, *Regional Growth Forecast 2010-2040*, December 2012.

Santa Barbara County, Planning and Development Department, *Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual*, October 2008.

Santa Barbara County Flood Control District, *County-Wide "Percent of Normal Rainfall" Graph*, 2014.

United States Environmental Protection Agency, National Ambient Air Quality Standards, website accessed September 2014: <http://epa.gov/air/criteria.html>.

6.0 PROJECT SPECIFIC (*short- and long-term*) AND CUMULATIVE IMPACT SUMMARY

The 2015-2023 Housing Element is a program-level document that establishes general goals, policies, and programs to address housing needs and facilitate new housing opportunities in the unincorporated portions of Santa Barbara County consistent with state housing element law. The 2015-2023 Housing Element does not grant any entitlements for development, include site-specific proposals, amend existing land-use designations, change existing zoning districts, reduce existing open space requirements, or otherwise change existing policies and development standards. However, such changes could occur through possible future actions resulting in new development that could ultimately result in environmental impacts.

The County decision-makers would need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review all possible future actions on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and regulations, and environmental review (CEQA). As discussed throughout this Negative Declaration, the existing Comprehensive Plan policies, zoning ordinance development standards, and applicable state and federal laws would typically ensure that proposed projects would have less than significant effects on the environment. Mitigation measures could also be applied through the environmental review process in rare and unforeseen instances where existing County, state, and federal laws, regulations, and programs are insufficient to reduce potentially significant effects to less than significant effects.

Based on the factors discussed above, including existing laws and regulations and the general nature of the proposed goals, policies, and programs, the project's short-term, long-term, and cumulative effects related to Aesthetics/Visual Resources, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Fire Hazards, Geologic Processes, Hazardous Materials/Risk of Upset, Historic Resources, Land Use, Noise, Public Facilities, Recreation, Transportation/Circulation, or Water Resources/Flooding attributable to the Housing Element are considered less than significant.

7.0 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact
1. Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions or significantly increase energy consumption, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			X	
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?			X	
3. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects and the effects of probable future projects.)			X	
4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	
5. Is there disagreement supported by facts, reasonable assumptions predicated upon facts and/or expert opinion supported by facts over the significance of an effect which would warrant investigation in an EIR ?			X	

Impact Discussion for Mandatory Findings of Significance: As previously discussed in greater detail for each environmental impact area (e.g., Air Quality, Biological Resources, Fire Hazards), the 2015-2023 Housing Element would have less than significant effects on the environment. To comply with state housing element law, the County included housing goals, policies, and programs that facilitate the production of affordable and special needs housing in an environmentally sustainable manner. This is primarily indicated by the County’s encouragement of infill, redevelopment, and mixed-use development in designated urban areas. Development in these areas would assist in the preservation of sensitive resources, such as agricultural lands and biological habitats, which are generally located in rural areas. The location of housing in close proximity to jobs would also result in reduced commute distances, which would minimize traffic and vehicular emissions that contribute to air quality degradation and climate change. The adoption of such goals, policies, and programs would facilitate the County’s production of adequate housing while also balancing the need of protecting other elements of the human and natural environment.

8.0 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Pursuant to the 2014 CEQA Statute and Guidelines, project alternatives are only required for projects which would result in significant and immitigable impacts to the environment. Any potentially significant impacts resulting from the 2015-2023 Housing Element could be mitigated to less than significant impacts. Therefore, no project alternatives were considered.

9.0 INITIAL REVIEW OF PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE SUBDIVISION, ZONING AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan: The County Comprehensive Plan contains eight mandatory elements and five optional elements. Government Code section 65302 requires the Comprehensive Plan to include the following seven mandatory elements: Circulation, Conservation, Housing, Land Use, Noise, Open Space, and Safety. In addition, Public Resources Code section 30500 states that the County and other communities within the coastal zone must prepare a local coastal program (LCP), which includes a coastal land use plan and coastal zoning ordinance. The County's Coastal Land Use Plan is part of the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan includes the following six optional elements: Agricultural, Energy, Environmental Resource Management, Hazardous Waste, and Scenic Highways.

Community plans are adopted as amendments to the Land Use Element and/or Coastal Land Use Plan (if applicable area is within the coastal zone). They are used to plan the future of a particular community or geographic area at a finer level of detail. The County currently has nine community plans. A tenth community plan is underway for the Gaviota Coast.

In general, Government Code section 65300.5 states that all elements of the Comprehensive Plan, whether mandatory or optional, must be internally consistent with each other. However, Government Code section 65589.5(d)(5) allows some exceptions when necessary for a local government to comply with state housing element law.

The Comprehensive Plan covers all the unincorporated portions of Santa Barbara County. As a result, its goals, policies, and implementation programs generally provide a broad, long-term blueprint for future land-use and physical development. However, some of the Comprehensive Plan's provisions contain specific and/or quantified standards that apply on a case-by-case basis to individual projects.

The Housing Element is one element of the Comprehensive Plan and, similar to the Comprehensive Plan, its goals, policies, and programs provide broad housing and land-use strategies that would not directly result in any physical development or direct environmental impacts. At a programmatic level, staff reviewed and concluded that the Housing Element's goals, policies, and programs are consistent with applicable Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and other requirements.

The Housing Element contains some programs that may facilitate and result in amendments to the Land Use Element, Coastal Land Use Plan, and perhaps other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Any such amendments would occur through possible future formal actions (i.e., General Plan Amendment) that County decision-makers would need to approve, adopt, fund, and/or review on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws and environmental review (CEQA). In part, Land Use and Development Code section 35.104.060 and Coastal Land Use Plan section 35-180.6 state that decision-makers can only approve such amendments if they find the amendments are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, any future individual development projects stemming from the Housing Element's goals, policies, or programs would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including the Coastal Land Use Plan.

Land-Use and Development Code and Coastal Zoning Ordinance (Article II): The County zoning ordinances contain specific standards that apply to individual projects rather than broad plans such as the Housing Element. In addition, the Housing Element contains broad housing and land-use strategies that would not directly result in any individual projects or direct environmental impacts. Nonetheless, at a programmatic level, staff reviewed and concluded that the Housing Element’s goals, policies, and programs are consistent with applicable zoning ordinance standards.

Several of the Housing Element’s programs could result in changes to the zoning ordinances that could indirectly facilitate future affordable and special needs housing and social support facilities. For example, Programs 1.10, 1.14, and 1.17 would increase the allowed density of some affordable residential projects. Program 1.16 would reduce existing open space requirements in the Design Review (DR) zone for affordable, special needs, and senior housing projects. Programs 1.15, 2.2, and 2.6 would allow new types of housing, such as mixed-use development (commercial/residential), combined residential and treatment facilities, and multi-level care senior housing facilities.

As with amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, the County would need to review any such future housing and social support facilities on a case-by-case basis subject to applicable laws, zoning permits, and environmental review (CEQA). In part, the zoning ordinances state that County decision-makers can only approve zoning permits (e.g., Land Use Permits, Coastal Development Permits) for such projects if they find the projects conform to the Comprehensive Plan and applicable zoning ordinance. For example, County decision-makers can only approve a Land Use Permit or Coastal Development Permit if “[t]he proposed development conforms: (1) To the applicable policies of the Comprehensive Plan, including the Coastal Land Use Plan; (2) With the applicable provisions of this Article [Land-Use and Development Code or Coastal Zoning Ordinance]....” (Land Use and Development Code section 35.82.110, Coastal Zoning Ordinance section 35-169.5). Therefore, any future individual development projects stemming from the Housing Element’s goals, policies, or programs would be consistent with the applicable zoning ordinances.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION BY P&D STAFF

On the basis of the Initial Study, the staff of Planning and Development:

Finds that the proposed project WILL NOT have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, recommends that a Negative Declaration (ND) be prepared.

Finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures incorporated into the REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION would successfully mitigate the potentially significant impacts. Staff recommends the preparation of an ND. The ND finding is based on the assumption that mitigation measures will be acceptable to the applicant; if not acceptable a revised Initial Study finding for the preparation of an EIR may result.

Finds that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and recommends that an EIR be prepared.

Finds that from existing documents (previous EIRs, etc.) that a subsequent document (containing updated and site-specific information, etc.) pursuant to CEQA Sections 15162/15163/15164 should be prepared.

Potentially significant unavoidable adverse impact areas:

With Public Hearing Without Public Hearing

PREVIOUS DOCUMENT:

PROJECT EVALUATOR: _____ DATE: _____

11.0 DETERMINATION BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEARING OFFICER

I agree with staff conclusions. Preparation of the appropriate document may proceed.

I DO NOT agree with staff conclusions. The following actions will be taken:

I require consultation and further information prior to making my determination.

SIGNATURE: _____ INITIAL STUDY DATE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ REVISION DATE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ FINAL NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE: _____