

State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street Intersection Improvement

City of Morro Bay, County of San Luis Obispo

05-SLO-1-30.0/30.4

05-SLO-41-0.0/0.15

Project ID Number 051500014/EA 05-0F670

Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

Volume 1 of 2



Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation

October 2026



General Information About This Document

What's in this document:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared this Initial Study, which examines the potential environmental impacts of alternatives being considered for the proposed project in San Luis Obispo County in California. The document explains why the project is being proposed, the alternatives being considered for the project, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, potential impacts of each of the alternatives, and proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

What you should do:

- Please read the document. Additional copies of the document and the related technical studies are available for review at the Caltrans district office at 50 Higuera St, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401, 8AM-5PM (Monday through Friday); Morro Bay Library at 625 Harbor St, Morro Bay, CA 93442, 10AM-6PM (Tuesday and Wednesday), 9AM-5PM (Thursday), 1PM-5PM (Friday), 9AM-1PM (Saturday). This document may be downloaded at the following website:
[State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street Intersection Improvement Project](#)
- Attend the public information meeting on November 12, 2026, from 5:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. at the Morro Bay High School Auditorium, 235 Atascadero Rd, Morro Bay, CA 93442.
- Tell us what you think. If you have any comments regarding the proposed project, please attend the public information meeting, and/or send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline. Submit comments via U.S. mail to: Matt Fowler, District 5 Environmental Division, California Department of Transportation, 50 Higuera St, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. Submit comments via email to:
SR1-SR41-MainSt@dot.ca.gov
- Submit comments by the deadline: November 25, 2026

What happens next:

After comments are received from the public and the reviewing agencies, Caltrans may 1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, 2) do additional environmental studies, or 3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is appropriated, Caltrans could design and construct all or part of the project.

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05-SLO-1-30.0/30.4
Project ID Number: 051500014
EA: 05-0F670

Improve the intersections of State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street
in the city of Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo County, California

INITIAL STUDY
with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation
and
San Luis Obispo Council of Governments
Responsible Agency: California Transportation Commission

Scott Smith

Scott Smith
Office Chief, Environmental Analysis, District 5
California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

10/13/2026

Date

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DRAFT
Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

State Clearinghouse Number: pending

District-County-Route-Post Mile: 05-SLO-1-30.0/30.4 and 05-SLO-41-0.0/0.15

EA/Project Number: 05-0F670/051500014

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in cooperation with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) proposes to convert the two existing intersections of the State Route 1 northbound ramps, State Route 41, and Main Street into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane in the city of Morro Bay to address traffic operational deficiencies and improve multimodal access. This configuration would serve single lane approaches from State Route 1 on- and off-ramps, single lane approach from eastbound State Route 41, and single lane approach from Main Street approaches. A multilane approach is proposed for the westbound State Route 41 approach.

The project would construct Americans-with-Disabilities-Act-compliant, standard Caltrans Class II bike lanes, sidewalks, and intersection crossings. Retaining walls would be installed along the western edge of the northbound State Route 1 on- and off-ramps to accommodate realignment of the ramps closer to the State Route 1 mainline.

Determination

This proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration is included to give notice to interested agencies and the public that it is Caltrans' intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for this project. This does not mean that Caltrans' decision regarding the project is final. This Mitigated Negative Declaration is subject to change based on comments received by interested agencies and the public.

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project and, pending public review, expects to determine from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

The project would have no effect on agriculture and forestry resources, land use and planning, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, and wildfire.

The project would have less than significant effects to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions,

hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, transportation, tribal cultural resources, and utilities and service Systems.

With the following mitigation measures incorporated, the project would have less than significant effects to aesthetics/visual resources:

- AESTHETICS-2 (Compensatory Mitigation): Aesthetic Treatment. In coordination with the Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architect, the following aesthetic commitments shall be incorporated during the project's final design phase:
 1. All retaining walls shall be aesthetically treated with texture and/or color consistent with the scenic coastal setting and to reduce graffiti potential.
 2. All splitter islands shall be aesthetically treated with texture and/or color and/or planted.
 3. The center island apron of the roundabout shall be aesthetically treated with texture and/or color.
 4. The center island of the roundabout shall be planted or aesthetically treated with texture and/or color.
 5. All guard rail, pedestrian rail, and safety rail on top of retaining walls shall be colored or darkened.
 6. Project aesthetics incorporated shall consider inclusion of Transportation Art and/or Gateway treatments.
 7. Project aesthetics shall be developed with input from community stakeholders, including Native American representatives.
- AESTHETICS-4 (Compensatory Mitigation): Retaining Wall Planting. Provide sufficient area at the base of all retaining walls to allow for planting and maintenance of shrubs, trees, or vines. Plant along the base of all retaining walls to reduce the perceived visual scale of the walls, complement the scenic coastal setting, and reduce graffiti potential.
- AESTHETICS-5 (Compensatory Mitigation): Lighting
 1. The point source of all exterior lighting shall be shielded from off-site views.
 2. Light trespass from exterior lights shall be minimized by directing light downward and utilizing cut-off fixtures or shields.

Scott Smith
Office Chief, Environmental Analysis, District 5
California Department of Transportation

Date

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Chapter 1 **Proposed Project**

1.1 Introduction

Caltrans in cooperation with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments proposes improvements at the intersections of State Route 1 northbound ramps, State Route 41, and Main Street in the city of Morro Bay to address traffic operational deficiencies and improve multimodal access. Figures 1.1 and 1.2 show the project vicinity and location. The existing intersection at State Route 41 and Main Street is an all-way stop-controlled intersection that is adjacent to the intersection of State Route 41 and State Route 1 northbound on- and off-ramps. A Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative are being evaluated for this project. The Build Alternative would convert the two existing intersections into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane. The proposed intersection improvements would tie in with existing roadway facilities (e.g., driveways, curbs, and sidewalks).

The project is included in the adopted San Luis Obispo Council of Governments' 2027 Federal Transportation Improvement Program for the Federal Fiscal Year 2029. The project is programmed in the adopted 2026 State Transportation Improvement Program and is partially funded in the Congestion Management and Air Quality program and Regional Improvement Program for delivery in Fiscal Year 2028-2029. The current total programmed funding amount for the project is \$7,830,000. However, the current total estimated cost of the project is \$18,555,894. This includes \$16,379,000 for construction and \$408,300 for right-of-way costs and utility verification. The cost difference is expected to be provided from a combination of State and federal funding sources. The start of construction is expected in February 2029, and the project will occur in stages over the course of 18 months. Completion is anticipated in Summer 2030.

Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As the lead agency, Caltrans has prepared this Initial Study with proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project.

1.2 Purpose and Need

1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the project is to improve the State Route 1 northbound ramps, State Route 41, and Main Street intersections to address traffic operational deficiencies and improve multimodal access.

1.2.2 Need

The intersections of the State Route 1 northbound ramps, State Route 41, and Main Street have been identified as operating below the target Level of Service “C” at certain times of the day and year, where queuing in four approach legs of the intersections exceeds the available storage.

Traffic patterns at the State Route 1 northbound ramps, State Route 41, and Main Street intersections are challenging to navigate, especially for vulnerable road users, like the disabled, elderly, and Morro Bay High School students. Vehicles on the northbound off-ramp and northbound Main Street legs during the AM peak are delayed in trying to find gaps in vehicular and pedestrian traffic to make left turns to reach their destination. The conflicts in all directions of travel lead to operational challenges and extended delays. Those delays also lead to traveler delays on other legs of the intersection.

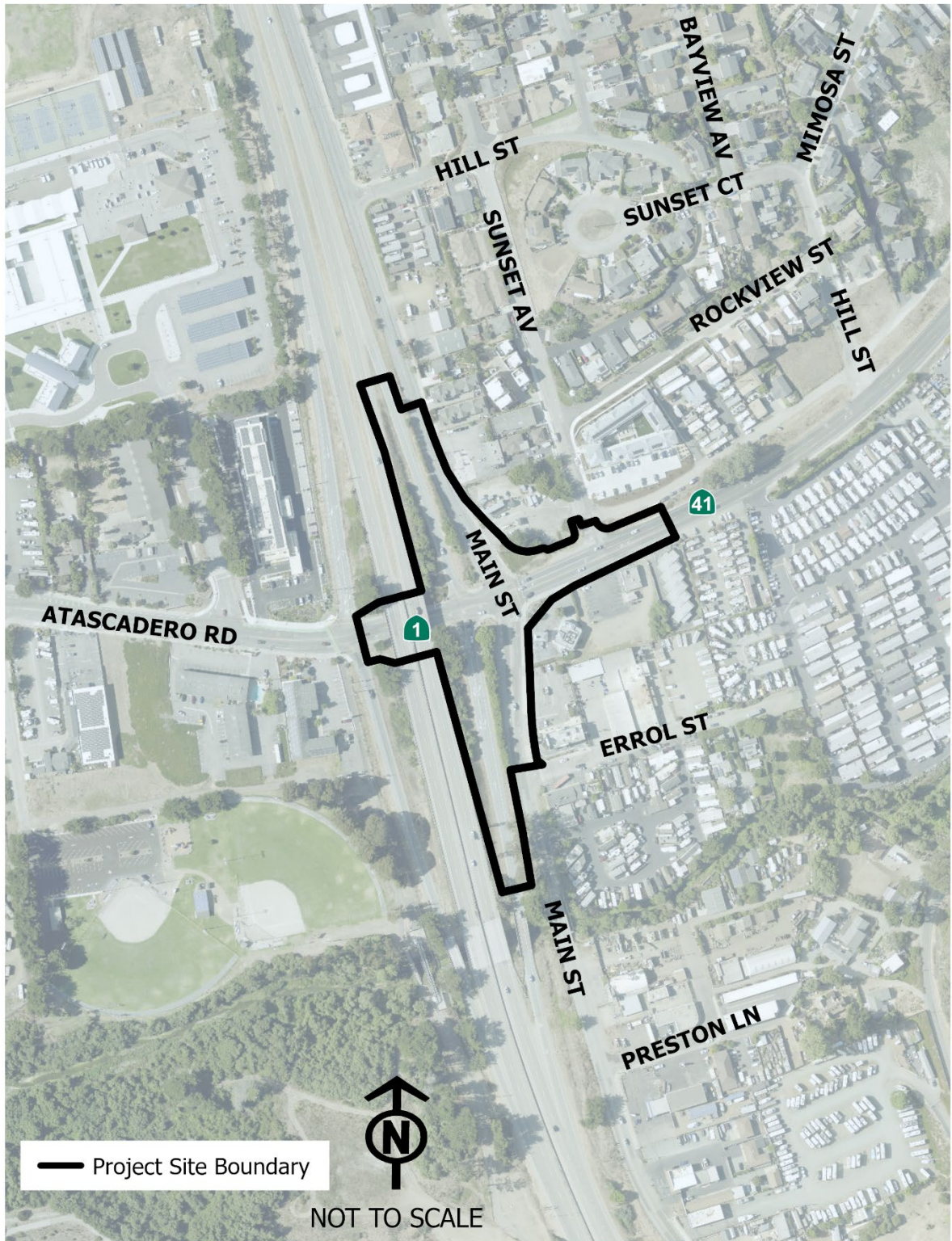
1.3 Project Description

Caltrans in cooperation with San Luis Obispo Council of Governments, proposes improvements at the intersections of State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street in the city of Morro Bay to address traffic operational deficiencies and improve multimodal access. The 6.5-acre project site appears on the U.S. Geological Survey Morro Bay North, California 7.5-minute quadrangle. Figures 1.1 and 1.2 show the project vicinity and location. The existing intersection at State Route 41 and Main Street is an all-way stop-controlled intersection that is adjacent to the intersection of State Route 41 and State Route 1 northbound ramps.

Figure 1.1 Project Vicinity Map



Figure 1.2 Project Location Map



Build Alternative 1 (Roundabout Alternative) and the No-Build Alternative are being evaluated for this project. Build Alternative 1 would convert existing intersections of the State Route 1 northbound ramps, State Route 41, and Main Street into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane. The proposed intersection improvement would tie in with existing roadway facilities (e.g., driveways, curbs, sidewalks, etc.). Additional right-of-way would be required for the project. The project would implement avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to address temporary and permanent impacts. The alternatives are described in further detail below.

1.4 Project Alternatives

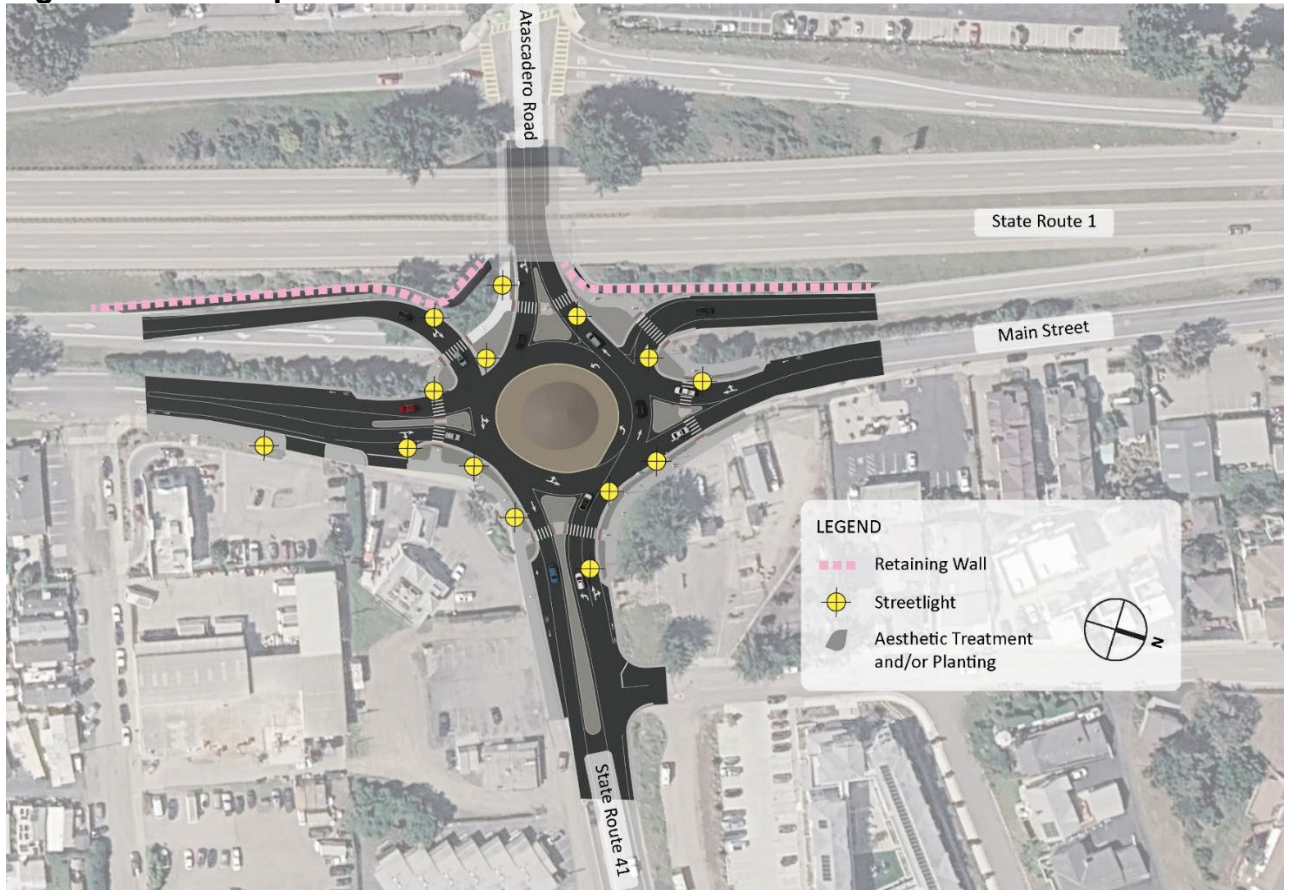
Two alternatives labeled as the Build Alternative 1 and No-Build Alternative are under consideration. Several criteria were taken into consideration when evaluating the various alternatives for the project, including the purpose and need, cost, and environmental impacts.

1.4.1 Build Alternative 1 (Roundabout Alternative)

Build Alternative 1 would convert the two existing intersections of the State Route 1 northbound ramps, State Route 41, and Main Street into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane. This configuration would serve single lane approaches from State Route 1 on- and off-ramps, single lane approach from eastbound State Route 41, and single lane approach from Main Street approaches. A multilane approach is proposed for the westbound State Route 41 approach.

The roundabout configuration includes an asymmetric central island, with a circulatory roadway and truck apron. Geometrics were developed to meet roundabout performance checks including, fastest path, truck turning, oversized and overweight trucks. The existing State Route 1 on- and off-ramps would be slightly realigned to meet circulatory roadway entering and exiting performance requirements. The alignment of both intersections and approach roadways would remain generally the same, and the paved (impervious) area would increase (see Figures 1.3 and 1.4).

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Simulation of the Build Alternative



Build Alternative 1 would accommodate pedestrians and bicycles with Americans-with-Disabilities-Act-compliant, standard Caltrans Class II bike lanes, sidewalks, and intersection crossings. Sidewalks and bike lanes are proposed on all legs of the intersection, including wider facilities along the perimeter of the roundabout to allow bicycles and pedestrians to share the path in those areas.

A 10-foot-wide shared-use path would be constructed around the perimeter of the roundabout, with at least three feet of landscape buffer from vehicular traffic. Crosswalks are proposed at least 25 feet outside of the roundabout to reduce conflict points with pedestrians as a vehicle is trying to enter the roundabout circulation. Crosswalks would have a pedestrian refuge of at least ten feet to allow for pedestrians to cross one lane in each direction at separate times. Bicycles would be accommodated by taking the travel lane and traveling through the roundabout as a vehicle or by taking the separated shared-use pathway and traveling around the roundabout as a pedestrian. Upgraded pedestrian ramps, flashing beacons, and lighting are proposed on all legs of the intersection.

Mounding of the roundabout center island would occur to allow for positive drainage into stormwater drop structures, which is roughly expected to be 0.2 meter (eight inches) above the new roundabout paved surface. However, the exact height would be determined during final design which would be consistent with the requirements of the 2020 Caltrans “Highway Design Manual”.

Build Alternative 1 would require the potential relocation of facilities and appurtenances for sewer, water, storm drainage, gas, electrical, and cable service, as necessary.

Build Alternative 1 would install retaining walls along the western edge of the northbound State Route 1 on- and off-ramps to accommodate realignment of the ramps closer to the State Route 1 mainline. The off-ramp retaining wall would extend from State Route 41 approximately 600 feet south and vary in height from 9.5 to 17.5 feet. The on-ramp retaining wall would extend from State Route 41, approximately 475 feet north, and would vary in height from 7.5 to 16.5 feet (see Figure 1.3). The retaining wall installations would require removal and pruning of existing landscaping.

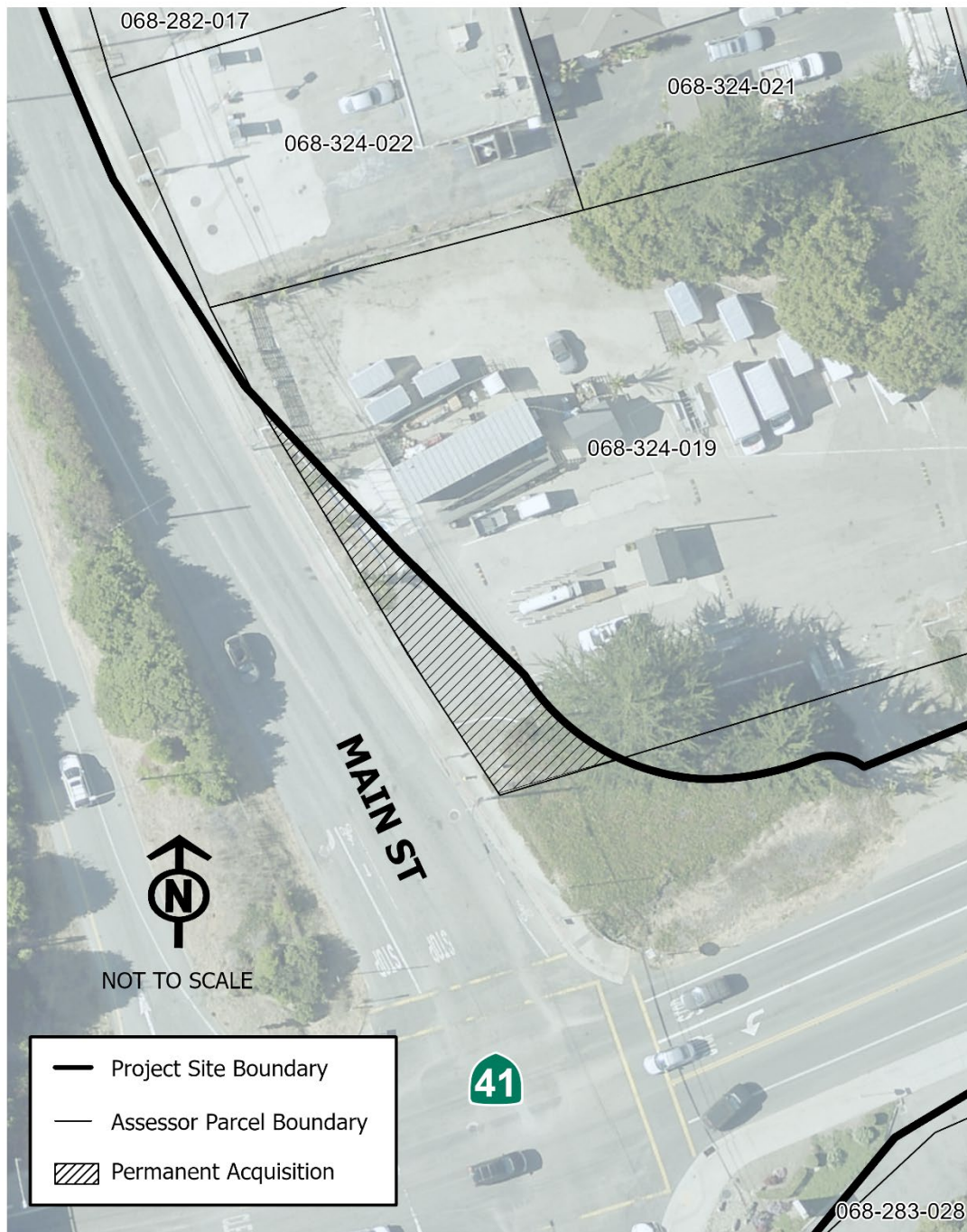
Consistent with “Plan Morro Bay” (the city of Morro Bay’s “2021 General Plan and Local Coastal Plan”) “gateway” and “entry corridor” policies, aesthetic treatments are proposed for the interior (center island) of the roundabout and retaining walls, but details would be determined during final design. Landscaping buffers are also expected to separate the proposed sidewalks from the roundabout, as well as areas between the proposed retaining walls on State Route 1 on- and off-ramps. Specific landscaping plans would be developed during the final design phase of the project.

Build Alternative 1 would require permanent right-of-way acquisition at the Morro Bay Propane and U-Haul parcel (Assessor Parcel Number 068-324-019) located at the northeast corner of the State Route 41/Main Street intersection. Temporary construction easements are also expected at the following three parcels: USA Gas Station (Assessor Parcel Number 068-283-028) and the Taco Bell parcels (Assessor Parcel Numbers 068-283-035 and 068-283-036). Along State Route 41, temporary construction easements would occupy the entire parcel frontage to a width between three and five feet. Affected parcels on Main Street, would be occupied with temporary construction easements along the entire parcel frontage to a width of up to three feet. Preliminary estimates of permanent acquisition and temporary construction easements are listed in Table 1.1. Figure 1.4 depicts the extent of permanent acquisitions. These estimates would be refined during the project's final design phase.

Table 1.1 Permanent Acquisition/Temporary Construction Easements

Assessor Parcel Number	Permanent Acquisition (square feet)	Temporary Construction Easements (square feet)	Parcel Size (square feet)
068-324-019	1817	0	30,928
068-283-028	0	1245	14,375
068-283-035	0	4	10,109
068-283-036	0	47	10,890

Figure 1.2 Permanent Right-of-Way Acquisition



Construction Activities

Development of Build Alternative 1 would require earthmoving activities and disturbance within the project area. This would require 5.82 acres of ground disturbance, including 2 acres of grubbing activities and 25,000 cubic yards of

cut and 21,000 cubic yards of fill. Retaining wall and ramp construction would require approximately 4,000 cubic yards of cut and fill soil to be removed and hauled off-site. All other cut and fill activities would be retained and balanced on-site. Roadway realignment, intersection improvements, bike and pedestrian improvements, and frontage improvements would create additional impervious surface area. Build Alternative 1 would result in approximately 3.42 acres of total impervious surface area, which is a net increase in impervious surface area of 0.21 acre (9,188 square feet).

The approximate excavation depths would vary throughout the project site. Table 1.2 lists estimated excavation depths for proposed improvement work. Roadway paving and utility trenching would occur throughout the project area; the locations of areas of deeper excavations are shown in Figure 1.3, where the streetlights and retaining walls would be placed.

Table 1.2 Excavation Depths

Type of Improvement Work	Approximate Depth of Excavation
Roadway and Pavement	2 feet
Utility Trenching	6 feet
Streetlight Foundations	3 feet
Retaining Wall Foundations	20 feet

The project is anticipated to be required to comply with the requirements set forth in the Caltrans Project Planning and Design Guide. The project would likely be required to implement post-construction treatment Best Management Practices, as the new impervious surface would likely be greater than one acre.

Project construction would require temporary lane closures of the northbound State Route 1 ramps and may also require temporary closure of the outside northbound lane on State Route 1 during construction of the retaining walls. Temporary lane closures are expected to last approximately 12 months. During construction, vehicle and pedestrian detour routes would be established. Staging is anticipated to occur within existing right-of-way areas, including within closed lanes, in medians, or along ruderal/disturbed edges of State Route 1 within the area of potential impact. Construction access would be facilitated along existing roadways within the project area, with traffic controls implemented as appropriate. The construction contractor would be responsible for obtaining all necessary environmental clearance and permitting for any staging areas not within the current project area studied in this document.

Construction activities are estimated to begin in Spring of 2029 and last for approximately 18 months. While nighttime construction is not required, if

approved, there would likely be about six months of intermittent activities such as utility relocation during non-peak hours of travel. Construction is not anticipated to occur on Saturdays, Sundays, or federal holidays. Construction activities are anticipated to use typical construction equipment and would require approximately 30 worker vehicle trips per day.

This project contains a number of standardized project measures that are used on most, if not all, Caltrans projects and were not developed in response to any specific environmental impact resulting from the project. These measures are addressed in more detail in the Environmental Consequences discussions found in Chapter 2.

Transportation System Management and Transportation Demand Management Alternatives

Transportation System Management strategies increase the efficiency of existing facilities; they are actions that increase the number of vehicle trips a facility can carry without increasing the number of through lanes. Examples of Transportation System Management strategies include ramp metering, auxiliary lanes, turning lanes, reversible lanes, and traffic signal coordination. Transportation System Management also promotes automobile, public and private transit, ridesharing programs, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements as elements of a unified urban transportation system. Modal alternatives integrate multiple forms of transportation modes, such as pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, rail, and mass transit.

Transportation Demand Management focuses on regional means of reducing the number of vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled, as well as increasing vehicle occupancy. It facilitates higher vehicle occupancy or reduces traffic congestion by expanding the traveler's transportation options in terms of travel method, travel time, travel route, travel costs, and the quality and convenience of the travel experience. A typical activity would be providing funds to regional agencies that are actively promoting ridesharing, maintaining rideshare databases, and providing limited rideshare services to employers and individuals.

The Build Alternative includes Transportation System Management strategies, including converting the two existing intersections into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane as well as accommodating pedestrians and bicycles with Americans-with-Disabilities Act-compliant, standard Caltrans Class II bike lanes, sidewalks, and intersection crossing.

A Transportation Management Plan would be prepared during the project's final design phase that would identify strategies that should be included in the project construction. Major strategies that would be included are listed below:

- Public Awareness Campaign

- Portable Changeable Message Signs
- Construction Area Signs
- Planned Lane Closure Website
- Construction Zone Enhanced Enforcement Program (COZEEP)
- Lane/Ramp Closures Charts
- Contingency Plan
- Special Days limiting work (to be determined)
- Liquidated Damages Penalty

1.4.2 No-Build (No-Action) Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, access and connectivity for all modes of travel through the State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street intersections would not be improved. Because existing lane geometrics and intersection controls would remain, access and connectivity for bicycle and pedestrian users would not be increased or improved. The intersections of State Route 1 northbound ramps, State Route 41, and Main Street would continue to operate with deficiency at certain times of the day and year, where queuing in four legs of the intersection exceeds the available storage. Traffic patterns would remain challenging to navigate, especially for vulnerable road users, like the disabled, elderly, and Morro Bay High School students. The conflicts in all directions of travel would continue to lead to operational challenges and extended delays.

1.5 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Discussion

Three alternatives were considered during the Project Initiation phase of the project, including: 1) No Build, 2) Roundabout Alternative, and 3) Traffic Signal Alternative. Of these three alternatives, the No Build and Roundabout Alternatives were carried forward for a detailed evaluation in the Project Approval/Environmental Document phase.

1.5.1 Build Alternative 2 (Traffic Signal Alternative)

Build Alternative 2 (Traffic Signal Alternative) would involve the signalization of the intersection of State Route 41 and Main Street and the intersection of State Route 41 and State Route 1 northbound ramps. Signals at both

intersections would be coordinated and operated on one controller. The following changes to lane configurations would occur.

State Route 41 and Main Street

Intersection modifications would include converting the northbound left-through lane into a dedicated left-turn lane, while the right-turn lane would become a shared through-right lane. On the eastbound approach, the existing left-through-right lane would be reconfigured into a dedicated left-turn lane alongside a shared through-right lane. Additionally, the southbound and westbound left-turn lanes would be set back from the crosswalk to accommodate truck turning movements.

State Route 41 and State Route 1 Northbound Ramps

The northbound left-through lane would be converted to a dedicated left-turn lane, while the right-turn lane would be reconfigured to function as a through-right lane. Similarly, the eastbound left-through-right lane would be modified to a left turn lane and through-right lane.

The Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) Step 2 report rejected the signal alternative. Justification for rejecting Build Alternative 2 was due to it having a higher number of conflict points when compared to the roundabout alternative. Conflict points are locations at which a roadway user can cross, merge, and/or diverge with another roadway user. Build Alternative 2 would continue to expose vulnerable road users to multiple challenging conflicts points since it would not reconfigure the roadway to limit crossing distances and physically separate pedestrians and bicycle pathways from vehicle traffic.

1.6 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Build Alternatives

The Build Alternative would include standardized project measures and best management practices that are used on most, if not all, Caltrans projects and were not developed in response to any specific environmental impact resulting from the proposed Build Alternative. Caltrans standardized measures are considered features of the project and are implemented with strict guidelines, just like other Caltrans standardized requirements. The measures listed below are applicable to the project and are discussed in more detail in the Environmental Consequences sections of the analysis found in Chapter 2. These measures can be found in the latest Caltrans Standard Specifications document. A copy of the full document can be found at the following link: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/ccs-standard-plans-and-standard-specifications>

- 7-1 Legal Relations and Responsibility to the Public
- 10-4 Water Usage

- 10-5 Dust Control
- 10-6 Watering
- 12-1 Temporary Traffic Control
- 12-3 Temporary Traffic Control Devices
- 12-4 Traffic Control Systems
- 13-1 Water Pollution Control
- 13-2 Water Pollution Control Program
- 13-3 Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
- 13-4 Job Site Management
- 13-6 Temporary Sediment Control
- 13-7 Temporary Tracking Control
- 13-10 Temporary Linear Sediment Barriers
- 14-1 Environmental Stewardship
- 14-2 Cultural Resources
- 14-6 Biological Resources
- 14-8 Noise and Vibration
- 14-9 Air Quality

1.7 Discussion of the NEPA Categorical Exclusion

This document contains information regarding compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other state laws and regulations. Separate environmental documentation, supporting a Categorical Exclusion determination, has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. When needed for clarity, or as required by CEQA, this document may contain references to federal laws and/or regulations (CEQA, for example, requires consideration of adverse effects on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—that is, species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act).

1.8 Permits and Approvals Needed

The following permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications are required for project construction:

Table 1.3 Permits and Approvals Needed

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permit, Statewide Construction General Permit	To be obtained in the final design phase
City of Morro Bay	Local Coastal Development Permit	To be obtained in the final design phase

Chapter 2 CEQA Evaluation

2.1 CEQA Environmental Checklist

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. Potential impact determinations include Significant and Unavoidable Impact, Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated, Less Than Significant Impact, and No Impact. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with a project will indicate that there are no impacts to a particular resource. A “No Impact” answer reflects this determination. The questions in this checklist are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Project features, which can include both design elements of the project and standardized measures that are applied to all or most Caltrans projects such as Best Management Practices and measures included in the Standard Plans and Specifications or as Standard Special Provisions, are considered to be an integral part of the project and have been considered prior to any significance determinations documented below.

“No Impact” determinations in each section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project as well as the appropriate technical report (bound separately in Volume 2), and no further discussion is included in this document.

The No-Build Alternative will not be discussed any further in this chapter since it would not result in any direct or indirect impacts to the environment. The Build Alternative will be considered as the project for the purpose of the CEQA evaluation contained in this chapter.

2.1.1 Aesthetics

Considering the information in the project’s Visual Impact Assessment dated January 2026, the following significance determinations have been made:

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	Less Than Significant Impact

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated

Affected Environment

Scenic Vistas

Scenic vistas are generally defined as high-quality views displaying good aesthetic and compositional value that can be seen from public viewpoints. If the project substantially degrades the scenic landscape as viewed from public roads, or in particular designated scenic routes, or from other public or recreation areas, this would be considered a potentially significant impact on the scenic vista. The primary visual resource contributing to scenic vistas in the project vicinity is Morro Rock, approximately one mile southwest of the project site. Other visual resources along the State Route 1 corridor that contribute to scenic vistas often include views of the Pacific Ocean, the beach and shoreline, bluffs and cliffs, mature trees and other native vegetation, and the hillsides and ridges inland from State Route 1.

As seen from most viewing locations east of State Route 1, views of Morro Rock and the Pacific Ocean are only partially visible due to intervening topography, distance and intervening development. The inland hills contribute to the scenic vista for views toward the east and can be seen from much of the project area.

Scenic Resources

A scenic resource is a specific feature or element with a high degree of memorability or landmark characteristics that contribute to the high visual quality of the corridor. In general, coastal scenic resources along State Route

1 include the Pacific Ocean, the rugged cliffs and shoreline, rock outcroppings and inland hills, vegetated creeks, and patterns of mature native vegetation. Morro Rock is among the most memorable and iconic natural features and coastal scenic resources as seen from State Route 1 through Morro Bay and the coastal communities of northern San Luis Obispo County. The project would result in a significant impact if it were to damage or have a substantial negative effect on views of any of those specific resources as seen from State Route 1, which is an Officially Designated State Scenic Highway.

Visual Character

Project-related actions would be considered to have a significant impact on the visual character of the project site if they altered the area in a way that substantially changed, detracted from, or degraded the visual quality of the project site or surrounding area. The degree to which that change reflects documented community values and meets viewers' aesthetic expectations is the basis for determining levels of significance. Visual contrast and compatibility may be used as a measure of the potential impact that the project may have on the visual quality of the project site. If a strong contrast occurred where project features or activities attract attention and dominate the landscape setting, this would be considered a potentially significant impact on visual character or quality of the project site.

The visual character of the project site and its surroundings are defined by both built and natural elements. Although the immediate project setting is characterized by suburban-type development, the views of Morro Rock, the Pacific Ocean, and the inland hills provide an awareness of a larger, natural context. These features combine for a moderately high visual quality and character. Within the project vicinity, the project intersections, Atascadero Road, and Main Street corridors are seen as primarily commercial.

Light and Glare

The project would result in a significant impact if it introduced substantial point-source lighting visible from public viewing locations at night or if project illumination caused noticeable spillover into the nighttime sky, increasing regional ambient light levels. Visibility of a substantial amount of illumination of project components such as walls and other elements, even without point-source visibility of spillover, could result in significant impacts. The placement of lighting, source of illumination, and fixture types combined with viewer locations, adjacent reflective elements, and atmospheric conditions can affect the degree of change to nighttime views. If the project results in direct visibility of a substantial number of lighting sources or allows a substantial amount of light to project toward the sky or reflect on project features, significant impacts on nighttime views and aesthetic character would result.

Night lighting is currently seen throughout the area. Existing streetlights surround the project intersections. Four streetlights are currently within the project site.

Environmental Consequences

Scenic Vistas

The project site is primarily located to the east of State Route 1. Most project elements would occur at or near the existing ground level. The proposed retaining walls would be constructed into the existing State Route 1 highway embankment. Roundabout lighting would add approximately 14 vertical poles; however, the pole profiles would be relatively thin and have little to no effect on surrounding views. The project would not generally reduce or otherwise affect visibility of scenic coastal resources such as Morro Rock, the Pacific Ocean, or the inland hills. As a result, the project would result in a less-than-significant impact on scenic vistas.

Scenic Resources

As mentioned previously, the project would have little to no effect on the availability of views to Morro Rock, the Pacific Ocean, or the scenic hills to the east. Therefore, a less-than-significant impact to scenic resources as seen from the Officially Designated State Scenic Highway State Route 1 would occur.

Visual Character

The project would result in a substantial visual change compared to the existing condition. The most noticeable visual changes would include the larger, completely reconfigured intersection, large retaining walls north and south of the intersection, removal of mature vegetation, new lighting and signage. The project would cause a considerable increase to the visual scale of the existing project intersection environment.

Visual Simulations

Visual simulations were prepared to quantify potential project visibility and to assess related visual effects (Figures 2.1 through 2.6). The layout and appearance of structures and other development features and landscaping shown in the visual simulations are based on conceptual designs provided by the project applicant as identified in plans, the project description, and associated development standards and design guidelines. The project aesthetic design as represented by the simulations, including materials, textures, colors, and landscaping may be subject to change, based on local approvals, final site engineering and construction design.

Figure 2.1 Existing Project Site View from State Route 41, East of State Route 1 and Main Street (facing west)



Figure 2.2 Conceptual Project Site Render from State Route 41, East of State Route 1 and Main Street (facing west)



Figure 2.3 Existing Project Site View from Northbound State Route 1 Off-Ramp, South of State Route 41 (facing north)



Figure 2.4 Conceptual Project Site View from Northbound State Route 1 Off-Ramp, South of State Route 41 (facing north)



Figure 2.5 Existing Project Site View from State Route 1 Bridge Overcrossing State Route 41 (facing east)



Figure 2.6 Conceptual Project Site View from State Route 1 Bridge Overcrossing State Route 41 (facing east)



Although the project would retain its visual appearance of a roadway intersection facility, it would change the overall visual character to a larger-scale facility more consistent with an urban environment. The proposed retaining walls would visually dominate the view and the setting from

viewpoints east of State Route 1. The generally well-vegetated roadsides would be replaced with extensive paved areas and engineered elements. The visual change would be highly noticeable, but it would retain the generally developed visual character of this commercial area and the intersection facilities and would not be unexpected in this existing visual context. The project would result in modifications to the existing intersection but would not result in a new or substantially different use at the project site.

Protective measures would be implemented to reduce impacts related to the visual character and quality of the project area. Avoidance and Minimization Measure Aesthetics-1 would require minimization of retaining wall height during final design. To reduce the perceived visual scale of the walls, complement the scenic coastal setting, and reduce graffiti potential, Mitigation Measure Aesthetics-4 would require planting at the base of the retaining walls. Avoidance and Minimization Measure Aesthetics-3 includes guidelines for project landscape planting that would enhance the visual character of the project site. Mitigation Measure Aesthetics-2 would provide guidelines for aesthetic treatment of project features. Impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the project area would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Light and Glare

A conceptual streetlight location plan shows that the project would include 14 new streetlights surrounding the roundabout. Four of the new streetlights would replace the existing four streetlights within the project site in essentially the same locations. The remaining 10 new streetlights would create additional lighting within the project area. The potential exists for these proposed streetlights to cause a substantial amount of point-source lighting, spill over, and atmospheric glow visible from surrounding public viewing locations, resulting in potentially significant impacts to nighttime views.

Mitigation Measure Aesthetics-5 would be implemented to reduce potential project impacts related to lighting. This measure would ensure that all exterior lighting would be shielded and directed downward to reduce point-source lighting created by the proposed streetlights. Impacts from new sources of light with potential to adversely affect nighttime views in the project area would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Temporary (Construction) Impacts

During construction, the project area would be directly visible by a high number of viewers on Main Street, State Route 41, and State Route 1 northbound on- and off-ramps. Anticipated construction equipment includes large vehicles and machinery. Construction would be short-term and is expected to be completed within one year.

Viewers of the project area would be affected at a moderate level during the construction phase of the project. Temporary construction-related impacts

would be considered moderate because construction would require the presence of substantial heavy equipment and machinery, generate construction dust, result in temporary access closures and detours, and require temporary stockpiling of construction materials. Night work has the potential to result in temporary light and glare impacts; however, night work would be limited to utility relocations. Construction-related impacts would be short-term and limited in nature.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following measures would be implemented to protect visual/aesthetic resources:

- **AESTHETICS-1: Retaining Wall Height.** The height of retaining walls shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible during the project design phase.
- **AESTHETICS-2 (Compensatory Mitigation): Aesthetic Treatment.** In coordination with the Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architect, the following aesthetic commitments shall be incorporated during the project's final design phase:
 1. All retaining walls shall be aesthetically treated with texture and/or color consistent with the scenic coastal setting and to reduce graffiti potential.
 2. All splitter islands shall be aesthetically treated with texture and/or color and/or planted.
 3. The center island apron of the roundabout shall be aesthetically treated with texture and/or color.
 4. The center island of the roundabout shall be planted or aesthetically treated with texture and/or color.
 5. All guard rail, pedestrian rail, and safety rail on top of retaining walls shall be colored or darkened.
 6. Project aesthetics incorporated during the project's final design phase shall consider inclusion of Transportation Art and/or Gateway treatments.
 7. Project aesthetics shall be developed with input from community stakeholders, including Native American representatives.
- **AESTHETICS-3: Planting.** Include landscape planting throughout the project site to the maximum extent allowed by safety standards.
- **AESTHETICS-4 (Compensatory Mitigation): Retaining Wall Planting.** Provide sufficient area at the base of all retaining walls to allow for planting and maintenance of shrubs, trees, or vines. Plant along the base of all retaining walls to reduce the perceived visual scale of the walls, complement the scenic coastal setting, and reduce graffiti potential.

- AESTHETICS-5 (Compensatory Mitigation): Lighting.
 1. The point source of all exterior lighting shall be shielded from off-site views.
 2. Light trespass from exterior lights shall be minimized by directing light downward and utilizing cut-off fixtures or shields.

2.1.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Based on the city of Morro Bay Zoning Map, there are no properties zoned for agricultural or forestry use within 1000 feet of the project limits.

The project would not require acquisition of or changes to farmland and is not located in or near forest resources. Temporary construction easements and existing Caltrans construction easements would not be within land designated for agricultural use; therefore, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	No Impact
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	No Impact

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources
c) Conflict with existing zoning, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	No Impact
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	No Impact
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	No Impact

2.1.3 Air Quality

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

Considering the information in the project's Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Memo dated October 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	No Impact
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	No Impact
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	Less Than Significant Impact

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	Less Than Significant Impact

Affected Environment

The proposed project is in the South-Central Coast Air Basin, which includes the counties of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura. The regulatory agency for air quality in San Luis Obispo County is the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District. The County is currently in non-attainment for State Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter - 10 microns (PM₁₀) and Ozone (hourly and 8-hour standards). The County air quality is in attainment for the state standards for Particulate Matter - 2.5 microns (PM_{2.5}), and Carbon Monoxide. The County is in attainment for all federal air quality standards.

The Federal Highway Administration first issued air quality conformity guidelines in 1993, with further amendments over the years. Conformity requirements do not apply to this project since the county of San Luis Obispo is in attainment for all federal ambient air quality standards.

Sensitive receptors in the project vicinity include residents, business owners and employees, and visitors in the coastal communities of Morro Bay.

Environmental Consequences

The project would not result in long-term or cumulative impacts on air quality because it would not alter the capacity or alignment of the existing roadways.

Temporary construction-related activities are expected to generate air pollutants that can be noticeable or cause inconvenience to people in proximity to the work location. The operation of construction equipment would generate exhaust, emissions, and/or odors. Dust would be generated during roadway demolition, excavation, grading, hauling, and various other activities that would disturb soil and sand. Levels of air pollutants would vary each day as construction progresses. It is expected that the air pollutants would have the potential to cause occasional annoyance and inconvenience for nearby residents, business owners, employees, and customers.

Temporary construction-related activities and the operation of construction equipment are not anticipated to cause long-term substantial or adverse impacts on air quality because these actions would occur intermittently, for a relatively short duration, and on a relatively small scale. In addition, the project is expected to help reduce future vehicle emissions by reducing vehicle delay and engine idling.

The potential for the project to result in impacts on air quality would be less than significant. In addition, the project would include Caltrans standard measures and strategies to minimize and control air pollutants generated by construction activities. Below is a list of applicable Caltrans standard measures and strategies for Air Quality, Emission Reduction, Dust Control, and Dust Palliatives that would be implemented during project construction.

Standard Specifications

- Section 10-4 (Water Usage). Provides rules for how contractors must manage water usage during construction, including water rationing compliance. Ensures water is used efficiently for dust suppression, which indirectly supports air quality by reducing particulate emissions.
- Section 10-5 (Dust Control). Specifies dust control responsibilities, including continuous suppression during active work, pre-watering, and proper equipment preparation. This section directly protects sensitive receptors and prevents fugitive dust emissions that could violate air quality standards.
- Section 18 (Dust Palliatives). Details the approved types of dust palliatives (water, chemical suppressants, binders) and the required treatment plan before use. Specifies quality testing, environmental compliance, application methods, and inspection requirements to ensure effective dust suppression and minimized particulate emissions.
- Section 19 (Earthwork). Provides standardized requirements for excavation, grading, compaction, and materials handling. Proper implementation reduces dust, soil disturbance, and pollutant generation. Earthwork activities often contribute to fugitive dust, so the section supports air quality protection through prescriptive handling and compaction standards.
- Sections 21-1 to 21-3 (Erosion Control). Mandates erosion protection measures such as sediment barriers, soil binders, slope protection, and revegetation. Although primarily water-quality related, these controls also reduce airborne particulates and pollutant migration that could affect sensitive receptors.

Standard Special Provisions

- 7-1.02C (Emissions Reductions). Requires contractors to certify compliance with California Air Resources Board emission reduction regulations. This Standard Special Provision ensures construction equipment meets emissions standards and directly supports preventing cumulative increases in criteria pollutants and maintaining consistency with air quality plans.

- 10-5 (Dust Control). Mandates suppression of fugitive dust from earthwork, grading, haul routes, staging areas, and material stockpiles. Directly limits particulate pollution that affects air quality and sensitive receptors. (This Standard Special Provision is part of the Standard Specifications but incorporated into contracts through Standard Special Provision cross-references.)
- 14-9 (Air Pollution Control). Requires contractors to comply with air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes, including California Air Resources Board and local air districts. Covers emissions from:
 - Heavy-duty equipment
 - Hauling and delivery vehicles
 - Materials handling
 - Activities that may generate odors (e.g., asphalt, solvents)
- 14-11 (Hazardous Waste and Contamination). Addresses removal, handling, and mitigation of hazardous substances (e.g., lead, asbestos). Prevents toxic dust, fumes, and odor-producing contaminants from dispersing into the air.
- 18-1 (Dust Palliatives). Provides requirements for soil stabilizers and dust suppressants to control dust and particulate emissions from disturbed surfaces.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The project would include Caltrans' standard measures and strategies to minimize impacts on air quality. Therefore, no avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required.

2.1.4 Biological Resources

Considering the information in the project's Natural Environment Study – Minimal Impacts dated December 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	Less Than Significant Impact
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	No Impact
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	No Impact
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	Less Than Significant Impact

Affected Environment

The biological study area encompasses the project limits plus a 50-foot buffer on all sides except for an 80-foot buffer north and a 90-foot buffer south of the project limits. The biological study area is defined as the area that has potential to be directly, indirectly, temporarily, or permanently impacted by construction and construction-related activities.

Natural Communities

Vegetation communities and land cover types that are present within the biological study area include developed, landscaped, ruderal, Monterey cypress-Monterey pine woodland stands, open water, and perennial rye grass fields. Morro Creek bisects the southern portion of the biological study area and may provide a wildlife movement corridor. Morro Creek may also serve as a migration corridor for aquatic species such as steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) traveling to or from the Pacific Ocean.

Jurisdictional Features

Two potentially jurisdictional features were observed within the biological study area, which are identified as Morro Creek and a potential Coastal Wetland and are discussed in detail below.

Morro Creek

Morro Creek, located in the southern portion of the biological study area, is likely considered jurisdictional by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Regional Water Quality Control Board. The drainage channel contains defined bed and banks, an ordinary high-water mark, riparian vegetation, and a visible connection to the Pacific Ocean. Morro Creek is also shown as a blue line stream on the U.S. Geological Survey Morro Bay North, California 7.5-minute quadrangle. Riparian vegetation associated with Morro Creek is located outside of the biological study area upstream and downstream of the project area.

Although a portion of Morro Creek is located within the biological study area, the project footprint does not include any portion of the creek or the associated riparian corridor, and all ground-disturbing activities would be set back at least 50 feet from the mapped top of bank of Morro Creek.

Coastal Wetland

A vegetation community in the northernmost part of the biological study area, perennial rye grass fields, is dominated by hydrophytic vegetation. Because the biological study area is within the coastal zone, this vegetation community has potential to be considered a coastal wetland, per the California Coastal Commission's definition of wetlands (CCR 13677(b)), which includes one-parameter wetlands that are dominated by a facultative, facultative wetland, or obligate wetland plant species. The perennial rye grass fields are located within the biological study area but outside of the project area.

Special Status Species

After literature review and field surveys completed within the biological study area, three special status plant species were determined to have marginally suitable habitat within the biological study area:

- Cambria morning glory (*Calystegia subacaulis* subspecies *episcopalis*)

- San Luis Obispo owl's clover (*Castilleja densiflora* subspecies *obispoensis*)
- Paniculate tarplant (*Deinandra paniculata*)

Based on the desktop review and field surveys completed as a part of the Natural Environment Study Minimal Impact prepared for the project, 13 animal species in addition to migratory and nesting birds were determined to have suitable habitat within the biological study area. However, no special status species were observed within the biological study area during surveys completed as a part of the Natural Environment Study Minimal Impact. The project has been designed to avoid direct impacts to Morro Creek, which contains critical habitat for South-Central California Coast steelhead Distinct Population Segment. The following species have been identified with suitable habitat within the biological study area:

- Coast Range newt (*Taricha torosa torosa*)
- Northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*)
- Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)
- Northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*)
- White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*)
- Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)
- Purple martin (*Progne subis*)
- Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*)
- Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*)
- California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*)
- Southwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys pallida*)
- South-Central California Coast steelhead Distinct Population Segment (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*)
- Migratory and nesting birds

Environmental Consequences

Although no special status species were observed during appropriately timed field surveys, there is a potential they could enter the area during construction. As a result, direct impacts to special-status species could occur if work crews are unaware of the potential for species to occur on-site and if

materials dangerous to animals are used on-site. Avoidance and Minimization Measures BIO-1 and BIO-3 include an environmental awareness training be presented to all construction personnel and compliance with regulations related to pesticide and herbicide use to reduce potential impacts to special-status animal species on-site. Additional potential impacts to biological resources are described below.

Candidate, Sensitive, and Special Status Species

Amphibians Species

In the unlikely event that Coast Range newt are utilizing the aquatic habitats adjacent to the project site at the time of project implementation, juveniles and adults may disperse through the project site, particularly during the rainy season. Although work in the southern portion of the project area would be limited to road striping within existing paved roadways, individual Coast Range newt could be crushed or trampled by vehicles and equipment if they are present on-site during construction. In addition, there is potential for Coast Range newt to use small mammal burrows for refuge and cover. As such, excavation or crushing of any burrows during construction may result in direct impacts to this species. Implementation of Avoidance and Minimization Measure BIO-3 would require a preconstruction survey for Coast Range newt prior to construction. In addition, Avoidance and Minimization Measures BIO-10 through BIO-13 would further reduce impacts to Morro Creek and potentially suitable habitat for Coast Range newt species. Potential impacts to Coast Range newt would be less than significant.

Although suitable habitat is present within the biological study area for California red-legged frog, based on documented occurrences and local biological knowledge California red-legged frog is not expected to utilize the aquatic habitats within the biological study area. Therefore, the project would not impact this species.

Reptile Species

Construction activities pose risks for direct and indirect impacts to Northern California legless lizard. For example, Northern California legless lizard basking on roadways would be especially vulnerable to vehicle strikes. Northern California legless lizard rely heavily on leaf litter and vegetation for shelter from the elements, protection from predators, and/or reproduction. Heavy equipment and ground-disturbing activities would disturb existing leaf litter, which may result in injury or death of the inhabitants or exclusion by the removal of a vital resource. Vegetation may also be removed as a result of construction activities; vegetation provides critical habitat for prey species of Northern California legless lizard. Avoidance and Minimization Measure BIO-4 would be implemented for the project and would require a preconstruction survey for this species. Potential impacts to Northern California legless lizard would be less than significant.

Although suitable habitat is present within the biological study area for southwestern pond turtles, based on documented occurrences and local biological knowledge, southwestern pond turtles are not expected to utilize the aquatic habitats within the biological study area. Therefore, the project would not impact this species.

Invertebrate Species

Direct impacts to nesting Crotch's bumble bee are most likely to occur during the flight season, generally March 1 to September 30, and to overwintering queens, from October 1 through February 28. Direct and indirect impacts may occur if grading and vegetation removal occur during the flight season. These actions can destroy nests or overwintering queens and remove foraging habitat that may lead to nest destruction or failure. Avoidance and Minimization Measure BIO-5 would be implemented for the project and includes a requirement for a focused Crotch's bumble bee survey if work would occur during the flight period. Potential impacts to Crotch's bumble bee would be less than significant.

Fish Species

The southerly limit of the proposed retaining wall is approximately 250 feet north of the mapped top of bank of Morro Creek. In addition, work within the southern portion of the project area would be limited to activities within the existing paved areas such as road striping. As such, no impacts to South-Central California Coast steelhead would occur because no impacts to Morro Creek would occur.

Mammal Species

Direct impacts to Townsend's big-eared bat are not expected to occur because potential roost sites are not expected to be impacted by the project. Indirect impacts may occur due to short-term construction activities in the vicinity of roosts, which may temporarily deter use of the area by bats. Avoidance and Minimization Measure BIO-6 would be implemented for the project and includes a bat emergence survey prior to the start of work. Potential impacts to Townsend's big-eared bat would be less than significant.

Nesting and Migratory Bird Species

Although no special status bird species or active nests were observed during surveys, nesting and foraging habitat for a variety of special status and migratory bird species occurs throughout the biological study area. Direct impacts to nesting birds could result if removal of vegetation occurs during the nesting season (February 1–September 1). Direct impacts to special-status and migratory birds include injury or mortality of nesting birds, loss of active nests, and/or harassment that could alter nesting behaviors. Indirect impacts could also result from noise and disturbance associated with construction during the nesting season, which could alter nesting behaviors. Implementation of Avoidance and Minimization Measures BIO-7 through BIO-

9 would protect nesting birds by requiring pre-construction surveys, the proper timing of vegetation removal, active nest buffers, tree removal planning, and protections for trees. Potential impacts to nesting and migratory birds would be less than significant.

Riparian Habitat and Other Sensitive Natural Communities

The project has been designed to avoid direct impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities, including Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas. Minor indirect impacts could occur from construction activities occurring in close proximity to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas, including erosion and sedimentation. Proposed ground-disturbing activities are located 50 feet away from the mapped top of bank of Morro Creek and 25 feet away from the mapped potential coastal wetland in accordance with policies from “Plan Morro Bay”.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures BIO-10 through BIO-13 would be implemented to further protect mapped Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas within the biological study area. Potential impacts to sensitive natural communities would be less than significant.

State and Federally Protected Wetlands

The project has been designed to avoid direct impacts to the potential coastal wetland identified within the biological study area. Minor indirect impacts could include erosion and sedimentation resulting from construction activities occurring in proximity to the potential coastal wetland. Avoidance and Minimization Measures BIO-10 through BIO-13 would be implemented to provide additional protection to the potential coastal wetland adjacent to the project area. Impacts to wetlands would be less than significant.

Wildlife Movement and Migratory Corridors

Morro Creek serves as the main corridor for wildlife movement within the biological study area. The project has been designed to avoid direct impacts to Morro Creek. Therefore, this project would not affect any migratory wildlife corridors or interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species. This project would not impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites and there would be no impact.

Local Policies and Ordinances

“Plan Morro Bay” contains policies in the Conservation Element to protect biological resources. The project has been designed to protect Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas through development setbacks from Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas and buffers of a sufficient width to protect Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas. The project footprint is buffered 50 feet from the mapped top of bank of Morro Creek, and 25 feet from the potential coastal wetland identified north of the project area. The

project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Adopted Conservation Plans

Since the project site is not within or adjacent to the boundaries of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan, the project would not conflict with the provisions of any said plans. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following avoidance and minimization measures would be implemented to further protect biological resources:

- BIO-1: Environmental Awareness Training. An environmental awareness training shall be presented to all construction personnel by a qualified biologist prior to the start of any project activities. The training shall include color photographs and a description of the ecology of all special-status species known or with potential to occur, as well as other sensitive resources requiring avoidance during construction. The training shall also include a description of protection measures required by discretionary permits, an overview of the federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act, and implications of noncompliance with these regulations. This shall include an overview of the required avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures. A sign-in sheet with the name and signature of the qualified biologist who presented the training, and the names and signatures of the environmental awareness trainees shall be kept. A fact sheet conveying the information provided in the environmental awareness training shall be provided to all project personnel.
- BIO-2: Pesticides and Herbicides. The use of pesticides (including rodenticides) and herbicides on the property shall be in compliance with all federal, State, and local regulations to avoid primary and secondary poisoning of sensitive species that may be using the project site.
- BIO-3: Coast Range Newt. A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-activity survey within 100 feet of suitable habitat for Coast Range newt (i.e. Morro Creek) immediately prior to the start of initial ground disturbance to ensure that this species is not present within proposed work areas. If Coast Range newt are found during preconstruction surveys, they shall be allowed to leave the work area of their own volition or be hand captured and relocated to suitable habitat outside of the area of impact. To minimize the potential for impacts to dispersing Coast Range newt, work within 100 feet of aquatic habitat shall occur during dry conditions, as feasible. If work within 100 feet of aquatic habitat is scheduled to start during the typical rainy season (October–April), when Coast Range newt

are most likely to be dispersing through upland habitat, a follow-up survey shall be conducted following any rain event of 0.5 inch or greater prior to the start of work for the day. During this survey, all vehicles, equipment, and materials staged on-site overnight shall be inspected. If Coast Range newt are found within the work area, they shall be allowed to leave on its own volition or be hand captured and relocated to suitable habitat outside of the area of impact.

- BIO-4: Northern California Legless Lizard. A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey within suitable habitat for Northern California legless lizard (i.e., within sandy or loose loamy soils, in leaf litter, under bushes, rocks, or detritus like logs and driftwood) immediately prior to the start of initial ground disturbance to ensure Northern California legless lizard are not present within proposed work areas. During the survey, the biologist shall gently disturb or rake the scrub understory and upper layers of duff to uncover or rouse Northern California legless lizards. If Northern California legless lizard are found during preconstruction surveys, they shall be allowed to leave the work area of their own volition or be hand captured and relocated to suitable habitat outside of the area of impact.
- BIO-5: Crotch's Bumble Bee. If work is planned to occur during the flying period of March 1 to September 30, a qualified biologist shall survey for Crotch's bumble bee within the work area 2 weeks prior to the start of initial ground disturbance. If a Crotch's bumble bee nest is observed, no work shall occur within 50 feet of the nest until it is no longer active. If Crotch's bumble bee is found during the active spring and summer period, or presence is unknown (e.g., if a survey during the active period was not completed) and work is planned between October 1 to February 28, potential overwintering habitat shall be avoided by a minimum of 50 feet. If potential overwintering habitat cannot be avoided, Caltrans shall coordinate with the appropriate resource agencies for guidance to implement project activities and avoid take or proceed with an Incidental Take Permit.
- BIO-6: Townsend's Big-Eared Bat. Prior to the start of work, a qualified biologist shall conduct an emergence survey of existing pine, Monterey cypress, and eucalyptus trees within and adjacent to the project site to determine if roosting bats are present. If a colony of bats is found roosting, further surveys shall be conducted sufficiently to determine the species present and the type of roost (day, night, maternity, etc.). If Townsend's big-eared bat is determined to be roosting on or adjacent to the project site, the following shall be implemented as appropriate:
 1. If a day or night roosting site is located on-site or within 50 feet of the project site, avoidance buffers shall be established/developed as determined by a qualified biologist dependent on the species as well

as the location of the roost in relation to the type of project activities occurring. If the day or night roost is within the area of impact, and the bats are not part of an active maternity colony, exclusion measures may be implemented, in close coordination with a qualified biologist and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. A plan shall be developed that includes the methodology for excluding roosting bats.

2. If an active maternity roost for Townsend's big-eared bat is on-site or within 100 feet of the project site, an avoidance buffer shall be established as determined by a qualified biologist. No construction activities (including parking and staging) shall be permitted within the avoidance buffer during the rearing season (typically March–September).
- BIO-7: Vegetation Removal Timing. Prior to construction, vegetation removal shall be scheduled to occur from September 2 to January 31, outside of the typical nesting bird season, as feasible, to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds. If vegetation removal or other construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential nesting bird habitat during the nesting season (February 1–September 1), a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than 10 calendar days prior to construction. If an active nest is found, Caltrans shall implement an appropriate buffer or monitoring strategy based on the habits and needs of the species. The buffer area or monitoring strategy shall be implemented until a qualified biologist has determined that juveniles have fledged, or nesting activity has otherwise ceased.
 - BIO-8: Active Bird Nests. During construction, active bird nests shall not be disturbed and eggs or young of bird species covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code shall not be killed, destroyed, injured, or harassed at any time.
 - BIO-9: Tree Removal. Trees to be removed shall be noted on design plans. Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing shall be installed around the dripline of trees to be protected within project limits.
 - BIO-10: Jurisdictional Waters. The following general measures would be implemented to further minimize impacts to jurisdictional waters during active construction:
 1. The use of heavy equipment and vehicles shall stay within the project limits and defined staging areas/access points. The boundaries of each work area shall be clearly defined and marked with high-visibility fencing. No work shall occur outside these limits.
 2. Project plans, drawings, and specifications shall show the boundaries of all jurisdictional waters and the location of erosion and sediment

controls, delineation of construction limits, and other pertinent measures to ensure the protection of jurisdictional waters.

3. Staging of equipment and materials shall occur in designated areas with appropriate demarcation and perimeter controls. No staging areas shall be located within 100 feet of jurisdictional waters.
 4. Secondary containment, such as drip pans, shall be used to prevent leaks and spills of potential contaminants.
 5. Washing of concrete, paint, or equipment and refueling and maintenance of equipment shall occur only in designated staging areas. These activities shall occur at a minimum of 100 feet from jurisdictional waters. Sandbags and/or absorbent pads and spill control kits shall always be available on-site to clean up and contain fuel spills and other contaminants.
 6. Construction equipment shall be inspected by the operator daily to ensure that equipment is in good working order and no fuel or lubricant leaks are present.
 7. An emergency response spill kit shall be kept on-site during construction for prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All project personnel shall be informed of the importance of preventing spills and the appropriate measures to take should an accidental spill occur.
 8. Gravel bags, if used, shall be filled only with clean gravel.
 9. After completion of the project's construction, all protective fencing/flagging used to delineate sensitive biological resources shall be removed from the project area and disposed of in appropriate waste receptacles or reused.
- BIO-11: Drainages and Other Aquatic Resources. The measures would be implemented to further protect drainages and aquatic resources on-site:
 1. To prevent erosion and sedimentation into drainages during construction, an erosion and sedimentation control plan shall be developed and implemented. It shall outline Best Management Practices for short-term, temporary stabilization. Acceptable stabilization methods include the use of weed-free, natural fiber (i.e., non-monofilament) rolls, jute or coir netting, and/or other industry standards. Erosion control devices shall be installed and maintained for the duration of the project. Best Management Practices shall be installed and maintained for the duration of the project.
 2. Construction activity within 100 feet of drainages shall only occur when appropriate Best Management Practices are in place to protect aquatic features from indirect impacts.

3. The project area would be located outside of the limits of potentially jurisdictional areas. No access routes, equipment or materials staging, work areas, or vegetation removal would occur within potentially jurisdictional areas.
- BIO-12: Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan. Prior to commencement of work activities, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan shall be prepared, which should include Best Management Practices to be implemented and monitored prior to and during construction. The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan shall include a Construction Site Monitoring Program that presents procedures and methods related to the visual monitoring, sampling, and analysis plans for non-visible pollutants, sediment and turbidity, and pH.
 - BIO-13: Morro Creek. The following recommendations have been provided to protect Morro Creek during active construction:
 1. No debris, soil, silt, sand, slash, sawdust, rubbish, cement or concrete, oil or petroleum products, or other organic or earthen material from any construction or associated activity of whatever nature shall be allowed to enter into or be placed where it may be washed by rainfall or runoff into Morro Creek.
 2. A staging area for equipment and vehicle fueling and storage shall be designated at least 100 feet away from Morro Creek, in a location where fluids cannot flow into waterways.
 - BIO-14: Vegetation Removal and Disposal. During vegetation removal, the existing vegetation shall be scraped from the ground surface and removed from the project site. The removed vegetation shall be hauled to and deposited at an established landfill.
 - BIO-15: Revegetation and Hydroseeding. Upon completion of finish grading, all disturbed soil surfaces would be hydro-seeded with a seed mix containing locally occurring native forbs and shrubs. Invasive species shall not be included on any landscaping plans associated with this project.
 - BIO-16: Eucalyptus and Acacia. Immediately after felling a eucalyptus or acacia tree (within two to three minutes), a qualified herbicide applicator would apply a 50 percent solution of glyphosate to the exposed cambium of the stump. The glyphosate application would inhibit stump sprouting and regeneration of the invasive trees.

2.1.5 Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the project's Historic Property Survey Report dated January 2026, Archaeological Survey Report dated June 2017, Extended Phase I Report dated January 2026, and Environmentally Sensitive

Area Action Plan dated January 2026 the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	Less Than Significant Impact

Affected Environment

Records Search

Based on the results of archival research, two previously documented archaeological resources are within the project's Area of Potential Effects. They are listed as CA-SLO-165 and CA-SLO-2222. CA-SLO-165 is an archaeological property, eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D. CA-SLO-2222 remains unevaluated for listing; however, for the purposes of this project only, Caltrans considers the site as an archaeological property, eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D.

Area of Potential Effects

The Area of Potential Effects for the project was established by Caltrans in accordance with Section 106 Programmatic Agreement Stipulation 8.A. The Area of Potential Effects consists of all right-of-way for the project, all areas of ground disturbance, and the entire boundaries of CA-SLO-165 and CA-SLO-2222. The project's area of direct impact includes all areas that would be subject to either temporary or permanent physical disturbance.

Field Survey Results

A pedestrian survey of the Area of Potential Effects revealed the presence of archaeological sites CA-SLO-165 and CA-SLO-2222. During Extended Phase I studies at CA-SLO-165, two surface transect units tested positive for intact archaeological deposits below three feet. The remaining units were negative for archaeological deposits. The positive locations are outside of the project's footprint. CA-SLO-2222 was not subject to subsurface investigations because the site is attested to be approximately seven feet below the surface, and no

project impacts are proposed at that depth within this area. Two excavated sites closest to CA-SLO-2222 did not yield intact archaeological deposits.

Native American Consultation

A request to the California Native American Heritage Commission to elicit pertinent cultural resource information available in the Sacred Lands File returned positive results for cultural resources and provided a list of Native American Tribes and individuals who may have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area.

Per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and as required under California Environmental Quality Act, specifically Public Resource Code Section 21080.3.1 and Chapter 532 Statutes of 2014 (in other words, Assembly Bill 52), Caltrans consulted with pertinent Native American contacts to identify potential Native American resources within the Area of Potential Effects. These contacts include representatives of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, Tule River Indian Tribe, *yak tityu tityu yak tilhini* (ytt) Northern Chumash Tribe of San Luis Obispo County and Region, Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians, San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council, Chumash Council of Bakersfield, Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, Xolon Salinan Tribe, Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties, and Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and San Benito counties. Chapter 3 of this document provides additional detail regarding Native American consultation efforts.

Environmental Consequences

The majority of the project's Area of Potential Effects would be subject to physical disturbance between one and three feet below current grade. Deeper excavations would be required for retaining walls and utilities. The depth of impacts per project element is summarized in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Summary of Proposed Construction Activities

Proposed Construction	Maximum Depth of Excavation (feet)	Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)
Roadway and Pavement	2	Vertical ESA begins at 2 feet
Lighting (outside ESA)	3	No ESAs
Lighting (inside ESA)	3	Vertical ESA begins at 3 feet
Retaining Walls	20	No ESAs
Utilities	6	No ESAs

Historic and Archaeological Resources

The development of State Route 1, State Route 41, Main Street, and the project intersections undoubtedly resulted in extensive ground disturbance within and adjacent to the mapped boundaries of CA-SLO-165 and CA-SLO-2222. Even though most of the Area of Potential Effects has been disturbed by previous construction, archaeological sensitivity within the area is moderate. No intact cultural deposits are present within the project's area of direct impacts. The project would not adversely affect the two archaeological properties since no excavation below the established cultural environmental sensitive areas would occur within the boundaries of the two archaeological properties. Avoidance and Minimization Measure Cultural-1 would be included to implement the project's Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan. The plan would establish environmentally sensitive areas within the boundaries of both archaeological properties to further protect archaeological resources, in accordance with Stipulation X.B.1.a of the 2024 Section 106 Programmatic Agreement. A horizontal environmentally sensitive area would be established at the limits of the project's area of direct impacts with CA-SLO-165. Fencing would be placed at the pavement limits to isolate the horizontal environmentally sensitive area. Vertical environmentally sensitive areas would be within site boundaries of CA-SLO-165 and CA-SLO-2222, beginning at two feet below the road surface. No project activities would be permitted within the environmentally sensitive area.

As part of the Native American Consultation for the project, tribal concerns regarding potential cultural resources in the Area of Potential Effects were identified. To address these concerns identified under Section 106 and Assembly Bill 52 and to further minimize concerns regarding potential impacts to potential cultural resources, the project would implement Avoidance and Minimization Measure Cultural Resources-2. This would require archaeological and Native American construction monitoring during ground-disturbing activities in areas sensitive for unknown buried cultural resources. Furthermore, regulatory requirements and Caltrans Standard Specifications for accidental discovery and recovery measures, discussed below, would be included. Therefore, impacts resulting in changes to the significance of historical and cultural resources would be less than significant.

Human Remains

Since excavation is required, the project has the potential to uncover human remains during construction. This is not expected, however, because disturbance is not expected to reach intact deposit and minimization measure Cultural-1 would be implemented to further ensure that no work would be conducted below the cultural environmentally sensitive areas. As a standard construction practice, regulatory requirements and Caltrans Standard Specifications for accidental discovery and recovery measures would be included to ensure the appropriate and respectful disposition of any unexpected discovery. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Caltrans Standard Specifications and State Regulations

Caltrans Standard Specification Section 14-2.03A dealing with the discovery of unanticipated cultural materials and human remains would apply to the project. If archaeological resources are discovered within or near construction limits, the specification requires that the resources not be disturbed and all work within a 60-foot radius of the discovery is immediately stopped to secure the area. Also, the project's Resident Engineer would be notified, and Caltrans would investigate the discovery. Archaeological resources would not be removed or taken from the job site. Work would not resume within the radius of discovery until authorized by Caltrans District 5 Archaeologist. If required, resources would be furnished to assist in the investigation or recovery of archaeological resources.

If human remains are discovered, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall stop in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner be contacted. If the remains are thought by the coroner to be Native American, the coroner would notify the California Native American Heritage Commission, who, pursuant to Public Resource Code Section 5097.98, would then notify the most likely descendent. At this time, the person who discovered the remains would be contact the project's Resident Engineer who would in turn notify the Caltrans District 5 Cultural Resources Branch so that they may work with the most likely descendent on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of Public Resource Code Section 5097.98 would be followed as applicable.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following measures would be implemented to avoid and further reduce potential project impacts to cultural resources:

- CULTURAL-1: An Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan has been prepared for this project. The project contractor shall adhere to the requirements of this plan, which includes:
 - Horizontal and vertical environmentally sensitive areas for CA-SLO-165 at the limits of the area of direct impacts. Fencing shall be placed at the pavement limits to isolate the horizontal environmentally sensitive area. The vertical environmentally sensitive area shall be within the site boundary of CA-SLO-165 beginning at two feet below the roadway and pavement surface and three feet below grade for lighting. No project activities shall be permitted within the environmentally sensitive area.
 - Vertical environmentally sensitive area for CA-SLO-2222 at the limits of the area of direct impacts. The vertical environmentally sensitive area shall be within the site boundary of CA-SLO-2222 beginning at three feet below the roadway and pavement surface and three feet

below grade for lighting. No project activities shall be permitted within the environmentally sensitive area.

- Methods for environmentally sensitive area delineation and installation of temporary fencing.
- General archaeological and Native American monitoring procedures during ground-disturbing activities associated with the project.
- Protocol for inadvertent discoveries of potentially significant cultural materials from known or unidentified resources.
- Treatment of human remains if they were to be discovered during the course of the project.
- Responsible parties for all aspects of the action plan.
- **CULTURAL-2:** Initial ground-disturbing activities shall be monitored by a qualified archaeologist and representative of a local Tribal group. Archaeological monitoring shall be conducted by individuals who meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology, or by personnel under the direct supervision of such qualified professionals. The entire project area, including where construction begin and end signs will be located, shall be monitored by a qualified archaeologist and Native American monitor during initial ground disturbance. The selection of tribal monitors shall be decided through consultation. All initial ground disturbance shall be monitored in the entirety of the Area of Potential Effect. Specific details shall be outlined in the project's Monitoring Plan, which shall be prepared prior to construction.

2.1.6 Energy

Considering the information in the project's Visual Impact Assessment dated January 2026, Climate Change Report dated May 2026, and Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Report dated October 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Energy
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	No Impact

Affected Environment

The project is within the city of Morro Bay in the county of San Luis Obispo.

California Green Building Standards Code

All roadway modernization projects undertaken by Caltrans that include public lighting infrastructure must comply with the stringent energy-efficiency standards of the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen/Title 24). Projects must adhere to maximum Lighting Power Density caps determined by the specific lighting zone (LZ) or application area (e.g., walkways, roadways, or parking hardscapes). Morro Bay generally falls under rural-suburban or urban transitional lighting zones (typically LZ2 or LZ3), which limit the total wattage allowed per square foot or linear foot.

To minimize light at night and eliminate energy waste, Title 24 mandates specific automated control systems for outdoor poles. All outdoor electroliers must be automatically controlled by a photocontrol, astronomical time-switch, or a combination control system to ensure lights automatically turn off when sufficient daylight is available. Systems must incorporate automatic time-based scheduling. Depending on the specific mounting height and application, certain pedestrian or hardscape-adjacent electroliers may require motion sensors that automatically dim or brighten the fixtures (e.g., dropping power by 50 percent to 90 percent when no movement is detected).

Under Title 24 (Part 11), outdoor luminaires emitting 6,200 lumens or greater must comply with strict backlight, uplight, and glare ratings. Shielding & Light Trespass: fixtures must be designed and pointed in a direction to prevent unwanted light spillage onto adjacent properties (light trespass) and minimize night-sky pollution. Furthermore, all newly installed electrolier luminaires must meet stringent minimum lumens-per-watt thresholds.

Plan Morro Bay

“Plan Morro Bay” dictates local land use, resource conservation, and infrastructure development. It includes policies prioritizing energy efficiency and supporting the integration of renewable energy systems (such as major battery energy storage and grid-support infrastructure tied to regional wind and solar generation). Under the Community Well-Being Element (Policy CW-1.1), municipal operations and street layouts incorporate standards that prevent crime through environmental design, which mandates adequate, energy-efficient street lighting and visibility while managing light pollution.

Environmental Consequences

Caltrans incorporates energy efficiency, conservation, and climate change measures into transportation planning, project development, design, operations, maintenance, facilities, fleets, equipment, and buildings to minimize the use of fuel supplies and energy resources and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The project would not alter existing vehicle capacity or the roadway alignments and, therefore, would not alter existing energy use on the project roadways. However, project construction would require the use of energy resources. Construction of the project is necessary to convert the two existing intersections into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane. New streetlights (14 electroliers) would be installed as part of the project. The four existing streetlights within the project site would essentially be replaced, resulting in a total of 10 new streetlights in the area. Though energy would be required to construct and operate the project, the use of energy would not be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary. Impacts associated with wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation would be less than significant.

The project would comply with the requirements of CALGreen/Title 24 and would not conflict with any “Plan Morro Bay” policies. Energy used for the project would not alter or conflict with any state, regional, or local plans for energy management. No impacts would result from the project.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required.

2.1.7 Geology and Soils

Considering the information in the project’s Paleontological Identification Report dated December 2026 and Storm Water Data Report dated September 2026, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	Less Than Significant Impact
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	Less Than Significant Impact
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	Less Than Significant Impact
iv) Landslides?	Less Than Significant Impact

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	Less Than Significant Impact
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	No Impact
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	No Impact
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	Less Than Significant Impact

Affected Environment

According to the San Luis Obispo County Land Use View database, the project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard Zone, and there are no mapped active faults crossing or adjacent to the project site. The nearest mapped potentially capable fault is located approximately 1.3 miles east of the project site. The nearest mapped active fault to the project site is the San Andreas Fault, approximately 50 miles to the east. However, as is most of California, the Central Coast is a seismically active region, prone to earthquakes and ground shaking.

Based on the geotechnical investigations conducted for the project, soils at the project site would have a moderate to low susceptibility to liquefaction. The potential for liquefaction is higher where soils are sandy, silty, or gravelly soils. Native soils at the project site consist largely of sandy and gravelly alluvium derived from sedimentary rock; however, nonnative artificial fill soils that were installed to support the existing State Route 1 overpass cover most of the native soil in the project area.

The extent of ground shrinking and swelling is influenced by the amount and kind of clay in the soil. The project site is not underlain by soils containing clay or clay materials; therefore, soils in the project area have low shrink/swell potential.

Landslides typically occur in areas with steep slopes. The topography within the project area is relatively flat to slightly sloping. As such, there is low potential for landslides at the project site.

Native surficial deposits within the project site have a low to high potential for supporting paleontological resources; however, artificial fill, which underlies the project area to a depth of 20 feet, is considered to have a low potential for supporting paleontological resources. Holocene deposits less than five feet below the ground surface are given a low paleontological sensitivity, whereas deeper sediments are assumed to be older and are given a high paleontological sensitivity. Although artificial fill may contain fossils transported from its source, those fossils would lack stratigraphic context and origin and would have limited scientific and educational value.

Environmental Consequences

Seismic Activity and Fault Rupture

The project is located in a seismically active area on a project site with a low to moderate risk of liquefaction. Expansive soils are not known to be present in the project area. The Caltrans Office of Earthquake Engineering is responsible for assessing the seismic hazard for Caltrans projects, and the project would be designed to meet Caltrans's stringent seismic requirements.

Based on the conditions at the site, the potential for impacts related to surface ground rupture of known earthquake faults would be less than significant. The project site may be subject to strong seismic ground shaking within the lifetime of the proposed components; however, no structures for habitation, occupiable buildings, or other structures that could result in a significant safety risk (e.g., bridges, etc.) are proposed. Additionally, the project would comply with the most current Caltrans procedures and design criteria regarding seismic design to minimize any adverse effects related to seismic ground shaking. Earthwork would be performed in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 19 (Earthwork), which requires standardized measures related to compacted fill, over excavation, re-compaction, and retaining walls, among other requirements. Adherence to Caltrans Standard Specifications and other applicable engineering standards would minimize the risk of loss, injury, or death associated with seismic ground shaking. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Soil Erosion and Loss of Topsoil

Development of the project would require earthmoving activities and disturbance within the project area. The project would require approximately five acres of ground disturbance, including two acres of grubbing activities and 25,000 cubic yards of cut and 21,000 cubic yards of fill. Approximately 4,000 cubic yards of existing artificial fill soil would be hauled off-site for retaining wall and ramp construction, and all other cut and fill would be balanced on-site. Roadway realignment, intersection improvements, bike and

pedestrian improvements, and frontage improvements would create additional impervious surface area. The project would require disturbance of approximately 5.82 acres. According to the project's Storm Water Data Report (September 2026), the project would result in 0.21 acres (9,199 square feet) of new impervious area.

Proposed ground disturbance has the potential to increase erosion and loss of topsoil at the project site that could run off into the surrounding areas. The project would disturb more than one acre of soils and would be required to comply with Regional Water Quality Control Board General Construction Permit requirements, including preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Prevention Pollution Plan with Best Management Practices to reduce erosive runoff during project construction. The plan would be prepared by a civil engineer to address both temporary and long-term sedimentation and erosion impacts. Based on required compliance with the Regional Water Quality Control Board, potential impacts associated with substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil would be less than significant.

Unstable Geologic Units and Soils

The project site is located in an area with low potential for landslide and moderate potential for liquefaction potential to occur. According to the U.S. Geological Survey Areas of Land Subsidence in California Map, the project site is not located in an area with known land subsidence. The project would not result in deep cuts into existing slopes, substantial changes to the existing topography of the project site or otherwise exacerbate the potential for landslides to occur on or off site. In addition, the project does not propose habitable structures that would put people at risk in the event of a landslide. Therefore, there would be no impacts associated with landslides. The project would be required to be constructed in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications to adequately withstand and minimize risk associated with potential ground-failure events; therefore, potential impacts related to ground failure would be less than significant.

Expansive Soils

Soils at the project site do not contain clay components and have low potential for soil expansion to occur. Adherence to Caltrans Standard Specifications and implementation of standard measures would ensure the project would not create risks to life or property as a result of development on expansive soils. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Septic Tanks and Alternative Wastewater Disposal Systems

The project consists of converting the two existing intersections into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane and does not include installation of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Portable restrooms would be provided for workers during construction, and no

wastewater facilities would be required by the project during the operational phase. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Paleontological Resources

The project could result in ground disturbance to depths as great as 20 feet below ground surface for installation of retaining wall foundations. As-built information for the original construction of State Route 1 through the project limits indicates that proposed retaining wall locations are primarily underlain by artificial fill with low paleontological sensitivity. If native soils are encountered during installation of retaining wall foundations, excavation would reach only the uppermost portion of the surficial deposits (Qa), which also have a low paleontological sensitivity. Because excavation is unlikely to reach geologic units with high paleontological sensitivity, the project is not anticipated to result in adverse effects to paleontological resources.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required.

2.1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Considering the information in the Climate Change Report dated May 2026 and Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Report dated October 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	No Impact

Affected Environment

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for documenting greenhouse gas emissions nationwide; the California Air Resources Board does so for the state.

The project area is located within the Regional Transportation Plan prepared by the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments. The Regional Transportation Plan identifies plans and strategies to increase alternative forms of travel such as biking, walking, and public transportation to help meet greenhouse gas emission reduction goals as well as improve public accessibility, safety, and health.

The proposed project is in an urban area of San Luis Obispo County with a well-developed road and street network and is considered a gateway into the city of Morro Bay. The routes in the project area are heavily used during peak hours. Traffic in the region consists primarily of local residents and local business operations, with tourist traffic typically at its highest during the weekends and holidays. Tourist visitation is particularly high during the summer months. Within the project area, State Route 1 is a four-lane divided highway and State Route 41 is a conventional two-lane road. Main Street is also a conventional two-lane road. As State Route 41 and Main Street intersect, both roads expand into three lanes, with the third lane serving as a dedicated right- or left-turn lane at each controlled stop. The State Route 1 off-ramp is a single lane exit that also expands into two lanes at the intersection with State Route 41. The northbound State Route 1 on-ramp consists of a single lane for traffic traveling north.

Environmental Consequences

The project would convert two existing intersections into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane. The project would not alter the existing highway capacity or alignment and would not alter current vehicle miles traveled in the area. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to alter existing operational greenhouse gas emissions for the region or conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the region.

Construction greenhouse gas emissions would result from material processing and transportation, onsite construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. These emissions would be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases. The total estimated greenhouse gas emissions for project construction are about 652 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions over a construction period of approximately 18 months. This estimate is based on assumptions made using the Roadway Construction Emissions Model during the environmental planning phase of the project and is considered an estimate of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions based on limited data inputs and default modeling values for a roadway construction.

Even though construction greenhouse gas emissions are produced for only a short time, they have long-term effects in the atmosphere, so cannot be considered temporary in the same way as criteria pollutants that subside after construction is completed. While the project would generate greenhouse gas emissions as a result of construction activities, it is not anticipated to substantially contribute to the regional emission level. In addition, the conversion two intersections to a roundabout would help offset emissions that would otherwise have been generated by vehicle delay and engine idling.

All construction contracts include Caltrans Standard Specifications related to air quality. Also, a traffic control plan and construction staging plan would be developed to guide traffic and maximize traffic efficiency while considering safety and construction needs. Traffic efficiency, in this case, refers to timing traffic delays during times of day when there are lower numbers of travelers and minimizing the time that traffic is stopped. Reducing vehicle idling would help minimize greenhouse gas emissions produced by stopped traffic. Standard Specification Section 12, Temporary Traffic Control, would guide implementation of the traffic control plan.

The use of on-road heavy-duty trucks that meet the California Air Resource Board's 2007 or cleaner certification standard for on-road heavy-duty diesel engines and compliance with the State On-Road Regulation would work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions during construction. Standard Specification Section 7-1.02C, Emissions Reduction, and Construction Manual Section 7-1.04A (1), Air Quality, require California Air Resource Board standards for on-road heavy-duty trucks during construction and compliance with State regulations for emissions. Conservation of water during construction and prioritizing the use of recycled water for construction needs would help to reduce construction-related emissions. This would be addressed by implementation of Standard Specification Section 10-4, Water Usage.

According to the Caltrans Standard Specifications, idling time for lane closure during construction would be limited to ten minutes in each direction. In addition, the contractor would comply with all South Coast Air Quality Management District rules, ordinances, and regulations regarding air quality restrictions. The project would comply with San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District Rule 420, Cutback Asphalt Paving Materials, which addresses emissions generated by the manufacture, application, and sale of cutback and emulsified asphalt materials for the paving, construction, and maintenance of asphalt surfaces, thus improving pavement life.

The project would implement landscaping as determined during the final design in coordination with San Luis Obispo Council of Governments, city of Morro Bay, and the Caltrans District Landscape Architect. This landscaping would help offset any potential carbon dioxide emissions increase. Furthermore, the measures would also be implemented in the project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project. Measures would include training for construction employees on methods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to construction. The contractor would be required to maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition and to use right sized equipment for the job. Idling time for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment would be limited to five minutes when not used in active operations. Consequently, construction impacts associated with greenhouse gas emissions would be less than significant.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following avoidance and minimization measures would be implemented to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the project:

- GHG-1: Supplement existing construction environmental training with information on methods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to construction. This information shall be shared using a handout. The information in the handout should include, but is not limited to:
 - Scheduling deliveries outside of peak morning and evening commute hours.
 - Using available alternative fuels such as renewable diesel for construction equipment.
 - Using available alternative solar-powered equipment.
 - Using portable power stations instead of portable electric generators.
 - Maximizing the use of recycled materials in the project construction to the extent feasible.
- GHG-2: Maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition and use right sized equipment for the job.
- GHG-3: When feasible, limit idling to five minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment when not used in active operations.

2.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Considering the information in the project's Phase I Initial Site Assessment dated December 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	Less Than Significant Impact

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	Less Than Significant Impact
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	Less Than Significant Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	No Impact
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	Less Than Significant Impact
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	No Impact

Affected Environment

Hazardous Materials/Waste

Hazardous Material Sites

Based on a query of the California Department of Toxic Substances Control's EnviroStor database and State Water Board's GeoTracker database, there are no active hazardous waste cleanup sites located within or adjacent to the project site. However, according to the GeoTracker database, there are three inactive leaking underground storage tank cleanup sites located adjacent to the project area, to the east of Main Street. The potential contaminant of concern at these sites is gasoline, and these cases have been closed since 1998, 2007, and 2008. Two sites located adjacent to the project were identified as having use limitations within the project areas that are relevant to the project. They are listed as Chevron Station 9-1928 and Shell Service Station.

The Chevron Station 9-1928 (T0607926253) is listed as a leaking underground storage tank Cleanup Site with a Cleanup Status of "Completed

– case closed as of 7/13/2007.” The site directly borders the project area and is located at 1798 Main Street at the southeast corner of the State Route 41 and Main Street intersection. The property is currently operating as a USA gas station. Residual soil and groundwater contamination still underlies the site and could pose an unacceptable risk under certain site redevelopment activities such as site grading, excavation, or dewatering. The site activity and use limitations require notification to Central Coast Water Board, Environmental Health and Safety, and the appropriate local planning and building departments prior to any changes in land use, grading activities, excavation, or dewatering. This notification should include a statement that residual soil and groundwater contamination underlie the property and may underlie nearby properties, and a description of the mitigation actions necessary (if any) to ensure that any possibly contaminated soils or groundwater brought to the surface by these activities are managed appropriately.

The Shell Service Station (T0607900101) is listed as a Leaking Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Site with a Cleanup Status of “Completed – case closed as of 9/26/2008.” The site directly borders the project area and is located at 1840 Main Street at the northeast corner of the Main Street/State Route 41 intersection. The property is currently operating as Morro Bay U-Haul and Propane. Residual soil and groundwater contamination still underlie the site and could pose an unacceptable risk under certain site redevelopment activities such as site grading, excavation, or dewatering. The site activity and use limitations require notification to Central Coast Water Board, Environmental Health and Safety, and the appropriate local planning and building departments prior to any changes in land use, grading activities, excavation, or dewatering. This notification should include a statement that residual soil and groundwater contamination underlie the property and may underlie nearby properties, and a description of the mitigation actions necessary (if any) to ensure that any possibly contaminated soils or groundwater brought to the surface by these activities are managed appropriately.

Asbestos

Asbestos containing materials were historically used in various construction products including insulation, roofing, floor tiles, shingles, pipes, and adhesives. Asbestos was also used in bridges and other concrete structures. Asbestos fibers, when disturbed and released into the air, can be inhaled and pose significant health risks, including lung cancer, mesothelioma, and asbestosis. The use of asbestos in construction and building products was generally discontinued prior to about 1980. The State Route 1 and State Route 41 Separation bridge structure (Bridge Number 49 0182) was constructed in 1962 and could contain asbestos containing materials, due to its age.

Lead Based Paint

Lead is a highly toxic metal that may cause a range of health problems, especially in young children. Lead based paint was banned for residential use in 1978. However, lead based paint is still legal for industrial uses such as for bridges, highways, water towers, pipes, parking lots, guard rails, and utility poles or towers. The State Route 1 and State Route 41 separation was constructed in 1962 and could contain lead-based paint due to its age. Paint that is present on other structures such as guard rails and fences, within the project area should be assumed to be lead based paint.

Aerially Deposited Lead

Aerially deposited lead contamination of soils resulted from the introduction of lead compounds to gasoline in the 1920s to enhance engine performance. The process of phasing out lead in automotive fuels commenced in 1974, and by 1992, its usage was prohibited in California. Consequently, shallow soils near established highways and other busy roads have the potential to be contaminated with aerially deposited lead above hazardous waste thresholds. The highest lead concentrations are typically found within ten feet of road pavement and the top six inches of soil.

Historical aerial photographs and topographic maps indicate that the project site and surrounding areas have supported vehicular activity since prior to the phasing out of lead gasoline. Hence, surface soils within the project site area are highly likely to have been affected by aerially deposited lead.

Traffic Striping and Pavement Markings

Lead chromate has been used in yellow traffic striping paints, thermoplastic striping, and pavement markings. Such materials can contain hazardous levels of lead and chromium. According to the Caltrans Paint and Thermoplastic Striping Guidance (2019), it is generally assumed that existing yellow paint and thermo-plastics associated with roadway markings contain lead and chromium unless there is specific knowledge that lead or chromium are not present. Yellow traffic striping was observed on the roadways within the project site.

Treated Wood Waste

Treated wood, used widely in construction for its resistance to pests and decay, often contains various chemicals that can pose significant health and environmental risks. Commonly used treatments include creosote, pentachlorophenol, and chromated copper arsenate, all of which contain harmful substances. Inhalation or ingestion of sawdust from treated wood can be particularly harmful. Improper disposal of treated wood waste, such as burning, can release toxic chemicals into the air, posing risks to human health and the environment. Treated wood posts were observed within the project site as providing support for various traffic signs.

Proximity to Schools

The nearest school is Morro Bay High School, approximately 0.1 miles west of the project site.

Proximity to Public/Public Use Airports and Airport Land Use Plans

The project site is not located within the vicinity of a public or public use airport or an airport land use plan, the nearest public airport is the San Luis Obispo County Airport, located approximately 15.46 miles southeast of the project site.

Emergency Response Plans

San Luis Obispo County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019)

The San Luis Obispo County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan is a multi-jurisdictional plan that geographically covers people, property, and critical assets within the County's jurisdictional boundaries. The plan reduces the risk for those who live in, work in, and visit the county. It also provides a viable planning framework for all foreseeable natural hazards that may impact the county of San Luis Obispo. The resources and background information in the plan are applicable countywide, and the plan's goals and recommendations can lay the groundwork for the development and implementation of local mitigation activities and partnerships. The plan includes the project site as a designated emergency evacuation route in the event of an emergency at Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant.

Morro Bay Multi-Hazard Mitigation Response Plan (2003, revised 2008)

The city of Morro Bay's Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Plan prescribes the City's policies and concepts for responding to any and all emergencies that could affect the health, safety, and property of the public within the city limits. The plan covers all emergencies, and it is broken down into the following categories of major events: Civil Disturbance – Terrorism, Earthquake, Hazardous Materials, Multi-Casualty, Nuclear Power Plant, Storm/Flood, Tsunami, and Wildland – Major Fire.

Morro Bay Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2006)

The Local Hazard Mitigation, approved by FEMA, provides guidance to the city of Morro Bay for mitigating problems before they occur. Although this plan is meant to be a multi-hazard plan, its primary function is to address mitigation for natural hazards and other environmentally related, human caused events or incidents.

Plan Morro Bay

"Plan Morro Bay" is the city of Morro Bay's General Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan. It presents a community vision for Morro Bay through 2040. "Plan Morro Bay" is organized around a framework for resiliency. Each element of this plan addresses different aspects of the

community and identifies measurable actions to guide residents, decision-makers, businesses, and City staff toward achieving the vision. The Public Safety Element identifies both areas that are vulnerable to natural hazards and resiliency strategies to help Morro Bay withstand future climate change impacts. It also details emergency response procedures and responsibilities. The plan includes policies to prepare a tsunami preparedness plan that describes evacuation procedures, adequate warning, and evacuation assistance.

Wildland Fires

The project site is not located within or adjacent to a wildland area and is within a developed area of Morro Bay.

Environmental Consequences

Transport, Use, and Disposal

The project is anticipated to require limited quantities of hazardous substances, including gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, solvents, oils, paints, etc. during construction. Use of these materials has the potential to result in accidental spills or releases. Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable federal and State environmental and workplace safety laws for the handling, transport, and storage of hazardous materials, including 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1910.119 (Process Safety Management of Highly Hazardous Chemicals) and 22 California Code of Regulations Division 4.5 (Environmental Health Standards for the Management of Hazardous Waste). Compliance with 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1910.119 would provide the worker-safety and exposure-prevention framework, requiring procedures, training, and safe-operation practices that reduce risks during chemical storage, fueling and refueling, use of flammable liquids, and equipment maintenance involving hazardous materials. 22 California Code of Regulations Division 4.5 requires proper environmental management of hazardous materials and wastes, including:

- appropriate containers and secondary containment
- labeling, accumulation, and inspection requirements
- prevention of releases to soil, stormwater systems, and drainage features
- cradle-to-grave management of all hazardous waste generated

In addition, the implementation of standard Best Management Practices under the Stormwater Plan would further reduce the potential of accidental release or exposure. Therefore, with adherence to applicable federal and State environmental and workplace safety laws, the project would not increase short- or long-term hazards to the public through the routine

transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, and impacts would be less than significant.

Release of Hazardous Materials

As discussed above, the project site has the potential to contain hazardous materials, including aerially deposited lead, asbestos-containing materials, and lead chromate. In addition, there are two leaking underground storage tank sites adjacent to the project area. Construction workers and individuals near the project area could be exposed to hazardous materials during ground-disturbing activities such as grading and/or road resurfacing at any of the areas with potential to contain hazardous substances. Additionally, the project would adhere to Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-11.12 (Removal of Yellow Traffic Stripe and Pavement Marking with Hazardous Waste Residue), Section 36-4 (Residue Containing Lead from Paint and Thermoplastic), Section 84-9.03B (Remove Traffic Stripes and Pavement Markings Containing Lead), and Section 14-11.02 (Discovery of Unanticipated Asbestos and Hazardous Substances); and 29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1910.120 (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response).

All of these requirements and standard procedures would combine to prevent upset or accident conditions. Before construction, a site investigation would identify hazardous materials. The findings would guide specific work methods though preparation and implementation of a Health and Safety Plan. During construction, Caltrans specifications would govern how work is conducted (in other words, containment, dust control, disposal, and stop-work protocols). 29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1910.120 governs worker behavior and safety controls (training, personal protective equipment, monitoring, emergency response). If contaminated soil or unexpected asbestos is encountered, Caltrans Section 14-11.02 requires immediate stopping of work, while 29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1910.120 procedures ensure workers respond safely without causing accidental releases. Together they prevent the spread of contaminated dust, release of hazardous-material debris, improper handling or disposal, uncontrolled exposure of the public or sensitive receptors, and accidental releases from unexpected, buried contamination. Ultimately, compliance with existing Caltrans Standard Specifications and 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1910.120 would ensure the following:

- Hazardous materials are properly identified before disturbance.
- All removal and handling follow established containment and disposal rules.
- Workers follow federally mandated safety and emergency procedures.

- Accidental releases are prevented through a combination of engineering controls and safety planning.

Because these requirements are mandatory and already part of standard Caltrans construction practice, no mitigation is needed, and impacts are less than significant.

Proximity to Schools

The nearest school is Morro Bay High School, approximately 0.1 miles west of the project site. Due to the age of the highway, concentrations of aerially deposited lead could be found in the soil. The soil would be tested prior to construction for these materials. If found in excess of regulatory limits, the materials would be handled according to all applicable regulations. Caltrans Standard Specifications include measures for handling these substances on all projects as applicable. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Hazardous Material Sites

Two sites located adjacent to the project were identified as having activity and use limitations that are relevant to the project. Both sites contain residual soil and groundwater contamination that could pose an unacceptable risk under certain site redevelopment activities such as site grading, excavation, or dewatering. Site activity and use limitations for both sites state that the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Environmental Health and Safety and appropriate local planning and building departments must be notified prior to any changes in land use, grading, activities, excavation, or dewatering. In addition, the notification must include a description of actions necessary to ensure that contaminated soil or groundwater would be managed appropriately. Construction of the project would require ground disturbance at both sites. As noted above, a preliminary site investigation would be completed for the project prior to construction to determine whether residual soil and groundwater contamination associated with the Chevron Station 9-1928 and Shell Service Station sites would be encountered during project construction. Any remnant soil or groundwater contamination, aerially deposited lead, asbestos-containing material, or lead based paint identified in the Process Safety Information would be appropriately handled, treated, and disposed of (if required) with implementation of Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-11.02 (Discovery of Unanticipated Asbestos and Hazardous Substances); and 29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1910.120 (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response). Based on required compliance with the activity and use limitations of the leaking underground storage tank sites adjacent to the project site, and compliance with Caltrans Standard Specifications, the project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment related to disturbance of a hazardous materials site, and impacts would be less than significant.

Proximity to Public Airports and Airport Land Use Plans

Since the project site is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan, the project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area. There would be no impact.

Emergency Response Plans

The project includes the conversion of the two existing intersections into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane at the State Route 1/State Route 41/Main Street intersection. Access for emergency vehicles during active construction may be temporarily constrained because project construction would require temporary lane closures of the northbound State Route 1 on- and off-ramps and may also require temporary closure of the outside northbound lane on State Route 1 during construction of the retaining walls. Temporary lane closures are expected to last approximately 12 months. No route closures would occur. Two-way traffic would be maintained in the event of a full lane closure. During construction, a Traffic Management Plan would be implemented that includes the establishment of vehicle detour routes. Construction access would be facilitated along existing roadways within the project area, with traffic controls implemented as appropriate. Emergency services would be notified of potential disruptions, delays, or detours in advance to minimize impacts to emergency access. Although emergency access may be constrained during construction, this impact would be minimal and temporary in nature. Project implementation would not result in a significant temporary or permanent impact affecting any adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Wildland Fires

The project would be required to demonstrate compliance with all applicable fire safety rules and regulations including the California Fire Code and Caltrans Standard Specifications. Based on required compliance with the California Fire Code and Caltrans Standard Specifications, the project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. There would be no impacts.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required.

2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Considering the information in the project's Location Hydraulic Study and Summary Floodplain Encroachment Report dated February 2025 and Water Quality Technical Memorandum dated October 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	Less Than Significant Impact
(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite;	
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding onsite or offsite;	Less Than Significant Impact
(iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	Less Than Significant Impact
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	Less Than Significant Impact
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	Less Than Significant Impact
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	No Impact

Affected Environment

Floodplain

The project site is located within the Morro Creek base floodplain, downstream of the confluence with Little Morro Creek. East of State Route 1, the existing and proposed floodplains are approximately 3,000 feet wide,

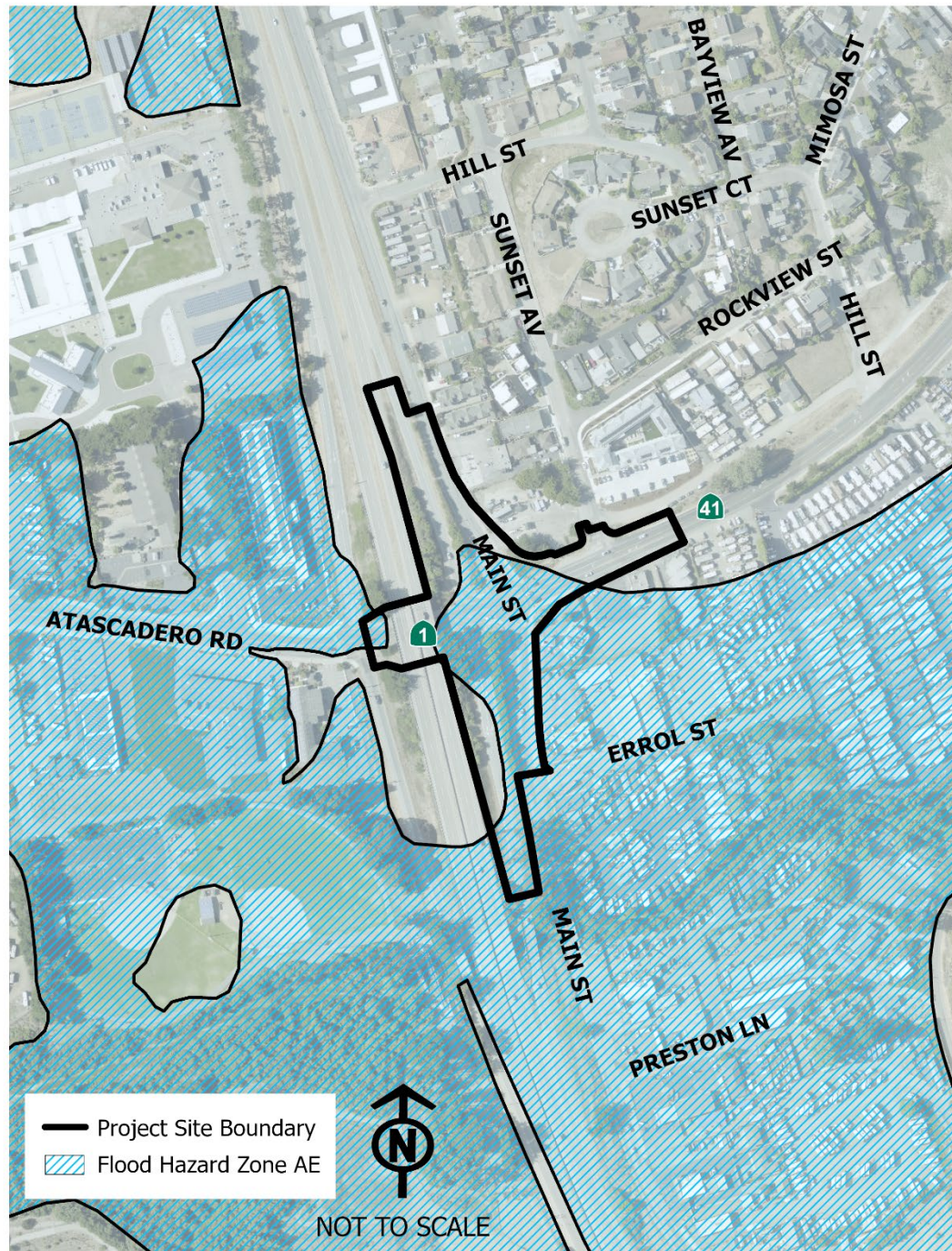
extending from approximately 200 feet north of the project intersections to the Main Street underpass beneath State Route 1. Flood depths vary greatly across the floodplain, with flood depths of approximately 13 feet within the Morro Creek channel. At State Route 41, State Route 1, and Main Street interchanges, average flood depths are approximately two to three feet. Much of the floodplain features low velocities. The highest velocities are noted within the Morro Creek channel at the State Route 1 and Main Street Bridge crossings and within the State Route 41 underpass beneath State Route 1. Several buildings are currently located within the existing Morro Creek base floodplain.

The portions of the project site are mapped on Federal Emergency Management Agency Floodplain Insurance Rate Map panel 06079C0813H within Federal Emergency Management Agency Special Flood Hazard Area Zone AE. Zone AE represents the base (100-year) floodplain where Base Flood Elevations are provided (Figure 2.7). The 100-year floodplain represents areas subject to inundation by the one-percent-annual-chance flood event.

Topography and Soils

The project area is relatively flat to slightly sloping with elevation ranging from approximately 20 feet above mean sea level along the western boundary to approximately 40 feet above mean sea level along the eastern boundary. The project area is located in a developed area surrounded by mixed use, commercial, and school land uses and is underlain by one soil type, Psamments and Fluvents, and is occasionally flooded. Psamments and Fluvents is an excessively drained soil derived from sandy and gravelly alluvium derived from sedimentary rock. This soil has a very low runoff potential.

Figure 2.7 FEMA Base Flood Elevations



Local Hydrology

The project area is approximately 0.5 miles east of the Pacific Ocean; it is developed with existing roadway infrastructure and surrounded by existing urban development. The project site is within the Morro Creek Watershed (Hydrologic Unit Code 180600060412).

Morro Creek, approximately 50 feet south of the project area, is the main stem within the watershed in northwestern San Luis Obispo County. Morro Creek is mapped as a blue line stream on the U.S. Geological Survey Morro Bay North, California 7.5-minute quadrangle. According to the State Water Board “Final 2020-2022 Integrated Report”, Morro Creek is not listed on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list of impaired waterbodies. There are no surface water resources within the project limits.

Groundwater Hydrology

The project site is located within the Morro Valley Groundwater Basin, which underlies Morro Valley in west-central San Luis Obispo County. The basin is bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and on all other sides by contact with impermeable rocks of the Jurassic to Cretaceous age Franciscan Group. The valley is drained by Morro Creek to the Pacific Ocean. Precipitation ranges from 15-to-17 inches per year. The depth to the water table is approximately 24-to-72 inches. Groundwater levels typically vary with seasons and rainfall.

Water Quality Control and Sustainable Groundwater Management Plans

Clean Water Act

In 1972 Congress amended the federal Water Pollution Control Act, making the addition of pollutants to the waters of the United States from any point source (a discrete conveyance such as a pipe or a human-made ditch) unlawful unless the discharge is in compliance with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. This act and its amendments are known today as the Clean Water Act. The goal of the Clean Water Act is “to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters.” The following are important Clean Water Act sections:

- Sections 303 and 304 require states to issue water quality standards, criteria, and guidelines.
- Section 401 requires an applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct any activity that may result in a discharge to waters of the United States to obtain certification from the State that the discharge would comply with other provisions of the act. This is most frequently required in tandem with a Section 404 permit request.
- Section 402 establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, a permitting system for the discharges (except for dredge or fill material) of any pollutant into waters of the United States. The State Water Resources Control Board and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards administer this permitting program in California. Section 402(p) requires permits for discharges of stormwater from industrial/construction and municipal separate storm sewer systems.

- Section 404 establishes a permit program for the discharge of dredge or fill material into waters of the United States. This permit program is administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. For more information, please see the Wetlands and Other Waters section.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, enacted in 1969, provides the legal basis for water quality regulation within California. It predates the Clean Water Act and regulates discharges to waters of the state. Waters of the state include more than just waters of the United States, like groundwater and surface waters not considered waters of the United States. Additionally, it prohibits discharges of waste the definition of which is broader than the Clean Water Act definition of pollutant. Discharges under the California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act are permitted by waste discharge requirements and may be required even when the discharge is already permitted or exempt under the Clean Water Act.

The State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards are responsible for establishing the water quality standards (objectives and beneficial uses) required by the Clean Water Act and regulating discharges to ensure compliance with the water quality standards. In California, Regional Water Quality Control Boards designate beneficial uses for all water body segments in their jurisdictions and then set criteria necessary to protect those uses. In addition, the State Water Resources Control Board identifies waters failing to meet standards for specific pollutants. These waters are then state-listed in accordance with the Clean Water Act Section 303(d). If a state determines that waters are impaired for one or more constituents and the standards cannot be met through point source or non-point source controls (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits or waste discharge requirements), the Clean Water Act requires the establishment of Total Maximum Daily Loads. Total Maximum Daily Loads specify allowable pollutant loads from all sources (point, non-point, and natural) for a given watershed.

State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards

The State Water Resources Control Board administers water rights, sets water pollution control policy, issues water board orders on matters of statewide application, oversees water quality functions throughout the state by approving Basin Plans, Total Maximum Daily Loads, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits, and regulates projects spanning more than one water board region. Regional Water Quality Control Boards are responsible for protecting beneficial uses of water resources within their regional jurisdiction using planning, permitting, and enforcement authorities to meet this responsibility.

Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin

Water quality control plans, or basin plans, establish California's administrative policies and procedures for protecting state waters. Beneficial uses and their corresponding water quality objectives meet federal regulatory criteria for water quality standards. Hence, California's basin plans serve as regulatory tools for meeting both federal and state requirements for water quality control. One significant difference between the federal and state programs is that California's basin plans establish standards for groundwater in addition to surface water resources.

The 2019 Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin (Basin Plan) (Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board 2019) was adopted by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board on June 14, 2019. The objective of the Basin Plan is to provide guidance for the management of surface and groundwater quality in the Central Coast Region to provide the highest water quality reasonably possible. The Regional Water Quality Control Board implements the Basin Plan by issuing and enforcing waste discharge requirements to individuals, communities, or businesses whose waste discharges can affect water quality. Protection and enhancement of beneficial uses of water against quality degradation is a basic requirement of water quality planning under the California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

City of Morro Bay General Plan/Local Coastal Plan (Plan Morro Bay)

The city of Morro Bay General Plan/Local Coastal Plan (Plan Morro Bay) (city of Morro Bay 2021) includes the following applicable regulations related to the protection of water resources:

GOAL C-7: Morro Bay water is safe, available, and used in an environmentally responsible manner.

POLICY C-7.15: Water Quality. To reduce the potential for degradation or impairment of water quality, development shall reduce potential pollutants in stormwater and irrigation runoff and require the following:

- To the maximum extent feasible, development shall include specific measures to help reduce potential pollutants and water quality impairment, including controlling the disposal of chemicals and hazardous materials, controlling the use of pesticides and herbicides, maintaining existing stormwater capture programs, applying low-impact development designs, and requiring on-site retention and/or reuse of runoff. The city shall utilize ecologically responsible pest control methods and integrated pest management to the extent feasible on public property and encourage this practice on private property.

- Drainage plans and erosion, sediment, and pollution control measures shall be required as conditions of approval in every application for new development that has the potential to impair water quality.
- Construction phase stormwater pollutant controls shall be required for development with the potential for water quality impairment, including erosion controls, sediment traps and filtering of off-site stormwater flows, capture of site-generated pollutant sources, street sweeping of dirt tracked off-site, litter control, post-construction monitoring, and other best management practices. Construction-phase water quality impacts shall be avoided by minimizing the disturbed area, phasing grading activities, implementing soil stabilization and pollution prevention measures, and preventing unnecessary soil compaction. Development with the potential for water quality impairment shall, at a minimum, be designed to meet National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System stormwater runoff requirements.
- Additionally, development shall be planned, sited, and designed in a manner that maintains or enhances on-site infiltration, reduces runoff, minimizes the transport of pollutants in runoff generated from the development, and recharges groundwater. Development shall ensure that runoff is appropriately collected, filtered, and treated by best management practices to minimize pollutant loading to the maximum degree feasible.

City of Morro Bay Stormwater Management Plan

The city of Morro Bay's Stormwater Management Plan regulates urban runoff, install sediment traps, and ensure compliance with state beach water safety standards.

One Water Plan (Integrated Master Plan)

The California Department of Water Resources classifies the Morro Valley Groundwater Basin as a very low-priority basin. Under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, only high- and medium-priority basins are legally mandated to form Groundwater Sustainability Agencies and submit formal Groundwater Sustainability Plans. Because a formal Groundwater Sustainability Plans is not strictly required by the state, the city of Morro Bay manages its groundwater through an integrated municipal framework called the One Water Plan (Integrated Master Plan). The plan addresses groundwater sustainability through the following integrated practices:

- Diversification and Blending: The city relies on the State Water Project for roughly 85 percent of its water. It uses local groundwater wells (near Lila Keiser Park) as a supplementary source.
- Water Quality Treatment: Because the Morro Basin has historically suffered from high nitrate levels, the city runs a Brackish Water

Reverse Osmosis facility to treat the well water or blends it with State Water to ensure it safely meets drinking standards.

- Climate Resilience: The city's One Water Plan framework proactively plans for 20-year infrastructure cycles, including groundwater treatment, recycled water use, and stormwater recharge, to combat threats like sea-level rise and saltwater intrusion.

Environmental Consequence

Surface Water Resources

Based on the absence of surface water resources within the project area and required compliance with the Caltrans 2023 Standard Specifications, no direct or indirect impacts to surface water resources would occur as a result of the project.

Groundwater Quality

As noted in Section 2.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials of this document, two sites that would be disturbed by the project were identified as having activity and use limitations that are relevant to the project. Both sites contain residual soil and groundwater contamination that could pose an unacceptable risk under certain site redevelopment activities such as site grading, excavation, or de-watering. Compliance with Caltrans Standard Specifications and 29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1910.120 Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response would prevent violations of water quality standards, waste discharge requirements, and substantial degradation of surface water or groundwater quality during project construction and operation. Caltrans Standard Specifications, including Section 13 Water Pollution Control and Section 21 Erosion Control, would require the implementation of Best Management Practices to prevent, control, and abate water pollution, including activities within flood zones. These specifications would mandate measures such as erosion and sediment control, containment of hazardous materials, and proper disposal of waste, thereby minimizing the risk of pollutants entering stormwater systems, drainage features, or groundwater.

Additionally, compliance with 29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1910.120 would ensure that hazardous waste operations and emergency response protocols are followed, including worker training, use of personal protective equipment, and emergency procedures for accidental releases. These federal requirements, together with Caltrans Standard Specifications, would require that hazardous materials are properly identified, contained, and disposed of, and that any accidental releases are promptly managed to prevent contamination of soil, surface water, or groundwater.

Prior to construction, a site investigation would identify potential hazardous materials, guiding the preparation and implementation of a Health and Safety

Plan. During construction, adherence to Caltrans specifications and federal regulations would govern work methods, including containment, dust control, and stop-work protocols in the event of unexpected contamination. These combined requirements would ensure that accidental releases are prevented through engineering controls and safety planning, and that any contaminated soil or groundwater would be managed appropriately in accordance with regulatory standards.

As a result, the project's compliance with Caltrans Standard Specifications and 29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1910.120 would provide a robust framework for protecting water quality, preventing violations of water quality standards and waste discharge requirements, and avoiding substantial degradation of surface water or groundwater quality. Therefore, impacts to groundwater quality would be less than significant.

Groundwater Supplies

The project is not expected to substantially decrease groundwater supplies because construction related water demands would be temporary in nature, and the project would not have water demands during operation. Long-term impacts related to inference with groundwater recharge are not anticipated to occur because the project would be constructed in compliance with Caltrans Stormwater Management Plan guidelines and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans Best Management Practices to minimize potential impacts of the project from contributing to the impairment of groundwater resources. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Drainage Patterns, Surface Water Runoff, and Ground Water Recharge

The project would result in the construction of improvements to an existing intersection and would be limited to a marginal increase in the amount of impervious surface area of 0.21 acres. Long-term impacts related to alteration of existing drainage patterns, an increase of surface water runoff, and inference with groundwater recharge are not anticipated to occur because the project would be constructed in compliance with Caltrans Stormwater Management Plan guidelines and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans Best Management Practices to minimize potential impacts of the project from contributing to erosion and siltation on and off site. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Floodplain

As noted above, portions of the project site are located within Zone AE, which delineates areas subject to inundation by the one-percent-annual-chance flood event. However, the project is not expected to be a significant floodplain encroachment and is not expected to significantly impact flood hazards. The project would not widen the base floodplain and does not lead to additional structures within the floodplain. The project would lead to increased water surface elevations at the edges of some existing structures that are situated

within the floodplain. The increase in water surface elevation is approximately 0.2 feet (2 inches). This increase in water surface elevation is not expected to significantly increase the risk of damage to these structures relative to the existing conditions. The estimated level of risk for the Build Alternative is low. While the Morro Creek floodplain is large and covers several buildings, the Build Alternative would result in minimal impacts to the floodplain outside of the project extents.

Areas of fill proposed by the project include the roundabout's center island, which would be elevated approximately 3.5 feet above the roads and may be landscaped. The splitter islands along Main Street and State Route 41 would also be in a fill condition and are elevated approximately 0.7 feet above the roads. While State Route 41 is located parallel to the main flow direction within Morro Creek, the proposed road elevations are similar to existing conditions, so the project is not expected to be considered a longitudinal encroachment. The results of the hydraulic models reveal the proposed Build Alternative is not expected to be a significant floodplain encroachment as defined in 23 Code of Federal Regulations 650.105(q). Permanent impacts associated with the potential to impede or redirect flood flows would be less than significant.

The project would be required to comply with the Caltrans 2023 Standard Specifications, including Section 13 Water Pollution Control and Section 21 Erosion Control. Section 13 includes general specifications for preventing, controlling, and abating water pollution, including activities within flood zones, and Section 21 includes specifications for applying permanent erosion control measures to the soil surface. Therefore, temporary impacts associated with construction of the project would not impede or redirect flood flows, and there would be no impact.

Inundation and Risk of Pollutant Release

Portions of the project site are located within Zone AE, which delineates areas subject to inundation by the one-percent-annual-chance flood event. However, the project is not expected to be a significant floodplain encroachment and is not expected to significantly impact flood hazards. Additionally, no pollutants would be stored by the project. Therefore, the project would not risk the release of pollutants due to project inundation, and impacts would be less than significant.

Water Quality Control and Sustainable Groundwater Management Plans

The project would be required to comply with Caltrans Stormwater Management Plan guidelines and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans Best Management Practices, which would not conflict with any regional or local plans for water quality control and sustainable groundwater management. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required.

2.1.11 Land Use and Planning

Proposed improvements would be limited to existing intersections within the city limits and would not facilitate unplanned growth in a previously isolated area. The project would not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. Considering the information in the project's Community Impact Assessment Memorandum dated December 2025 and Section 2.1.4 Biological Resources of this document, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Land Use and Planning
a) Physically divide an established community?	No Impact
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	No Impact

2.1.12 Mineral Resources

No mineral resources are known to exist within the project's footprint. Additionally, based on the San Luis Obispo County Land Use View database, no County or U.S Environmental Protection Agency mines or identified energy and extractive areas are located in the project vicinity. The project would not include the removal or extraction of mineral resources or preclude the extraction of mineral resources in the area. Considering this information, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mineral Resources
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	No Impact
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	No Impact

2.1.13 Noise

Considering the information in the project's Noise and Vibration Technical Memorandum dated December 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project result in:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	No Impact

Affected Environment

The project is at the location of two highway intersections in an urban area. Noise-sensitive land uses have been identified within 500 feet of the project area, including residences, motels, and an RV park. Morro Bay High School is just over 500 feet away from the project limits but has been included as a receptor due to the sensitivity of schools to increased sound levels. Commercial uses within 500 feet have not been included in this evaluation as receptors due to lack of useable exterior space.

The project is not within two miles of a private airstrip, airport land use plan, or public airport.

Environmental Consequences

The project would not introduce additional through lanes or alter the capacity or alignment of State Route 1, State Route 41, or Main Street. The proposed minor horizontal alteration associated with the project would not halve the distance between traffic noise and the closest sensitive noise receptors. No vertical alteration of travel ways would occur. It is anticipated that local noise levels would be similar to existing conditions. Therefore, no long-term noise abatement measures would be required for the project.

During construction of the project, noise from construction activities may intermittently dominate the noise environment in the immediate area of construction. Noise generated from construction must comply with Caltrans Standard Specification Section 14-8.02 Noise Control, which states the following:

- Do not exceed 86 dBA maximum A-weighted sound level (L_{max}) at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.
- Equip an internal combustion engine with the manufacturer-recommended muffler. Do not operate an internal combustion engine on the job site without the appropriate muffler.

The project would not require pile driving or other unusually loud construction activity. Retaining walls would be constructed using steel soldier piles with concrete lagging. Wall foundation footings would be drilled, and steel piles would be set in concrete. Construction noise would likely be audible at the residential land uses closest to the project area along Main Street and Atascadero Road. Construction noise would not likely be audible at the Morro Shores Inn and Suites, Motel 6, or Morro Bay High School due to distance and existing traffic noise generated on State Route 1. Construction activities would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02 Noise Control, as discussed above. Construction noise would be short-term, intermittent, and generally overshadowed by local traffic noise; therefore, temporary noise impacts would be less than significant.

Construction activities can generate varying degrees of vibration, depending on the construction procedures and the type of construction equipment used. Based on visual characteristics and age of adjacent structures, the adjacent building foundations are assumed to be constructed of engineered concrete and masonry. A large bulldozer would generate vibration levels at this structure of approximately 0.044 inches per second, which would be below the damage threshold of 0.3 inches per second. As noted above, the project would not include pile driving, and other equipment would generate less vibration than a pile driver. Temporary construction impacts associated with vibration would be less than significant. Since the project is not within two miles of a private airstrip, airport land use plan, or public airport, there would be no impacts associated with these topics.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Noise Abatement Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required.

2.1.14 Population and Housing

Proposed improvements would be limited to existing intersections within the city limits and would not facilitate unplanned growth in a previously isolated area. The project would not require acquisition of residential property,

displacement of existing people or housing, or construction of replacement housing. Considering the information in the Community Impact Assessment Memorandum for the project dated December 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Population and Housing
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	No Impact
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	No Impact

2.1.15 Public Services

The project consists of converting two existing intersections into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane, as well as installation of elements to improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists. Project activities would be limited to the existing roadway alignments. The project would not directly or indirectly induce or facilitate growth in the project vicinity; nor would it increase demand for public services including fire and police services, parks, or schools. Although project construction would result in a temporary increase in traffic congestion, this effect would be minimized to the extent feasible through the use of Caltrans standard specifications and measures. Considering this information, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services: Fire protection?	No Impact
Police protection?	No Impact
Schools?	No Impact
Parks?	No Impact
Other public facilities?	No Impact

2.1.16 Recreation

The intersection improvement project would not include recreational facilities in the scope, or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. The project would not increase the use of parks or recreational facilities. Therefore, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Recreation
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	No Impact
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	No Impact

2.1.17 Transportation

Considering the information in the project's Traffic Analysis and Operations Report dated September 2024, Intersection Control Evaluation dated May 2016 and the Climate Change Report dated May 2026, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	No Impact
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	No Impact
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	No Impact
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	Less Than Significant Impact

Affected Environment

Existing Roadways

The project involves improvements at the intersection of State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street. These roadways are discussed in detail below.

State Route 1 is a California State highway facility that traverses north-and-south along the coast of California and serves as the main auto and truck travel route connecting the coastal communities along the Central Coast, including Big Sur, Cambria, Cayucos, and Morro Bay with San Luis Obispo to the south and Monterey to the north. Within the study area, State Route 1 is a four-lane divided freeway, that transitions to an expressway, with a grassy median.

State Route 41 is a California State highway facility that traverses east-and-west, connecting Morro Bay to Atascadero. Within the study area, State Route 41 is a conventional highway that starts as Atascadero Road at the State Route 1 southbound ramps and extends east to pass through the project intersections and the intersection at Sunset Street. Access to State Route 1 is provided through a tight diamond interchange with two unsignalized ramp intersections on either side of the overcrossing.

Main Street is a two-lane, north-and-south minor arterial local road that runs east of and parallel to State Route 1 from the undercrossing of State Route 1 (post mile 29.6), 2,000 feet south of the project limits, to the northern limits of Morro Bay, approximately two miles north of the project limits. South of the Main Street undercrossing, the route provides service to the downtown core of Morro Bay. North of the project limits, Main Street provides access to the residences and businesses of the community of North Morro Bay. In the study area, Main Street is parallel to State Route 1 and is offset approximately 20 to 100 feet from the State Route 1 mainline.

Circulation Programs, Plans, Ordinances, and Policies

California Coastal Act

Public Resources Code Section 30210–30214 (Public Access)

Primary purpose of this article is to maximize public access to the shoreline and prevent private entities from blocking pathways to the ocean. It requires new coastal development projects to provide corridors for the public to walk from the nearest public road directly to the sea. This article implements Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution to guarantee the public's right to visit navigable waters. The article allows access to be regulated or limited only to protect public safety, military security, private property rights, or fragile environments from overuse. It explicitly orders the state to encourage and protect lower-cost visitor accommodations, such as public campgrounds and affordable overnight room rentals. These mandates are legally binding on Morro Bay and embedded in the certified Local Coastal Program.

Public Resources Code Section 30250–30255 (Location and Planning)

This article serves as the land-use planning framework, ensuring that new construction does not destroy the scenic and ecological value of the coast. It requires new residential, commercial, or industrial construction to be located within or directly adjacent to existing developed areas, preventing urban sprawl into rural, untouched coastal environments. This article mandates that all permitted buildings are to be designed and sited to protect sweeping ocean views and blend naturally into the surrounding landscape. Developers are required to analyze and minimize risks associated with high-hazard coastal zones, particularly regarding cliff erosion, fires, earthquakes, and flood risks. Public service capacities (like water, sewer, and roads) must be fully capable of handling new development without degrading coastal resources. These mandates are legally binding on Morro Bay and embedded in the certified Local Coastal Program.

Caltrans Complete Street Policy (Deputy Directive 37, 2021)

This policy establishes Caltrans' organizational priority to encourage and maximize walking, biking, transit, and passenger rail as a strategy to not only meet state climate, health, equity, and environmental goals but also to foster socially and economically vibrant, thriving, and resilient communities. It requires that all Caltrans-funded or overseen projects to include connected,

comfortable, safe pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities unless an exception is approved. This plan mandates multimodal accommodation on state highways including State Route 1 and State Route 41 within Morro Bay.

2023 San Luis Obispo Council of Governments Regional Transportation Plan

The Regional Transportation Plan is the adopted plan that governs long-range circulation policies across San Luis Obispo County, including Morro Bay. The intersection lies within a designated regional corridor governed by Regional Transportation Plan policies requiring safety, operational efficiency, multimodal connectivity, and climate-aligned transportation investments. The plan includes the following adopted regional policies which are relevant to the project:

- Provide reliable, integrated, flexible travel choices (Policy 2.1): Supports intermodal connectivity (transit plus bike plus walk plus auto), focusing on seamless connections between modes.
- Integrate new technologies (Policy 2.3): Encourages adaptive signal control, smart mobility, and efficiency innovations.
- Improve major transportation corridors (Policy 2.4): Enhances regional corridors, such as State Route 1 and State Route 41, for safety and access across all modes.
- Reduce congestion and increase safety (Policy 4.2): Prioritizes roadway operational improvements, intersection upgrades, congestion mitigation, and multimodal safety initiatives.
- Support compact growth and multimodal transportation (Policy 6.3 and Climate Strategies): Coordinates land use and transportation to reduce vehicle miles traveled, increase transit use, and expand active transportation infrastructure.

Plan Morro Bay (2021)

Plan Morro Bay is the adopted General Plan/Local Coastal Plan that contains the city's official multimodal transportation policies. "Plan Morro Bay" formally establishes expectations for safe, connected multimodal mobility (sidewalks, bicycle facilities, transit access, and roadway improvements) citywide, including the state highway intersections. Key adopted circulation policies relevant to the project include:

- Balanced Transportation System (CIR-1.1): Build and maintain a multimodal network serving pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, youth, elderly, and persons with disabilities.
- Access Improvement (CIR-1.2): Use public right-of-way improvements as opportunities to enhance multimodal access and street design.

- Connectivity (CIR-1.3): Complete connected sidewalk, bikeway, and transit networks.

2025 Morro Bay Short-Range Transit Plan (2026)

This adopted transit program for the city of Morro Bay guides local transit routes, service frequency, and operational standards; bus/trolley connectivity to key destinations; integration of pedestrian and bicycle access with transit stops and regional coordination with San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority. Adopted transit policies and programs within the plan include:

- Routing, frequency, service design, and performance standards for Morro Bay Transit.
- Integration of transit stops with pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Planning for future route modifications, trolley operations, and multimodal connectivity.

Environmental Consequences

The project would improve operations and multimodal access by converting two existing intersections into a roundabout with sidewalks and pedestrian pathways. The project would not conflict with any plans, ordinances, or policies addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Since the project would not result in a direct or indirect increase in vehicle miles travelled, it would not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).

The project would comply with Caltrans and Federal Highway Administration standards and requirements for intersection design and construction. Therefore, the project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).

The project includes the conversion of the two existing intersections of the State Route 1 northbound ramps, State Route 41, and Main Street into a modern roundabout with a dedicated westbound left-turn lane. Access for emergency vehicles during active construction may be temporarily constrained because project construction would require temporary lane closures of the northbound State Route 1 on- and off-ramps and may also require temporary closure of the outside northbound lane on State Route 1 during construction of the retaining walls. Temporary lane closures are expected to last approximately 12 months. During construction, a Traffic Management Plan would be implemented that includes the establishment of vehicle detour routes. Construction access would be facilitated along existing roadways within the project area, with traffic controls implemented as

appropriate. Emergency services would be notified of potential disruptions, delays, or detours in advance to minimize impacts to emergency access. Although emergency access may be constrained during construction, this impact would be minimal and temporary in nature. Project implementation would not result in a significant temporary or permanent impact on any adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Noise Abatement Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required.

2.1.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the project’s Historic Property Survey Report dated January 2026, Archaeological Survey Report dated June 2017, and Extended Phase I Report dated January 2026, and Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan dated January 2026, the following significance determinations have been made:

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

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or	Less Than Significant Impact
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	Less Than Significant Impact

Affected Environment

As discussed in Section 2.1.5 (Cultural Resources) of this document, portions of archaeological sites CA-SLO-165 and CA-SLO-2222 are within the

project's Area of Potential Effects. Both sites are associated with historic Native American Tribal activity and settlement and are considered sacred tribal lands.

Request to the California Native American Heritage Commission to elicit pertinent cultural resource information available in the Sacred Lands File returned positive results for cultural resources and provided a list of Native American Tribes and individuals who may have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area.

Per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and as required under California Environmental Quality Act, specifically Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1 and Chapter 532 Statutes of 2014 (in other words, Assembly Bill 52), Caltrans consulted with pertinent Native American contacts to identify potential Native American resources within the Area of Potential Effects. These contacts include representatives of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, Tule River Indian Tribe, *yak tityu tityu yak titihini* (ytt) Northern Chumash Tribe of San Luis Obispo County and Region, Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians, San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council, Chumash Council of Bakersfield, Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, Xolon Salinan Tribe, Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties, and Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and San Benito Counties. Chapter 3 of this document provides additional detail regarding Native American consultation efforts.

Environmental Consequences

As previously discussed in Section 2.1.5 Cultural Resources of this document, the majority of the project's Area of Potential Effects would be subject to physical disturbance between one and three feet below current grade. Deeper excavations would be required for retaining walls and utilities. The depth of impacts per project element is summarized in Table 2.1 in Section 2.1.5 Cultural Resources of this document.

The original development of State Route 1, State Route 41, Main Street, and the project intersections undoubtedly resulted in extensive ground disturbance within and adjacent to the mapped boundaries of CA-SLO-165 and CA-SLO-2222. Even though most of the Area of Potential Effects has been disturbed by previous construction, tribal cultural sensitivity within the area is high. The project would not adversely affect the two archaeological properties since no excavation below the established cultural environmental sensitive areas would occur within the boundaries of the two archaeological properties. Avoidance and Minimization Measure Cultural-1 would be included to implement the project's Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan.

As part of the Native American Consultation for the project, tribal concerns regarding potential cultural resources in the Area of Potential Effects were

identified. To address these concerns identified under Section 106 and Assembly Bill 52 and to further minimize concerns regarding potential impacts to potential cultural resources, the project would implement Avoidance and Minimization Measure Cultural Resources-2. Furthermore, regulatory requirements and Caltrans Standard Specifications for accidental discovery and recovery measures, discussed below, would be included. Impacts to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Avoidance and Minimization Measures Cultural-1 and Cultural-2, identified for cultural resources in Section 2.1.5 of this document, are applicable for Tribal Cultural Resources and would be implemented for the project.

2.1.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Considering the information in the project's Phase I Initial Site Assessment dated December 2025, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	No Impact
d) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	No Impact

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	No Impact

Affected Environment

The following utilities exist within the project area and its vicinity.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company

The Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) provides electrical power to San Luis Obispo County, including the city of Morro Bay. Multiple PG&E overhead 70-kilovolt power lines and underground electrical lines traverse the project site.

Southern California Gas Company

The project site contains four- to eight-inch gas lines with natural gas provided by Southern California Gas Company.

Telecommunications

The project site also contains overhead and underground telecommunication line and telephone poles.

Water

Water services to the project site are provided by the Morro Bay Municipal Water Company. Underground water lines located within the project site include six-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipes and four- to eight-inch asbestos cement pipes.

Sewer

Sewage services for the project site are provided by the city of Morro Bay. There are sewer lines on the project site.

Environmental Consequences

Construction activities would require utility trenching throughout the project area, and the approximate depth of excavation would be six feet. Because most of the project area is already developed, or consists of existing roadway, relocation of utilities to underground trenches is not likely to result in environmental impacts. Further investigation into the relocation process is required and would be conducted in the next phase of the project should project funding be approved. Caltrans would coordinate with the utility owners to ensure potential conflicts with utilities are resolved prior to construction.

Any potential relocations would be limited to existing utilities in the project area. Additionally, the project does not propose or necessitate construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Water to maintain potential landscaping would be required during operation of the project. The extent of landscaping would be determined during the project's final design phase. However, native, drought-tolerant plants would be considered for landscaping needs, so water supply needs would be minimal and intermittent. Construction of the project would use minimal water. Water for construction would be acquired by the contractor from commercial suppliers and brought to the site as needed. Therefore, there would be sufficient water supplies available to serve the project during construction. Impacts would be less than significant.

The project would not generate wastewater. Portable restrooms would be provided for workers during construction, and no wastewater facilities would be required by the project during the operational phase. Therefore, there would be no impact.

The project would not generate solid waste during operation. During construction, some solid waste would be generated, but not in excess of infrastructure capacity or state or local standards. To the extent safe and feasible, construction materials would be reused or recycled. In addition, waste materials generated by project construction would be collected and disposed of properly. Therefore, there would be no impact.

The project would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required.

2.1.20 Wildfire

According to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire Hazard Severity Zone mapping tool (effective October 1, 2025), the project limits are not within or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. Therefore, the following significance determinations have been made:

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	No Impact
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	No Impact
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	No Impact
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	No Impact

2.1.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance
a) 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 or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	Less Than Significant Impact

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation

Affected Environment

Visual Environment

The project is located at the intersections of State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street in the city of Morro Bay. This location is considered the eastern gateway to the city and the Estero Bay coast. According to the State Scenic Highway System Map, State Route 1 is an Officially Designated State Scenic highway and All-American Road, and State Route 41 is classified as an Eligible State Scenic Highway. According to the “Plan Morro Bay”, the approximately one-mile section of State Route 1 between State Route 41 and San Jacinto Street provide views of scenic resources within the city. In addition, the approximately one-mile section of State Route 41 between Mission Drive in the county of San Luis Obispo and Hill Street within city limits is a route that provides scenic views.

The landmark of the community, Morro Rock, is probably the most significant visual feature of the area and can be seen from almost any location in Morro Bay. One of the principal entryways to the City is at the intersection of State Route 1 and State Route 41; however, the visual quality of this area is seriously impaired by the lack of landscaping, excessive signs, vacant and unkept properties, and overhead utilities.

Environmental Consequences

Aesthetics

The resource study area for aesthetic resources for the project is the same as the project boundary shown in Figure 1.2. This resource study area was chosen because the aesthetic impacts of the project are within the gateway to the city of Morro Bay. The resource study area is largely built-out with transportation infrastructure, commercial properties along Main Street, and landscape vegetation along roadside shoulders. However, the views of Morro

Rock and the ocean provide a more natural element. The project would have substantial visual change compared to the existing condition due to the new intersection configuration and retaining walls. The new facility would be considered urbanizing as compared to the existing condition and would have a less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated. With implementation of Mitigation Measures Aesthetics-2, Aesthetics-4, and Aesthetics-5 identified in Section 2.1.1 Aesthetics of this document, the impacts to the visual character and urbanization would be reduced to less than significant. The projects identified in Table 2.2 are considered reasonably foreseeable and are within the aesthetics resource study area for cumulative impacts.

Table 2.2 Summary of Cumulative Projects for Aesthetic Resources

Location	Description	Status	Aesthetic Impact
545 Atascadero Road	16 attached residential units and 11 roof decks with access via spiral staircases	Pending	Minor urbanization as compared to currently empty lot.
541 Atascadero Road	4 apartment units with attached garages	Pending	Minor urbanization as compared to currently empty lot.
220 Atascadero Road	Change temporary outdoor dining area to permanent outdoor dining.	Temporary Use Permit issued 03/15/2023	No impact. Seating area will remain the same.
1698 Main Street	Remodel of an existing 2,116-square-foot commercial restaurant structure (Wee Shack) due to flood damage.	Pending	Minor urbanization due to the remodel but is replacing an existing structure.

Given that the projects identified in Table 2.2 have only a minor urbanizing effect, if any, the project's impact would not be considered cumulatively considerable when combined with the other projects in the resource study area. With implementation of the project's aesthetics mitigation measures, the project would not have a significant cumulatively considerable impact on aesthetic resources.

Conclusion

Impacts to biological resources and California history and prehistory would be less than significant. The project would implement standard minimization

measures to ensure no substantial adverse effect on biological resources, wetlands, or other state waters. The project would have no impact on migratory wildlife corridors or conflict with any policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Excavation or disturbance would not occur within culturally sensitive areas, which would be avoided through the incorporation of vertical and horizontal environmentally sensitive areas. Impacts associated with the quality of the environment would be less than significant with incorporation of mitigation for aesthetics/visual resources.

Impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable, would be reduced to less than significant with incorporation of mitigation for aesthetics/visual resources, as noted above.

Impacts associated with environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly, would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures Aesthetics-2, Aesthetics-4, and Aesthetics-5 identified in Section 2.1.1 Aesthetics of this document. All other impacts to resources would be less than significant.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Implementation of Mitigation Measures Aesthetics-2, Aesthetics-4, and Aesthetics-5 would reduce potential direct, indirect, and cumulative project impacts to less than significant. No additional avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required.

Chapter 3 Coordination

3.1 Tribal Consultation

November 2016: Caltrans Archaeologist and Native American Coordinator Dr. Azevedo initiated consultation with the Northern Chumash and Salinan communities. The first step was initiated by conducting a California Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File records search and requesting a list of individuals and Tribes to contact. The records search revealed no sacred cultural resources within the study area. After receiving the results, the list of consultants and Tribes were contacted to initiate the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 process and provide Assembly Bill 52 notification.

November and December 2016: Dr. Azevedo responded to questions raised by consultation members via email and phone. The Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties, ytt Northern Chumash Tribe of San Luis Obispo County and Region, and Northern Chumash Tribal Council all responded with concerns regarding the project's location.

May 2018: Dr. Azevedo provided all members of the consultation group with copies of the draft Archaeological Survey Report. In May 2018, Patti Dutton, Tribal Office Administrator for the Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties, following a phone call from John Burch to SWCA, responded via email with concerns that the document did not contain an ethnographic context that considered the Salinan. The draft Archaeological Survey Report was edited to incorporate this comment.

July 2019: Dr. Azevedo provided all members of the consultation group with copies of the draft archaeological testing proposal. Participants and other members of the Native American community were asked to comment on the project and whether they would like to attend a field review to discuss the project and the location of known cultural in relationship to the undertaking.

September 11, 2020: Mona Tucker, representing the ytt Northern Chumash Tribe of San Luis Obispo County and Region, and Robert Piatti, representing the Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties, met with Caltrans engineers, Dr. Azevedo, and SWCA Principal Cultural Resources Team Lead Leroy Laurie to discuss the project area and their knowledge of cultural resources in the vicinity.

January 2022: Johnny Odom Jr., who is a member of the ytt Northern Chumash Tribe of San Luis Obispo County and Region, was present during the Extended Phase I fieldwork. Multiple members (Deanna Perry, Randy Timmerman, and Jessica Bournonville) of the Salinan Tribe of San Luis

Obispo and Monterey counties were present at various times during the fieldwork.

December 2022: Dr. Azevedo submitted the draft archaeological testing report to all members of the consultation group. No additional comments were received.

October 2024: Mona Tucker, representing the ytt Northern Chumash Tribe of San Luis Obispo County and Region, and Robert Piatti, representing the Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties, met with Caltrans engineers and environmental staff, Dr. Azevedo, and SWCA Principal Cultural Resources Team Lead Leroy Laurie at the project area. The project findings to date, previous data recovery for a private development within the Area of Potential Effects, and potential protective measures were reviewed. Both Tribal partners asked for Dr. Azevedo to attend Tribal meetings to present the project and discuss potential protective measures.

November 2024: Dr. Azevedo attended the Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties monthly Tribal meeting to discuss the project status to date, and to ask members of the Tribe if they had ideas for mitigation or visual treatments in the vicinity. Tribal members asked about other State projects of interest in the counties.

January 22, 2025: Violet Walker, Ernest Houston, and Shirley Puga of the Northern Chumash Tribal Council met with John Olejnik, Krisstin Hadick, Christina MacDonald, and Kaya Wiggins of Caltrans to discuss District 5 active projects. It was during this meeting that Violet Walker requested to consult on the project and expressed dissatisfaction about not knowing the status of consultation or the project.

January 27, 2025: Caltrans required an updated consultation list, given the length of the project and Tribal leadership changes that have occurred since the original outreach effort. Caltrans archaeologist Kaya Wiggins sent the California Native American Heritage Commission a request to search the Sacred lands Files for cultural resources within the project area, as well as a list of Native American individuals who are familiar with the project area and may have information pertinent to cultural resources studies.

January 28, 2025: Mathew Lin, Cultural Resources Analyst of the California Native American Heritage Commission, responded that the Sacred Lands File search was positive for cultural resources and provided a list of Native American Tribes and individuals who may have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. Edgar Alvarez, Nakia Zavalla, and Wendy Teeter of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians met with Christina MacDonald, John Olejnik, Hannah Ehrlich, Robert Johnson-Ramirez, and Kaya Wiggins of Caltrans to discuss District 5 active projects. During the meeting, the Tribe was given a status update and informed that a Finding of No Adverse Effect document was in production and would be sent to them in

the following months. The Tribe indicated interest in consulting during this project.

3.2 Public Meetings

May 2, 2023: Regular Meeting. The Morro Bay High School Student Senate deliberated on this project and unanimously voted to recommend that the city pursue the roundabout alternative.

May 10, 2023: Community Workshop. A community workshop was held at the Morro Bay Community Center Auditorium. This event presented three alternatives: a roundabout, traffic signals, or a no-build option. The city of Morro Bay, GHD (the selected consultant), and Caltrans delivered a brief presentation, followed by a question-and-answer session. Afterward, attendees engaged in breakout discussions with displays showcasing the three options. Feedback was collected and analyzed by the city of Morro Bay and GHD.

May 17, 2023: Regular Meeting. The City of Morro Bay Public Works Advisory Board meeting was held at Morro Bay High School. Agenda item A-2 covered:

- "Consideration of recommendation to the City Council of a design alternative for intersection improvements at State Route 41, State Route 1, and Main Street. Recommendation: Review and make a recommendation to the City Council at their meeting on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, regarding the preferred design alternative for these intersection improvements."
- The Public Works Advisory Board recommended that the project team proceed with the roundabout alternative.

June 13 and 27, 2023: Regular Meeting. The city of Morro Bay Council deliberated this project over two meetings at the Morro Bay Vets Hall. Ultimately, the City Council voted 3-2 in favor of pursuing the roundabout alternative.

June 29, 2023: Environmental Public Scoping Meeting. Caltrans and the city of Morro Bay hosted an open-house format Environmental Public Scoping Meeting for the project at Morro Bay Community Center. To gather community input on the scope, environmental concerns, and roundabout versus traditional traffic signal alternatives for the State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street intersections. Attendees engaged in breakout discussions with displays showcasing the three options. Discussion focused on the project timeline, balancing pedestrian safety near the high school, commercial impacts on local businesses, and resolving existing traffic

gridlock. Feedback was collected and analyzed by Caltrans, the city of Morro Bay, and GHD.

April 22, 2025: Regular Meeting. The City of Morro Bay Council deliberated this project at the Morro Bay Vets Hall. The City Council ultimately voted 3-2 in favor of directing City staff to discontinue work on the project and retain \$1.2 million of the Measure Q/E funds in the project fund.

May 27, 2025: Regular Meeting. The city of Morro Bay Council deliberated the potential next steps for this project at the Morro Bay Vets Hall. The City Council voted 4-1 in favor of reaffirming the April 22, 2025, vote to discontinue environmental work on the roundabout, and to:

1. Adopt Resolution No. 30-25 to request the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments to complete the roundabout project environmental documents.
2. Transfer development impact fee funding to the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments for finalization of the roundabout project environmental phase at a not-to-exceed amount of \$60,000 and authorize the City Manager to develop and execute an agreement to effectuate such transfer.

Chapter 4 Distribution List

National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, California 90802-4213

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
1455 Market Street
San Francisco, California 94103

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, California 93003-7726

California Coastal Commission Caltrans Liaison
725 Front Street #300
Santa Cruz, California 95060

California Department of Fish and Wildlife – Region 4
1234 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, California 93710

California Transportation Commission
Caltrans Liaison Electronically Filed

Regional Water Quality Control Board – Central Coast Region
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

Regional Transit Authority
253 Elks Lane
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

San Luis Obispo Council of Governments
1114 Marsh Street
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

San Luis Obispo County Bicycle Advisory Committee
County Government Center, Room 206
1055 Monterey Street
San Luis Obispo, California 93408

City of Morro Bay City Hall
595 Harbor Street
Morro Bay, California 93442

City of Morro Bay Planning Department
955 Shasta Avenue
Morro Bay, California 93442

City of Morro Bay Fire Department
715 Harbor Street
Morro Bay, California 93442

City of Morro Bay Police Department
850 Morro Bay Boulevard
Morro Bay, California 93442

City of Morro Bay Public Works
955 Shasta Avenue
Morro Bay, California 93442

Morro Bay High School
235 Atascadero Road
Morro Bay, California 93442

Morro Bay in Bloom
Post Office Box 782
Morro Bay, California 93442

Morro Bay Library
625 Harbor Street
Morro Bay, California 93442

Bike SLO County
860 Pacific Street, Suite 105
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

SLO Bicycle Club
Post Office Box 1585
San Luis Obispo, California 93406

Native American Tribal Contacts
Caltrans Liasson Electronically Submitted

Appendix A Title VI Policy Statement

CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR

California Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
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September 2025

TITLE VI/NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the assurances set forth in the Caltrans' Title VI Program Plan, to ensure that no person in the United States shall on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Related non-discrimination authorities, remedies, and state law further those protections, including sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, age, low income, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

Caltrans is committed to complying with 23 C.F.R. Part 200, 49 C.F.R. Part 21, 49 C.F.R. Part 303, and the Federal Transit Administration Circular 4702.1B. Caltrans will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its services, programs, and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin (including LEP). In addition, Caltrans will facilitate meaningful participation in the transportation planning process in a non-discriminatory manner.

The overall responsibility for this policy is assigned to the Caltrans Director. The Caltrans Title VI Coordinator is assigned to the Caltrans Office of Civil Rights Deputy Director, who then delegates sufficient responsibility and authority to the Office of Civil Rights' managers, including the Title VI Branch Manager, to effectively implement the Caltrans Title VI Program. Individuals with questions or requiring additional information relating to the policy or the implementation of the Caltrans Title VI Program should contact the Title VI Branch Manager at title.vi@dot.ca.gov or at (916) 639-6392, or visit the following web page: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/title-vi>.


Dina El-Tawansy (Sep 12, 2025 16:52:12 PDT)
DINA A. EL-TAWANSY
Director

"Improving lives and communities through transportation."

Appendix B Coastal Act Policy Consistency Summary Table

Coastal Act Chapter Three Policy Area	Build Alternative Coastal Zone Assessment
Biological Resources, Section 30240 (a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas. (b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.	The project has been designed to avoid direct impacts to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area. Standard Measures, Best Management Practices, and protective measures are incorporated to fully avoid impacts to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area. See Section 2.1.4 Biological Resources of this document for more information.
Biological Resources, Section 30231 The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface waterflow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.	The project has been designed to avoid direct impacts to coastal waters and wetlands and riparian habitats. Standard Measures, Best Management Practices, and protective measures are incorporated to fully avoid impacts to coastal waters, wetlands, and riparian habitat. See Section 2.1.4 Biological Resources of this document for more information.

Coastal Act Chapter Three Policy Area	Build Alternative Coastal Zone Assessment
Biological Resources, Section 30230 Marine resources shall be maintained, enhanced, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes	The project has been designed to avoid direct impacts to coastal waters. Standard Measures, Best Management Practices, and protective measures are incorporated to fully avoid impacts to coastal waters and protect marine resources. See Section 2.1.4 Biological Resources of this document for more information.
Biological Resources, Section 30236 Channelizations, dams, or other substantial alterations of rivers and streams shall incorporate the best mitigation measures feasible, and be limited to (1) necessary water supply projects, (2) flood control projects where no other method for protecting existing structures in the flood plain is feasible and where such protection is necessary for public safety or to protect existing development, or (3) developments where the primary function is the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat.	The project does not propose to alter any rivers or streams. Therefore, no effects related to channelizations, dams, or other substantial alterations of rivers and streams are anticipated.
Agricultural Resources, Section 30241 The maximum amount of prime agricultural land shall be maintained in agricultural production to assure the protection of the areas' agricultural economy, and conflicts shall be minimized between agricultural and urban land uses through all of the following: (a) By establishing stable boundaries separating urban and rural areas, including, where necessary, clearly defined buffer areas to minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban land uses. (b) By limiting conversions of agricultural lands around the periphery of urban	The project area does not contain any farmland, including prime agricultural land as defined by the California Coastal Act. Therefore, no effects to farmland is anticipated.

Coastal Act Chapter Three Policy Area	Build Alternative Coastal Zone Assessment
areas to the lands where the viability of existing agricultural use is already severely limited by conflicts with urban uses or where the conversion of the lands would complete a logical and viable neighborhood and contribute to the establishment of a stable limit to urban development. (c) By permitting the conversion of agricultural land surrounded by urban uses where the conversion of the land would be consistent with Section 30250. (d) By developing available lands not suited for agriculture prior to the conversion of agricultural lands. (e) By assuring that public service, facility expansions, and nonagricultural development do not impair agricultural viability, either through increased assessment costs or degraded air and water quality. (f) By assuring that all divisions of prime agricultural lands, except those conversions approved pursuant to subdivision (b), and all development adjacent to prime agricultural lands shall not diminish the productivity of such prime agricultural lands.	
Agricultural Resources, Section 30242 All other lands suitable for agricultural use shall not be converted to non-agricultural uses unless (1) continued or renewed agricultural use is not feasible, or (2) such conversion would preserve prime agricultural land or concentrate development consistent with Section 30250. Any such permitted conversion shall be compatible with continued agricultural use on surrounding lands.	The project area does not contain any lands suitable for agricultural use. Therefore, no effects related to converting agricultural lands to non-agricultural use are anticipated.
Agricultural Resources, Section 30243 The long-term productivity of soils and timberlands shall be protected, and	The management of timberlands does not occur in Morro Bay. Therefore, no effects to timberlands are anticipated.

Coastal Act Chapter Three Policy Area	Build Alternative Coastal Zone Assessment
conversions of coastal commercial timberlands in units of commercial size to other uses or their division into units of noncommercial size shall be limited to providing for necessary timber processing and related facilities.	
Visual/Aesthetics, Section 30251 The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department 48 of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.	The project has been designed to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding area. See Section 2.1.1 Aesthetics of this document for more information.
Cultural Resources and Paleontology, Section 30255 Where development would adversely impact archaeological or paleontological resources as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer, reasonable mitigation measures shall be required.	A portion of the project site has been identified as a culturally sensitive area. The project is not expected to result in adverse impacts to archaeological, paleontological, or historical resources. Caltrans Standard Measures, Best Management Practices, and protective measures are incorporated to avoid impacts to archaeological, paleontological, and historical resources. See Section 2.1.5 Cultural Resources and Section 2.1.7 Geology and Soils of this document for more information.
Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff, Section 30232 Protection against the spillage of crude oil, gas, petroleum products, or hazardous substances shall be provided in relation to any	The project has been designed to reduce impacts related to water quality and stormwater runoff. Caltrans Standard Measures, Best Management Practices, and environmental commitment

Coastal Act Chapter Three Policy Area	Build Alternative Coastal Zone Assessment
development or transportation of such materials. Effective containment and cleanup facilities and procedures shall be provided for accidental spills that do occur.	measures are incorporated to fully avoid impacts to water quality. See Section 2.1.4 Biological Resources and 2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality of this document for more information.
Wetlands and Other Waters, Section 30233 (a) The diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes shall be permitted in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects, and shall be limited to the following: (1) New or expanded port, energy, and coastal-dependent industrial facilities, including commercial fishing facilities. (2) Maintaining existing, or restoring previously dredged, depths in existing navigational channels, turning basins, vessel berthing and mooring areas, and boat launching ramps. (3) In open coastal waters, other than wetlands, including streams, estuaries, and lakes, new or expanded boating facilities and the placement of structural pilings for public recreational piers that provide public access and recreational opportunities. (4) Incidental public service purposes, including but not limited to, burying cables and pipes or inspection of piers and maintenance of existing intake and outfall lines.	The project design does not include the diking, filling, or dredging of coastal waters. Therefore, no effects related to diking, filling, or dredging coastal waters are anticipated

Coastal Act Chapter Three Policy Area	Build Alternative Coastal Zone Assessment
(5) Mineral extraction, including sand for restoring beaches, except in environmentally sensitive areas. (6) Restoration purposes. (7) Nature study, aquaculture, or similar resource dependent activities. (b) Dredging and spoils disposal shall be planned and carried out to avoid significant disruption to marine and wildlife habitats and water circulation. Dredge spoils suitable for beach replenishment should be transported for these purposes to appropriate beaches or into suitable longshore current systems. (c) In addition to the other provisions of this section, diking, filling, or dredging in existing estuaries and wetlands shall maintain or enhance the functional capacity of the wetland or estuary. Any alteration of coastal wetlands identified by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, including, but not limited to, the 19 coastal wetlands identified in its report entitled, "Acquisition Priorities for the Coastal Wetlands of California", shall be limited to very minor incidental public facilities, restorative measures, nature study, commercial fishing facilities in Bodega Bay, and development in already developed parts of south San Diego Bay, if otherwise in accordance with this division. For the purposes of this section, "commercial fishing facilities in Bodega Bay" means that not less than 80 percent of all boating facilities proposed to be developed or improved, where the improvement would create additional berths in	

Coastal Act Chapter Three Policy Area	Build Alternative Coastal Zone Assessment
Bodega Bay, shall be designed and used for commercial fishing activities. (d) Erosion control and flood control facilities constructed on watercourses can impede the movement of sediment and nutrients that would otherwise be carried by storm runoff into coastal waters. To facilitate the continued delivery of these sediments to the littoral zone, whenever feasible, the material removed from these facilities may be placed at appropriate points on the shoreline in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects. Aspects that shall be considered before 44 issuing a coastal development permit for these purposes are the method of placement, time of year of placement, and sensitivity of the placement area.	
Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography, Section 30235 Revetments, breakwaters, groins, harbor channels, seawalls, cliff retaining walls, and other such construction that alters natural shoreline processes shall be permitted when required to serve coastal-dependent uses or to protect existing structures or public beaches in danger from erosion, and when designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts on local shoreline sand supply. Existing marine structures causing water stagnation contributing to pollution problems and fishkills should be phased out or upgraded where feasible.	The project design does not include any construction elements that would alter natural shoreline processes. Therefore, no effects related to construction altering natural shoreline processes are anticipated.
Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography Section 30253 New development shall do all of the following:	The project has been designed to minimize the risk to life and property in areas of high flood hazard; neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the

Coastal Act Chapter Three Policy Area	Build Alternative Coastal Zone Assessment
(a) Minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood, and fire hazard. (b) Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along bluffs and cliffs. (c) Be consistent with requirements imposed by an air pollution control district or the State Air Resources Board as to each particular development. (d) Minimize energy consumption and vehicle miles traveled. (e) Where appropriate, protect special communities and neighborhoods that, because of their unique characteristics, are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses.	site or surrounding area; be consistent with air pollution requirements; and minimize energy consumption and vehicle miles traveled. Caltrans Standard Measures, Best Management Practices, and protective measures would be incorporated to further minimize impacts. See Section 2.1.3 (Air Quality), Section 2.1.6 Energy, Section 2.1.7 Geology and Soils, Section 2.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Section 2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality of this document for more information.
Public Access, Section 30210 In carrying out the requirement of Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution, maximum access, which shall be conspicuously posted, and recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people consistent with public safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners, and natural resource areas from overuse.	The project would improve coastal public access by improving the function at the intersections of State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street to reduce delay and improve operations and multimodal connectivity.
Public Access, Section 30211 Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.	The project would not limit public access to the sea, but would improve public access in the Coastal Zone, including access to the beach.

Coastal Act Chapter Three Policy Area	Build Alternative Coastal Zone Assessment
Public Access, Section 30223 Upland areas necessary to support coastal recreational uses shall be reserved for such uses, where feasible.	The project would improve public access to coastal recreational uses.
Public Access, Section 30252 The location and amount of new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by (1) facilitating the provision or extension of transit service, (2) providing commercial facilities within or adjoining residential development or in other areas that will minimize the use of coastal access roads, (3) providing non-automobile circulation within the development, (4) providing adequate parking facilities or providing substitute means of serving the development with public transportation, (5) assuring the potential for public transit for high intensity uses such as high-rise office buildings, and by (6) assuring that the recreational needs of new residents will not overload nearby coastal recreation areas by correlating the amount of development with local park acquisition and development plans with the provision of onsite recreational facilities to serve the new development.	The project would enhance public access to the coast by improving the function at the intersections of State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street to reduce congestion and improve multimodal connectivity.

Appendix C Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures Summary

Aesthetic/Visual Resources

The following measures would be implemented to protect visual/aesthetic resources:

- AESTHETICS-1: Retaining Wall Height. The height of retaining walls shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible during the project design phase.
- AESTHETICS-2 (Compensatory Mitigation): Aesthetic Treatment. In coordination with the Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architect, the following aesthetic commitments shall be incorporated during the project's final design phase:
 1. All retaining walls shall be aesthetically treated with texture and/or color consistent with the scenic coastal setting and to reduce graffiti potential.
 2. All splitter islands shall be aesthetically treated with texture and/or color and/or planted.
 3. The center island apron of the roundabout shall be aesthetically treated with texture and/or color.
 4. The center island of the roundabout shall be planted or aesthetically treated with texture and/or color.
 5. All guard rail, pedestrian rail, and safety rail on top of retaining walls shall be colored or darkened.
 6. Project aesthetics incorporated during the project's final design phase shall consider inclusion of Transportation Art and/or Gateway treatments.
 7. Project aesthetics shall be developed with input from community stakeholders, including Native American representatives.
- AESTHETICS-3: Planting. Include landscape planting throughout the project site to the maximum extent allowed by safety standards.
- AESTHETICS-4 (Compensatory Mitigation): Retaining Wall Planting. Provide sufficient area at the base of all retaining walls to allow for

planting and maintenance of shrubs, trees, or vines. Plant along the base of all retaining walls to reduce the perceived visual scale of the walls, complement the scenic coastal setting, and reduce graffiti potential.

- AESTHETICS-5 (Compensatory Mitigation): Lighting.
 1. The point source of all exterior lighting shall be shielded from off-site views.
 2. Light trespass from exterior lights shall be minimized by directing light downward and utilizing cut-off fixtures or shields.

Biological Resources

The following measures would be implemented to further protect biological resources:

- BIO-1: Environmental Awareness Training. An environmental awareness training shall be presented to all construction personnel by a qualified biologist prior to the start of any project activities. The training shall include color photographs and a description of the ecology of all special-status species known or with potential to occur, as well as other sensitive resources requiring avoidance during construction. The training shall also include a description of protection measures required by discretionary permits, an overview of the federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act, and implications of noncompliance with these regulations. This shall include an overview of the required avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures. A sign-in sheet with the name and signature of the qualified biologist who presented the training, and the names and signatures of the environmental awareness trainees shall be kept. A fact sheet conveying the information provided in the environmental awareness training shall be provided to all project personnel.
- BIO-2: Pesticides and Herbicides. The use of pesticides (including rodenticides) and herbicides on the property shall be in compliance with all federal, State, and local regulations to avoid primary and secondary poisoning of sensitive species that may be using the project site.
- BIO-3: Coast Range Newt. A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-activity survey within 100 feet of suitable habitat for Coast Range newt (i.e. Morro Creek) immediately prior to the start of initial ground disturbance to ensure that this species is not present within proposed work areas. If Coast Range newt are found during preconstruction surveys, they shall be allowed to leave the work area of their own volition or be hand captured and relocated to suitable habitat outside of the area of impact. To minimize the potential for impacts to dispersing Coast Range newt, work within 100 feet of aquatic habitat shall occur during dry conditions, as

feasible. If work within 100 feet of aquatic habitat is scheduled to start during the typical rainy season (October–April), when Coast Range newt are most likely to be dispersing through upland habitat, a follow-up survey shall be conducted following any rain event of 0.5 inch or greater prior to the start of work for the day. During this survey, all vehicles, equipment, and materials staged on-site overnight shall be inspected. If Coast Range newt are found within the work area, they shall be allowed to leave on its own volition or be hand captured and relocated to suitable habitat outside of the area of impact.

- BIO-4: Northern California Legless Lizard. A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey within suitable habitat for Northern California legless lizard (i.e., within sandy or loose loamy soils, in leaf litter, under bushes, rocks, or detritus like logs and driftwood) immediately prior to the start of initial ground disturbance to ensure Northern California legless lizard are not present within proposed work areas. During the survey, the biologist shall gently disturb or rake the scrub understory and upper layers of duff to uncover or rouse Northern California legless lizards. If Northern California legless lizard are found during preconstruction surveys, they shall be allowed to leave the work area of their own volition or be hand captured and relocated to suitable habitat outside of the area of impact.
- BIO-5: Crotch's Bumble Bee. If work is planned to occur during the flying period of March 1 to September 30, a qualified biologist shall survey for Crotch's bumble bee within the work area 2 weeks prior to the start of initial ground disturbance. If a Crotch's bumble bee nest is observed, no work shall occur within 50 feet of the nest until it is no longer active. If Crotch's bumble bee is found during the active spring and summer period, or presence is unknown (e.g., if a survey during the active period was not completed) and work is planned between October 1 to February 28, potential overwintering habitat shall be avoided by a minimum of 50 feet. If potential overwintering habitat cannot be avoided, Caltrans shall coordinate with the appropriate resource agencies for guidance to implement project activities and avoid take or proceed with an Incidental Take Permit.
- BIO-6: Townsend's Big-Eared Bat. Prior to the start of work, a qualified biologist shall conduct an emergence survey of existing pine, Monterey cypress, and eucalyptus trees within and adjacent to the project site to determine if roosting bats are present. If a colony of bats is found roosting, further surveys shall be conducted sufficiently to determine the species present and the type of roost (day, night, maternity, etc.). If Townsend's big-eared bat is determined to be roosting on or adjacent to the project site, the following shall be implemented as appropriate:

1. If a day or night roosting site is located on-site or within 50 feet of the project site, avoidance buffers shall be established/developed as determined by a qualified biologist dependent on the species as well as the location of the roost in relation to the type of project activities occurring. If the day or night roost is within the area of impact, and the bats are not part of an active maternity colony, exclusion measures may be implemented, in close coordination with a qualified biologist and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. A plan shall be developed that includes the methodology for excluding roosting bats.
 2. If an active maternity roost for Townsend's big-eared bat is on-site or within 100 feet of the project site, an avoidance buffer shall be established as determined by a qualified biologist. No construction activities (including parking and staging) shall be permitted within the avoidance buffer during the rearing season (typically March–September).
- BIO-7: Vegetation Removal Timing. Prior to construction, vegetation removal shall be scheduled to occur from September 2 to January 31, outside of the typical nesting bird season, as feasible, to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds. If vegetation removal or other construction activities are proposed to occur within 100 feet of potential nesting bird habitat during the nesting season (February 1–September 1), a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than 10 calendar days prior to construction. If an active nest is found, Caltrans shall implement an appropriate buffer or monitoring strategy based on the habits and needs of the species. The buffer area or monitoring strategy shall be implemented until a qualified biologist has determined that juveniles have fledged, or nesting activity has otherwise ceased.
 - BIO-8: Active Bird Nests. During construction, active bird nests shall not be disturbed and eggs or young of bird species covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code shall not be killed, destroyed, injured, or harassed at any time.
 - BIO-9: Tree Removal. Trees to be removed shall be noted on design plans. Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing shall be installed around the dripline of trees to be protected within project limits.
 - BIO-10: Jurisdictional Waters. The following general measures would be implemented to further minimize impacts to jurisdictional waters during active construction:
 1. The use of heavy equipment and vehicles shall stay within the project limits and defined staging areas/access points. The boundaries of each

work area shall be clearly defined and marked with high-visibility fencing. No work shall occur outside these limits.

2. Project plans, drawings, and specifications shall show the boundaries of all jurisdictional waters and the location of erosion and sediment controls, delineation of construction limits, and other pertinent measures to ensure the protection of jurisdictional waters.
 3. Staging of equipment and materials shall occur in designated areas with appropriate demarcation and perimeter controls. No staging areas shall be located within 100 feet of jurisdictional waters.
 4. Secondary containment, such as drip pans, shall be used to prevent leaks and spills of potential contaminants.
 5. Washing of concrete, paint, or equipment and refueling and maintenance of equipment shall occur only in designated staging areas. These activities shall occur at a minimum of 100 feet from jurisdictional waters. Sandbags and/or absorbent pads and spill control kits shall always be available on-site to clean up and contain fuel spills and other contaminants.
 6. Construction equipment shall be inspected by the operator daily to ensure that equipment is in good working order and no fuel or lubricant leaks are present.
 7. An emergency response spill kit shall be kept on-site during construction for prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All project personnel shall be informed of the importance of preventing spills and the appropriate measures to take should an accidental spill occur.
 8. Gravel bags, if used, shall be filled only with clean gravel.
 9. After completion of the project's construction, all protective fencing/flagging used to delineate sensitive biological resources shall be removed from the project area and disposed of in appropriate waste receptacles or reused.
- BIO-11: Drainages and Other Aquatic Resources. The measures would be implemented to further protect drainages and aquatic resources on-site:
 1. To prevent erosion and sedimentation into drainages during construction, an erosion and sedimentation control plan shall be developed and implemented. It shall outline Best Management Practices for short-term, temporary stabilization. Acceptable stabilization methods include the use of weed-free, natural fiber (i.e., non-monofilament) rolls, jute or coir netting, and/or other industry

- standards. Erosion control devices shall be installed and maintained for the duration of the project. Best Management Practices shall be installed and maintained for the duration of the project.
2. Construction activity within 100 feet of drainages shall only occur when appropriate Best Management Practices are in place to protect aquatic features from indirect impacts.
 3. The project area would be located outside of the limits of potentially jurisdictional areas. No access routes, equipment or materials staging, work areas, or vegetation removal would occur within potentially jurisdictional areas.
- BIO-12: Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan. Prior to commencement of work activities, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan shall be prepared, which should include Best Management Practices to be implemented and monitored prior to and during construction. The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan shall include a Construction Site Monitoring Program that presents procedures and methods related to the visual monitoring, sampling, and analysis plans for non-visible pollutants, sediment and turbidity, and pH.
 - BIO-13: Morro Creek. The following recommendations have been provided to protect Morro Creek during active construction:
 1. No debris, soil, silt, sand, slash, sawdust, rubbish, cement or concrete, oil or petroleum products, or other organic or earthen material from any construction or associated activity of whatever nature shall be allowed to enter into or be placed where it may be washed by rainfall or runoff into Morro Creek.
 2. A staging area for equipment and vehicle fueling and storage shall be designated at least 100 feet away from Morro Creek, in a location where fluids cannot flow into waterways.
 - BIO-14: Vegetation Removal and Disposal. During vegetation removal, the existing vegetation shall be scraped from the ground surface and removed from the project site. The removed vegetation shall be hauled to and deposited at an established landfill.
 - BIO-15: Revegetation and Hydroseeding. Upon completion of finish grading, all disturbed soil surfaces would be hydro-seeded with a seed mix containing locally occurring native forbs and shrubs. Invasive species shall not be included on any landscaping plans associated with this project.
 - BIO-16: Eucalyptus and Acacia. Immediately after felling a eucalyptus or acacia tree (within two to three minutes), a qualified herbicide applicator would apply a 50 percent solution of glyphosate to the exposed cambium

of the stump. The glyphosate application would inhibit stump sprouting and regeneration of the invasive trees.

Cultural Resources

The following measures would be implemented to avoid and minimize potential project impacts to cultural resources:

- CULTURAL-1: An Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan has been prepared for this project. The project contractor shall adhere to the requirements of this plan, which includes:
 1. Horizontal and vertical environmentally sensitive areas for CA-SLO-165 at the limits of the area of direct impacts. Fencing shall be placed at the pavement limits to isolate the horizontal environmentally sensitive area. The vertical environmentally sensitive area shall be within the site boundary of CA-SLO-165 beginning at two feet below the roadway and pavement surface and three feet below grade for lighting. No project activities shall be permitted within the environmentally sensitive area.
 2. Vertical environmentally sensitive area for CA-SLO-2222 at the limits of the area of direct impacts. The vertical Environmentally Sensitive Area shall be within the site boundary of CA-SLO-2222 beginning at three feet below the roadway and pavement surface and three feet below grade for lighting. No project activities shall be permitted within the environmentally sensitive area.
 3. Methods for environmentally sensitive area delineation and installation of temporary fencing.
 4. General archaeological and Native American monitoring procedures during ground-disturbing activities associated with the project.
 5. Protocol for inadvertent discoveries of potentially significant cultural materials from known or unidentified resources.
 6. Treatment of human remains if they were to be discovered during the course of the project.
 7. Responsible parties for all aspects of the action plan.
- CULTURAL-2: Initial ground-disturbing activities shall be monitored by a qualified archaeologist and representative of a local Tribal group. Archaeological monitoring shall be conducted by individuals who meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology, or by personnel under the direct supervision of such qualified professionals. The entire project area, including where construction begin and end signs will be located, shall be monitored by a qualified

archaeologist and Native American monitor during initial ground disturbance. Tribal monitors shall be decided through consultation. All initial ground disturbance shall be monitored in the entirety of the Area of Potential Effect. Specific details shall be outlined in the project's Monitoring Plan, which shall be prepared prior to construction.

Greenhouse Gases

The following measures would be implemented to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the project:

- GHG-1: Supplement existing construction environmental training with information on methods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to construction. This information shall be shared using a handout. The information in the handout should include, but is not limited to:
 - Scheduling deliveries outside of peak morning and evening commute hours.
 - Using available alternative fuels such as renewable diesel for construction equipment.
 - Using available alternative solar-powered equipment.
 - Using portable power stations instead of portable electric generators.
 - Maximizing the use of recycled materials in the project construction to the extent feasible.
- GHG-2: Maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition and use right sized equipment for the job.
- GHG-3: When feasible, limit idling to five minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment when not used in active operations.

List of Technical Studies Bound Separately (Volume 2)

- Air Quality Report and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Memorandum, Terry A. Hayes Associates Inc. (October 2025)
- Climate Change Report, Caltrans District 5 (May 2026)
- Community Impact Assessment Memorandum for the State Route 1/41 and Main Street Intersection Improvement Project, SWCA Environmental Consulting (December 2025)
- Historic Property Survey Report, SWCA Environmental Consulting (January 12, 2026)
 - Archaeological Survey Report State Route 1/State Route 41/Main Street Interchange Improvement Project, SWCA Environmental Consulting (June 2017)
 - Extended Phase I Report State Route 1/State Route 41/Main Street Interchange Improvement Project, SWCA Environmental Consulting (January 2026)
 - Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan State Route 1/State Route 41/Main Street Interchange Improvement Project, SWCA Environmental Consulting (January 2026)
- Location Hydraulic Study and Summary Floodplain Encroachment Report, GHD (February 2025)
- Natural Environment Study (Minimal Impacts) State Route 1/41 and Main Street Intersection Improvement Project, SWCA Environmental Consulting (December 2025)
- Noise and Vibration Technical Memorandum, Terry A. Hayes Associates Inc. (December 2025)
- Phase I Initial Site Assessment State Route 1/41 and Main Street Intersection Improvement Project, Parikh Consultants, Inc. (December 2025)
- State Route 1/State Route 41/Main Street Intersection Control Evaluation, Omni Means Engineering Solutions (May 2016)
- State Route 1/41 and Main Street Intersection Improvement Project Paleontological Resources Memorandum, SWCA Environmental Consulting (December 2025)
- Storm Water Data Report, GHD (September 2026)

- Traffic Analysis and Operations Report, GHD (September 2024)
- Visual Impact Assessment State Route 1/State Route 41/Main Street Interchange Improvement Project, SWCA Environmental Consulting (January 2026)
- Water Quality Technical Memorandum State Route 1/41 and Main Street Intersection Improvement Project, SWCA Environmental Consulting (October 2025)

To obtain a copy of one or more of these technical studies/reports or the Initial Study, please send your request to:

Matt Fowler
District 5 Environmental Division
California Department of Transportation
50 Higuera Street; San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Or send your request via email to: matt.c.fowler@dot.ca.gov

Please provide the following information in your request:

Project title: State Route 1, State Route 41, and Main Street Intersection Improvement

General location information: city of Morro Bay, county of San Luis Obispo

District number-county code-route-post mile: 05-SLO-1-30.0/30.4 and 05-SLO-41-0.0/0.15

Project ID number: 051500014/EA 05-0F670