

QUAIL VINEYARDS PROJECT

RESPONSES TO PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ERRATA CONCERNING THE INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

This Responses to Comments and Errata document contains responses to comments received during the public review period for the Quail Vineyards Project (proposed project) Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). The City of Morgan Hill, as lead agency, released the IS/MND for public review beginning on November 4, 2024 and ending on December 4, 2024, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15105.

According to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15073 and 15074, the lead agency must consider the comments received during consultation and review periods together with the IS/MND. However, unlike with an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), comments received on an IS/MND are not required to be attached to the negative declaration, nor must the lead agency make specific written responses to public agencies. Nonetheless, the lead agency has chosen to provide responses to those specific public comments that are related to the environmental analysis contained in the IS/MND.

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

The City of Morgan Hill received one comment letter from Liam Downey, President, Quail Meadows Homeowner's Association, during the open comment period on the IS/MND for the proposed project. The following section includes responses to the letter, and where revisions to the IS/MND text are required in response to a comment, new text is double underlined and deleted text is ~~struck through~~.

Comments that are not related to the environmental analysis contained in the IS/MND, but rather are focused on other topics such as project design, will be addressed separately by City staff.

Page 2 – Section A10 – Status of Native American Consultation

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), AB52 (Gatto 2014), formal notification and notification of consultation opportunity, pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21080.3.1 (hereafter PRC) was sent to the following:

- Native America Heritage Commission
- Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
- Mah Mutsun Tribal Band
- Mah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista
- Indian Canyon Mutsum Band of Costanoan
- Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of San Francisco Bay Area
- North Valley YUokuts Tirbe
- The Ohlone Indian Tribe Rumsen Am:Atur:ataj Ohlone
- Tamien Nation
- Tribal Cultural Resources Office

Page 32 – Special Status Wildlife Species

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Appendix G, does not require consideration of a proposed project's potential impacts to common wildlife species. The question (Question 'a') in Section IV, Biological Resources, of Appendix G, asks:

Would the project:

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

The wildlife species mentioned by the commenter (e.g., coyotes, owls, hawks, egrets, and herons) are not identified by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as candidate, sensitive, or special status. As a result, there is no requirement to analyze these species within the IS/MND. Notwithstanding, certain common bird species are protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, as noted on page 35 of the IS/MND. These include the general bird species mentioned by the commenter. Mitigation Measure IV-3 requires a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction nesting bird survey should construction occur during the nesting season (February 1 to August 31). If nesting birds are detected on-site, Mitigation Measure IV-3 ensures protection of nesting birds and their young.

Page 99 – Transportation – Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Facilities

Regarding the comment about the intersection of Santa Teresa and Watsonville Road, the City of Morgan Hill Transportation Master Plan (Table 16, Tier 1 Intersection Projects, page 101) states the following regarding this intersection:

- Install signal. Consider 1-lane roundabout with right-turn channelization if ROW can be acquired.

In recognition that the City is considering both a traffic signal and roundabout at the intersection of Santa Teresa and Watsonville Road, the following clarification is made to page 99 of the IS/MND:

It should also be noted that although not a part of the proposed project, the City of Morgan Hill plans to install a traffic signal or roundabout and eastbound turn lane with right-turn channelization at the intersection of Sunnyside Avenue/Santa Teresa Boulevard and Watsonville Road as outlined in the City's ~~Community-Based Transportation Plan (CBTP) Report~~ Transportation Master Plan.

Regarding the comment about the IS/MND's reference to bike lanes on Santa Teresa Boulevard, the following correction is made to page 100 of the IS/MND:

In the project vicinity, bike lanes are located along the length of Sunnyside Avenue. While bike lanes are not currently located along and Santa Teresa Boulevard, Class II bike lanes are recommended on it from Watsonville Road to California Avenue in the City's Bikeways, Trails, Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The proposed

project would provide a new six-foot-wide bicycle lane along the project frontage of Watsonville Road. Due to the relatively small size of the proposed project, the project is not expected to generate a significant amount of bicycle trips. Therefore, the demand generated by the proposed project could be accommodated by the existing bicycle facilities in the vicinity of the project site. Thus, the proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy related to the City's bicycle facilities.

Regarding the comment about MoGo, the following revisions have been made to Section XVII, Transportation, Question 'a', of the IS/MND (the bottom paragraph on page 100):

Furthermore, Mitigation Measure XVII-1 requires implementation of CAPCOA VMT reduction strategies T-23 and T-25. Specifically, the project applicant would be required to extend transit network coverage or hours (CAPCOA Handbook Strategy T-25) for the City's current MoGo or future rideshare service by paying a fee of \$4,800 per residential unit ($\$4,800 \times 14 \text{ residential units} = \$67,200$), which would support the City's current MoGo or future rideshare service for current and future use up to 20 years. The City of Morgan Hill calculated the MoGo fees using a rate of two persons per household. Under the existing zoning designations for the site (RE-1 and RPD), each single-family property is allowed at least one dwelling unit; therefore, the City conservatively estimated an average of two dwelling units per lot with an average of four persons per lot or two persons per unit. A MoGo one-way trip costs \$2.50 for one rider and MoGo service is provided six days a week. The City assumed that each person would take two round trips MoGo trips per day, six days a week, which totals to \$60 a week per person. As such, the City determined that the weekly MoGo cost per lot would be \$240 ($\$60 \times 4 \text{ persons}$). The City then multiplied the average cost per lot (\$240) by 20 years and determined that the cost associated with adding miles of services and added stop(s) for the proposed development would be \$4,800 per unit. Therefore, with 14 residential units, the applicant would be required to pay a fee of \$4,800 per residential unit ($\$4,800 \times 14 \text{ residential units} = \$67,200$). Mitigation Measure XVII-1 also requires the applicant to fund the construction of a 0.711-mile expansion of MoGo a rideshare service with up to two rideshare stops within the City of Morgan Hill.

For Question 'b', additional revisions are required for the MoGo discussion on pages 102 through 104 of the IS/MND, as follows:

The CAPCOA strategies that are applicable to and feasible for the proposed project are described below. CAPCOA VMT reduction strategies T-18 and T-20 are incorporated into the project design, while implementation of CAPCOA VMT reduction strategies T-23 and T-25 would be required through implementation of Mitigation Measures XVII-1.

- **T-18. Provide Pedestrian Network Improvement** – This measure will increase the sidewalk coverage to improve pedestrian access. Providing sidewalks and an enhanced pedestrian network encourages people to walk instead of drive. This mode shift results in a reduction in VMT and GHG emissions; and
- **T-20. Expand Bikeway Network** – This measure will increase the length of a city or community bikeway network. A bicycle network is an

interconnected system of bike lanes, bike paths, bike routes, and cycle tracks. Providing bicycle infrastructure with markings and signage on appropriately sized roads with vehicle traffic traveling at safe speeds helps to improve biking conditions (e.g., safety and convenience). In addition, expanded bikeway networks can increase access to and from transit hubs, thereby expanding the “catchment area” of the transit stop or station and increasing ridership. This encourages a mode shift from vehicles to bicycles, displacing VMT and thus reducing GHG emissions.

- **T-23. Community-Based Travel Planning** – This measure would target residences in the project area with community-based travel planning (CBTP). CBTP is a residential-based approach to outreach that provides households with customized information, incentives, and support to encourage the use of transportation alternatives in place of single occupancy vehicles, thereby reducing household VMT.
- **T-25. Extend Transit Network Coverage or Hours** – This measure would expand the local transit network by either adding or modifying existing transit service or extending the operation hours to enhance the service near the project site. Starting services earlier in the morning and/or extending services to late-night hours can accommodate the commuting times of alternative-shift workers. This encourages the use of transit and therefore reduce VMT and associated GHG emissions.

CAPCOA VMT reduction strategies T-18 and T-20 would be implemented through the proposed project’s design. For example, the proposed project would include the construction of sidewalks and bicycle lanes in the project vicinity, which are consistent with CAPCOA VMT reduction strategies T-18 and T-20, respectively, and thus, would result in a reduction in VMT for the proposed project. The CAPCOA Handbook’s GHG Reduction Formulas for T-18 and T-20 were relied upon to determine the reduction in VMT for the proposed project. Based on the CAPCOA Handbook’s GHG Reduction Formulas, the addition of approximately 0.73 mile of sidewalks and approximately 0.15 mile of bicycle lanes in the project area would result in a 0.62 percent reduction from the home-based VMT per resident associated with the proposed project. With the 0.62 percent reduction, home-based VMT per resident associated with the proposed project would be reduced to 21.9, which is still above the OPR’s recommended impact threshold of 20.94 VMT per capita. Therefore, implementation of additional CAPCOA VMT reduction strategies, such as T-23 Provide CBTP and T-25 Extend Transit Network Coverage or Hours would be required to further reduce the project’s VMT per capita to a less-than-significant level.

Because implementation of CAPCOA VMT reduction strategies T-23 and T-25 are not already incorporated into the proposed project, implementation of such strategies would be required by Mitigation Measure XVII-1. Consistent with CAPCOA VMT reduction strategy T-23, implementation of Mitigation Measure XVII-1 would require the project applicant to partner with a CBTP service provider such as the Santa Clara VTA or the City of Morgan Hill and ensure that CBTP services are available to project residents, and renewed on an annual basis. In compliance with CAPCOA VMT reduction strategy T-25, Mitigation Measure XVII-1 would also require the project applicant to pay fees, which would support the current City’s MoGo or future rideshare service for current and future use up to 20 years. Furthermore, Mitigation Measure XVII-1 would require the applicant to fund

the construction of a 0.711-mile expansion of MoGo a rideshare service through the new completed road with up to two rideshare stops (one located near Watsonville Road, and one near Secretariate Way and Santa Teresa intersection to be reviewed by the City Civil Engineer) within the City of Morgan Hill. Based on the CAPCOA Handbook's GHG Reduction Formulas for T-23 and T-25, implementation of CAPCOA VMT reduction strategies T-23 and T-25 would result in a VMT reduction of 2.28 and 2.71 percent, respectively. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure XVII-1, the home-based VMT per resident associated with the proposed project would be reduced by an additional 4.99 percent.

Based on the above, implementation of CAPCOA reduction strategies T-18, T-20, T-23, and T-25 would result in a total VMT reduction of approximately 5.61 percent and the home-based VMT per resident associated with the proposed project would be reduced from 22.04 to 20.79, which is below the OPR's recommended impact threshold of 20.94 VMT per capita.

Without implementation of Mitigation Measure XVII-1, the proposed project would result in a home-based VMT per resident that would exceed the applicable threshold of 20.94. As a result, the proposed project would conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b), and a **potentially significant** impact could occur.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the above impact to a *less-than-significant* level.

XVII-1. *The project applicant shall implement the following CAPCOA VMT reduction strategies to reduce the number of vehicle trips that would be generated by future residents, subject to review and approval by the City Engineer. The timing for each strategy is set forth below:*

1) Community-based travel planning (CAPCOA Handbook Strategy T-23)

Prior to resident occupancy, the project applicant shall partner with a CBTP service provider such as the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) or the City of Morgan Hill and ensure that CBTP services are available to project residents.

According to CAPCOA, this strategy would reduce project-generated residential VMT per capita by 2.28 percent.

2) Extend Transit Network Coverage or Hours (CAPCOA Handbook Strategy T-25)

Prior to issuance of a building permit, the project applicant shall pay a fee of \$4,800 per residential unit (\$4,800 x 14 residential units = \$67,200), which would support the City's current MoGo or future rideshare service for current and future use up to 20 years. ~~A total of 0.554 miles of MoGo service is located within~~

~~the 0.25-mile buffer surrounding the project site. The project applicant would be required to fund the construction of a 0.711-mile expansion of MoGo—a rideshare service through the new completed road with up to two rideshare stops (one located near Watsonville Road, and one near Secretariate Way and Santa Teresa intersection to be reviewed by the City Civil Engineer) within the City of Morgan Hill, the location and design of which shall be determined by the City of Morgan Hill Development Services Department. The rideshare stop(s) shall be installed and operational prior to certificate of occupancy of the first residence.~~

According to CAPCOA, this strategy would reduce project-generated residential VMT per capita by 2.71 percent.

The above revisions to the IS/MND reflect the expectation that MoGo, the City's on-demand rideshare service, will be ending in early 2025. Mitigation Measure XVII-1 has been revised to require the applicant to fund an alternative rideshare service should MoGo cease to operate. Thus, the effectiveness of the mitigation measure remains unchanged.

Page 103 – VMT Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Community-based travel planning (CBTP) has already been conducted for the City of Morgan Hill by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) as part of its partnership with the City in preparing the Morgan Hill Community-Based Transportation Plan. Mitigation Measure XVII-1(a) requires that project residents be made aware of existing and future CBTP services and their schedules and fares, such as VTA public transit, including ACCESS Paratransit Service, and Caltrain. The following CBTP projects are fully funded, as identified in the Morgan Hill CBTP: Santa Teresa-Hale Corridor Road and Trail between Dewitt and Main (Phase 1); Main Avenue Bike Lane and Sidewalk Project; Rider's Choice Pilot Program; Mobility Assistance Program (MAP); Regional Means-Based Fare Discount Program; and Morgan Hill Transit Amenities Improvement Project.