

City of Morro Bay Zoning Ordinance Update



Initial Study and Final Negative Declaration

Prepared for:

City of Morro Bay 955 Shasta Avenue Morro Bay, CA 93442

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**NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT
A NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

CITY OF MORRO BAY ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

1. **PROJECT TITLE:**

City of Morro Bay Zoning Ordinance Update

2. **LEAD AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS:**

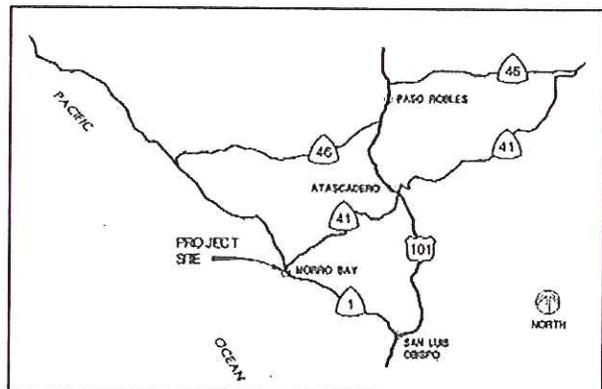
Public Services Department
City of Morro Bay
955 Shasta Avenue
Morro Bay, CA 93442

3. **CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE NUMBER:**

Greig Cummings
Planning Manager
(805) 772-6266
gcummings@morro-bay.ca.us

4. **PROJECT LOCATION:**

The City of Morro Bay is located on the western coast approximately midway between the metropolitan areas of San Francisco and Los Angeles. The City lies within the County of San Luis Obispo and about 12.5 miles north of the City of San Luis Obispo. The City is surrounded by unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County.



5. **PROJECT SPONSOR'S NAME AND ADDRESS:**

Greig Cummings
Planning Manager
955 Shasta Avenue
Morro Bay, CA 93442
(805) 772-6266
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6. **GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION:**

Various – Citywide

7. **ZONING:**

Various - Citywide

8. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The City is undertaking Citywide revisions to Title 17 – Zoning of the City’s Municipal Code in order to bring it into compliance with its recently adopted General Plan/Local Coastal Plan. The current Zoning Ordinance was adopted by the City on September 25, 1995 and certified by the California Coastal Commission on February 6, 1997. Subsequent minor amendments to the Zoning Ordinance have been made since that time.

On February 23, 2004, the City approved a revised General Plan/Local Coastal Plan for certification by the California Coastal Commission. The new General Plan/Local Coastal Plan reflects a combination of the City’s General Plan and Local Coastal Program into one working document that is internally consistent and up-to-date. An Initial Study and draft Negative Declaration was prepared for the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan and approved on February 23, 2004.

The purposes of this Zoning Ordinance Update Project are to:

- Implement the policies of, and ensure consistency with, the adopted General Plan/Local Coastal Plan;
- Streamline the processes, standards and discretionary review criteria for approvals;
- Update provisions for consistency with relevant federal and State law, including the Coastal Act; and
- Ensure that the Zoning Ordinance is easier to read and use.

The changes made are largely procedural and are aimed at easing use and clarity. Other changes include updating land use and zoning designations to reflect General Plan policies and current uses of parcels, and revising provisions that are outdated or not in conformance with Federal or State law. All the changes made are based on policies of the already adopted and approved General Plan/Local Coastal Plan. There are no changes made to land use designations or zoning designations that result in increased density, increased population potential or major infrastructure upgrades than those already evaluated in the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan.

9. **SURROUNDING LAND USES AND SETTING:**

See discussion of setting under “Evaluation of Environmental Impacts”.

10. **OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL IS REQUIRED:**

Changes to the City’s Zoning Ordinance are subject to review and approval by the California Coastal Commission.

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

 X I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to the earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

 I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

 I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

 I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

 I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated impact” on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Title

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be significantly affected by this project as indicated by the checklist in the following sections:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Aesthetics | Agricultural Resources | Air Quality |
| Biological Resources | Cultural Resources | Geology/Soils |
| Hazards & Hazardous Materials | Hydrology/Water Quality | Land Use/Planning |
| Mineral Resources | Noise | Population/Housing |
| Public Services | Recreation | Transportation/Traffic |
| Utilities/Service Systems | Mandatory Findings of Significance | |

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA

The City of Morro Bay, as the lead agency in this project, has entered into the environmental review process to assess potential impacts that could arise from implementation of the changes to the proposed Zoning Ordinance. Through this documentation process, the City of Morro Bay ensures that all of the possible environmental effects of the proposed plan are fully disclosed according to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

CEQA GUIDANCE

Appendix I of the State CEQA Guidelines was used in answering the checklist questions:

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the discussion. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the discussion shows that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained when it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including offsite as well as onsite, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. “Negative Declaration: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level (mitigation measures from earlier analyses may be cross-referenced).
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(c)(3)(D)). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a. Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b. Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.

- c. **Mitigation Measures.** For effects that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. **Supporting Information Sources:** A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project’s environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a. The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b. The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS				
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a scenic state highway?			X	
c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			X	
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in this area?			X	

SETTING

Scenic vistas generally include areas of high scenic quality that are visible to a number of people, including recreational travelers. Scenic vistas in the project area include the Santa Lucia foothills to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. Morro Bay is surrounded by hills and ridgelines with more than half of the City’s physical edge being coastline. The ocean and the hills are generally visible from area residences throughout the community. The landscape includes natural coastal terrain and agricultural lands. The City’s edge at the urban/rural boundary is also a defining characteristic of the City.

Other scenic resources or reference points in the area consist of:

- Morro Rock which can be seen from almost any location in the City;
- The sand spit which is visible from the Embarcadero, Coleman Drive, the State Park roads and from bluff and hillside residential areas;
- Morro Bay Power Plant which has three 450 feet high exhaust stacks, which are visible from miles away; and

- Morro Bay State Park which contains Black Hill, the golf course and campground, which comprise a large portion of the southern part of the City.

In 1999, the portion of Highway 1 north of Highway 101 in San Luis Obispo was declared an official "scenic highway". Of the approximately 53 miles of "scenic" Highway 1 winding through San Luis Obispo County, about six miles lies in Morro Bay.

The existing visual character and quality of the planning area varies among different portions of the City, depending on land use and density. The majority of the planning area is currently built-out.

The source of light and glare is due to the nighttime environment that comes from the Morro Bay High School Stadium and existing residential and commercial uses.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

State CEQA Guidelines consider an impact significant if the project will have "a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect."

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-d. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact to visual resources or aesthetics. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity. In addition, several provisions in the new Zoning Ordinance seek to protect visual resources or aesthetics, including new development regulations, bluff development standards, public access requirements, and sign regulations.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with aesthetics are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES:</p> <p>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 Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland.</p> <p>Would the project:</p>				
<p>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?</p>				X
<p>b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?</p>				X
<p>c. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?</p>				X

SETTING

Morro Bay contains approximately 300 acres of agricultural land within its city limits. Additionally, the City has interest in resource protection and land use planning for agricultural areas outside of the City. These agricultural lands creates a form of open space and defines the edges of a community, maintains open areas that are critical to the function of ground water recharge and percolation, and acts as a productive use of the land for which this area was historically noted.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-c. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact to agricultural resources. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local

Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity. In addition, provisions and required findings have been added to the Zoning Ordinance to limit any future conversion of farmland in accordance with the adopted GP/LCP policies.

Implementation of the proposed Zoning Ordinance will not result in a conversion of prime farmland, farmland of local importance, and grazing land, to non-agricultural uses.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with agricultural resources are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>III. AIR QUALITY</p> <p>Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations:</p> <p>Would the project:</p>				
<p>a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?</p>			X	
<p>b. Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?</p>			X	
<p>c. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?</p>			X	
<p>d. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?</p>			X	
<p>e. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?</p>			X	

SETTING

San Luis Obispo County is in moderate non-attainment for respirable particulate matter, or PM₁₀, and precursors to ozone. Sources of PM₁₀ emissions include agricultural operations, construction, and road dust. Vehicular emissions are the main source of precursors to ozone. In San Luis Obispo County, the Air Pollution Control District (APCD) regulates air quality through its Clean Air Plan (CAP) and construction monitoring, among other measures.

The two major stationary sources of air pollutant emissions affecting the City are the Morro Bay power plant and Hanson Concrete. The Morro Bay Power Plant had no emission violations between

1993 and 1998 and Hanson Concrete has had no incidents of emission violations between 1993 and 1998.

Other sources of air pollutant emissions are small and large-scale businesses and facilities including dry cleaners, gas stations, the wastewater treatment plant, and the harbor dredging operations.

The Zoning Ordinance does not specifically propose projects that may create objectionable odors, such as certain types of processing plants, or farms.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-e. Increases in population and/or density could result in increased vehicle traffic and construction activity that could impact air quality. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact to air quality. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity. In addition, performance standard provisions were added to the Zoning Ordinance to monitor and limit the level of smoke, particulate matter, odor and other air contaminants.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with air quality are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			X	
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native residents or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			X	
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f. Conflict with provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?			X	

SETTING

The City of Morro Bay has many sensitive habitat areas within and immediately adjacent to the community. These areas include critical habitat for several rare and endangered plant and animal species.

Morro Bay and its estuary comprise a large wetland within the City of Morro Bay, which is one of the most important wetlands on the central coast of California. The Morro, Chorro, Toro, Alva Paul and Los Osos Creeks provide habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms, and food and shelter for migratory birds and other animals. Associated with these creeks are riparian scrub and riparian woodland communities. These communities are characterized by sparse to dense corridors of vegetation occurring adjacent to the streams.

Other sensitive habitats within the City include:

- **Morro Rock.** Morro Rock is located near the mouth of Morro Bay and is the northernmost visible igneous plug in a chain of peaks that extend from Islay Hill in San Luis Obispo to Morro Rock. The Rock is connected to the mainland by a strand that is comprised of fill materials, much of it dredged from the bay during past operations. The ecological preserve located on Morro Rock serves as a nesting site the federally endangered Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). It is also a resting site for many other bird species.
- **Fairbanks Point.** Fairbanks Point is part of Morro Bay State Park and is located at the southern end of Morro Bay’s City limits. The grove of eucalyptus trees located at Fairbanks Point serves as a major nesting site for herons, egrets and cormorants.
- **Black Hill Natural Area.** This upland area of Morro Bay State Park is located southeast of the developed part of the City. The golf course is southwest of Black Hill. The dominant plant community within the Black Hill Natural Area is coastal sage scrub. Within the coastal sage scrub community are such species as California sagebrush, deerweed and buckwheat. The community also contains species characteristic of chaparral and grasslands. As is typical of coastal foothill areas, the grasslands are characterized by pastureland and scattered grass openings in the chaparral. The rare (federal species of concern) Jones's layia (*Layia jonesii*) is located here.
- **Western Snowy Plover Critical Habitat.** The western snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*) is a small shorebird, listed as federally threatened. This bird occurs on the Washington, Oregon and California coasts including beaches within the City of Morro Bay. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service have designated critical habitat areas for the threatened western snowy plover that include portions of Morro Strand State Beach and the Morro Bay Sand Spit.

- **Pygmy Oak Forest.** The Elfin Forest Natural Area on the southeastern shore of Morro Bay is a diverse and complex assemblage of natural plant communities that includes coastal brackish marsh, riparian woodland fringe, pygmy oak woodland, grassland, coastal dune scrub and oak manzanita association. It supports a documented 25 species of mammals, over 110 kinds of birds, and 11 species of reptiles and amphibians. San Luis Obispo County acts as the lead agency in the administration of the Elfin Forest.
- **Bird Sanctuary.** The City has designated itself as a “bird sanctuary.” The bay and nearby areas are home to hundreds of species both as residents and migrants. Morro Bay is nationally known for the abundance of avian species and usually ranks near the top of the Audubon Society’s annual count.

The Morro Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) is a federally funded program whose mission is to work with the community to implement the conservation plan and oversee the restoration efforts.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-e. Increases in development could result in increased habitat loss and degradation that could impact biological resources. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on biological resources. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

f. There is no adopted local or regional conservation plan that this Zoning Ordinance update may be in conflict with.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with biological resources are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES				
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?			X	
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?			X	
c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	
d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

SETTING

The City of Morro Bay’s archaeological resources include prehistoric and ethnohistoric Native American archaeological sites, historic archaeological sites, historic buildings, and elements or areas of the natural landscape that have traditional cultural significance.

The City of Morro Bay supported prehistoric populations. Surveys have been required with several development projects, and they indicate a significant Native American presence, including Chumash and Salinan, especially around the bay, near creeks, and near outcroppings suitable for grinding acorn mortars. Surveys will continue to be conducted prior to development near known sites and previously un-surveyed locations suspected of containing such resources. The results of all such surveys should continue to be compiled by the City and maintained as proprietary information not for general public knowledge.

At present, the City of Morro Bay does not have an official historical society. Neither is there a local program for the evaluation and official designation of historic sites. Morro Rock is the City’s only designated historical landmark.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-d. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on cultural resources. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and

approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with cultural resources are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS				
Would the project:				
a. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated in 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.			X	
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv. Landslides?			X	
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?			X	
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable because of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No 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?			X	
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?			X	

SETTING

Morro Bay is located in the Coastal Franciscan domain that lies along the mountains and hills associated with the Santa Lucia Range. The Santa Lucia Range resulted from uplift during the Pliocene and Quaternary periods.

The surface geology within the domain consists of a northwest-trending sliver of largely Franciscan formation rocks, bounded by the Hosgri fault and West Huasna fault on the west and the Nacimiento fault and the Rinconada fault on the east. The Franciscan complex is a mixture of igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks. Cretaceous-age (65 to 140 million years old) and Tertiary-age (2 to 65 million years old) sedimentary rocks, including an unnamed Cretaceous sandstone, and a relatively small amount of Lospe, Vaqueros, Rincon, Monterey and Pismo formations, overlie the Franciscan Formation basement rocks in some parts of the region. The domain is characterized by moderate earthquake activity during the Quaternary period and has numerous northwest-striking, mainly northeast-dipping faults, with uncertain potential to generate future earthquakes.

The main geologic hazards associated with this domain are groundshaking, liquefaction or seismic related settlement of alluvium in the low-lying areas of the coastal portion of the domain, tsunami and coastal erosion in ocean front areas, and severe landslide potential on moderate to steep hillsides. The slopes of the Santa Lucia Mountains are underlain by mostly the Franciscan Formation and other Cretaceous age rocks that are considered to be the formations most susceptible to landslides in the County. Much of the northern coastal plain is characterized as a wave cut platform on which Quaternary- age marine terrace deposits overlie the older bedrock. Streams in the region are typically bordered by steep to moderately steep terrain, and the bottoms of stream valleys contain Quaternary- to Recent-age alluvium, which overlies the bedrock.

A large portion of Morro Bay is underlain by ancient sand dunes, including the Bay itself. They are interbedded with water laid clays and gravels that have been transported and deposited by streams. These ancient dune sand areas are stabilized and contain deep, coarse textured soils. They are subject to excessive drainage, rapid permeability, and wind and water erosion. The potential for liquefaction concerns are estimated at a high potential.

The foothills of Morro Bay have been generally categorized as “shallow upland” soils. Within this category, two soil groups can be identified. One is formed on firm shales, sandstone or mudstone,

and is highly prone to erosion in view of the character of the soil and steep slopes. The second group is a clayey soil formed on shale or igneous bedrock. Situated on gently rolling terrain, erosion is moderate and the subsoil permeability is slow.

Morro Bay is characterized by fairly gently inclined slopes with gradients of less than 50 percent on slopes consisting of older alluvium and late Pleistocene dune sands. The potential for slope stability concerns are estimated at a low potential.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-e. Increases in development could result in increased building activity that could impact the geology and soils. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on geology and soils. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity. In addition, provisions were added to the Zoning Ordinance to limit development impacts to geology and soils, including a new chapter on bluff development standards that includes detailed submittal requirements such as a geology report.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with geology and geologic hazards are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIAL Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
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?			X	
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	
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?			X	
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X

g. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			X	
h. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?			X	

SETTING

Due to the quantity and frequency with which hazardous materials are shipped through the region, transportation-related accidents pose a significant hazardous material risk to City residents. Major modes of hazardous material transportation include the use of State Highways 1 and 41 and numerous underground pipelines. In addition to the potential for transportation related releases of hazardous materials, potential exposure of the public to hazardous materials can result from their use by industry, agriculture, commercial, and service establishments. Household use of hazardous materials also has the potential to result in their release into the environment.

The Diablo Canyon Power Plant is the primary radiation hazard risk in the region. An uncontrolled release of radioactive material would have the potential to result in significant impacts. To prepare for potential emergency situations that might develop at the power plant, extensive warning, reporting, and response plans have been developed. Updated information regarding the Emergency Response Plan is distributed to the public each year. Additional potential radiation hazards include low-level radioactive waste from medical facilities and elsewhere. The hauling, handling and disposal of these materials are governed by federal regulations.

Morro Bay has three electrical transmission corridors that distribute electricity generated from the Morro Bay Power plant. These transmission corridors generally bring power into San Luis Obispo County from a variety of outside sources. These electric transmission corridors are capable of either transmitting power into or out of the county.

The Morro Bay Fire Department provides fire response and prevention services. The low-density urban development predominant in the City helps to minimize potential urban fire hazards. The California Department of Forestry (CDF) is responsible for preventing and controlling wildland fires.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-h. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on hazards and hazardous material. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity. In addition, performance standard provisions were added to the Zoning Ordinance to require any use, handling, storage and transportation of hazardous and extremely hazardous materials to comply with the State’s Hazardous Materials Regulations and any other applicable laws.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with hazardous materials and fires are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</p> <p>Would the project:</p>				
<p>a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?</p>			X	
<p>b. Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?</p>			X	
<p>c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?</p>			X	
<p>d. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?</p>			X	
<p>e. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?</p>			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			X	
g. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?			X	
h. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
i. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?			X	
j. Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?			X	

SETTING

In October 2003, the City of Morro Bay adopted a Storm Water Management Plan in accordance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provisions for compliance with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II requirements. The Storm Water Management Plan provides an integrated approach for prevention of pollution from storm water runoff in Morro Bay. This is an important water quality management tool that Morro Bay uses through public outreach, education and participation through best management practices to help prevent pollution problems at the source.

Morro Bay’s water consumption has generally been decreasing since the late 1980's, and reached a low in 1992. Although total consumption has decreased, future development will most likely cause water consumption to increase.

The completion of the State Water Project’s Coastal Pipeline Branch has made more water available to the Morro Bay community. State water allocations total more than 1,300 AF/Y for municipal and residential use. The City currently supplements 10 percent or more of its total supply with municipal wells, depending on the efficiency and availability of water in the State system. Additionally, Morro Bay is served by seawater extraction wells that serve the City desalinization facility in times of shortage.

The City of Morro Bay holds 1,758 AF/Y in stream allocations from the Chorro and Morro Creek basins. As previously discussed, the City currently receives its water from the State Water Project, but

operational problems or peak usage days on the State Water System would stimulate the need to withdraw from the groundwater basins.

The City of Morro Bay has standards regulating drainage within the city limits. Compliance with these standards is examined for portions of the planning area that have the potential for annexation to the City. City standards focus on areas located within or near the 100-year flood plain.

Several areas within the community are prone to flood hazard including areas adjacent to creek channels and the Morro Bay Estuary. Areas considered to be prone to flood hazards are those subject to a 100-year flood. A 100-year flood is an event determined by hydrologic analysis to have a one percent chance per year of occurrence and is the standard event from which residential and commercial areas are to be protected. Flooding may also occur in low-lying areas that have poor drainage, even during moderately sized storms. Many factors can increase the severity of floods, including fires in watershed areas, the placement of structures or fill material in flood-prone areas and areas of tidal influence, and increased runoff that results from the development of impervious surfaces such as roadways and rooftops.

A tsunami is a wave caused by a displacement of the ocean floor, usually by movement along a fault. As the wave approaches shore, it increases in size and can cause extensive damage to coastal structures. Several small tsunami events have been recorded in San Luis Obispo County. However, previous studies have predicted a maximum tsunami wave “run up” of approximately 9.5 feet above sea level for a 100-year event. Wave run up could be increased substantially if a tsunami occurred during a major storm. Areas of tsunami hazard potential include portions of the community at elevations near sea level.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-j. Increases in development could result in increased construction activity that could impact the hydrology and water quality. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on hydrology and water quality. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with hydrology and water quality are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. LAND USE PLANNING Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?				X
b. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?			X	
c. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X

SETTING

Morro Bay is divided into a series of residential and non-residential land use designations and zoning districts. These different zoning districts identify the locations in the City where specific types of land uses may occur. The zoning districts used in this Zoning Ordinance are derived from the land use designations approved in the City’s General Plan/Local Coastal Plan.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-b. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on land use and planning. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

c. The proposed Zoning Ordinance does not conflict with a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. In fact, these areas are preserved through the Open Space – Natural zoning designation.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with land use and planning are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. MINERAL RESOURCES Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
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?				X

SETTING

Since the Army Corps of Engineers concluded its mining of Morro Rock, there are no known mineral resources extracted in Morro Bay.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-b. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on the mineral resources. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

CONCLUSIONS

Impacts associated with mineral resources are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. NOISE. Would the project result in:			X	
a. Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b. Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c. A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
d. A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

SETTING

The existing noise environments in the City of Morro Bay are composed of sounds from many sources. The most significant source of noise in Morro Bay is road traffic from Highway 1, Morro Bay Boulevard, Main Street, Highway 41 and South Bay Boulevard being associated with high noise levels.

Noise associated with individual development projects occurs throughout Morro Bay. Because of its intermittent nature, it is not possible to characterize construction noise either by location or intensity. However, construction noise typically ranges from 70 to 95 dBA at 50 feet from the noise source, depending on the amount and types of equipment used.

The Duke Energy (formerly PG&E) Morro Bay plant does not exceed 45 dBA Leq in any portion of Morro Bay.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-d. Increases in population and/or density could result in increased vehicle traffic and construction activity that could impact noise quality. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on noise levels. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity. In addition, performance standard provisions were added to the Zoning Ordinance to monitor and limit the level of noise.

e-f. The plan area is not located near an airport or in the vicinity of a private airstrip.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with noise are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING				
Would the project:				
a. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?			X	
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	
c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	

SETTING

The population of Morro Bay according to the 2000 census was 10,350, which was an increase of less than 200 persons since 1990, largely as a result of limited land development availability, and a local building permit restriction due to lack of water. In comparison, the population of San Luis Obispo County increased by nearly 17,000 since 1990.

In 1984, the citizens of the community enacted Measure F, a voter initiative that set the maximum population for the City at 12,200 and requires voter approval to increase the population above this limit.

At the time of the 1990 Census, Morro Bay had 5,694 housing units. By 2000 that figure increased to 6,251. During that 10 year period, an average of about 43 housing units have been constructed annually in Morro Bay. Recently, the construction rate has increased slightly from the ten-year trend to approximately 65 units per year.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-c. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on the environment. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with population and housing is considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. 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:				
i. Fire protection?			X	
ii. Police protection?			X	
iii. Schools?			X	
iv. Parks?			X	
v. Other Public Facilities?			X	

SETTING

The Morro Bay Fire Department provides fire response and prevention services. Police protection services are provided by the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Department substation located in Los Osos. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) provides additional police protection.

San Luis Coastal Unified School District (SLCUSD) operates two elementary schools and a high school within the City of Morro Bay: Del Mar Elementary, Morro Bay Elementary, and Morro Bay High School.

The City manages Del Mar Park, Anchor Street Park, Keiser Park, Morro Bay City Park, Centennial Park, Coleman Park, Bayshore Bluffs, Tidelands Park, Cloisters, Monte Young Park, Morro Bay High School, and Morro Rock Beach. In addition, San Luis Obispo County operates the Morro Bay Golf Course in Morro Bay State Park. The state parks include Morro Bay State Park, Morro Strand State Park and Montana de Oro State Park offer camping facilities, passive recreational opportunities, and active recreational facilities.

Government buildings in Morro Bay are predominantly located in the vicinity of the Downtown. They include the City Hall, Public Services building, Community Center (Housing Recreation & Parks), Public Library and Veteran's Hall.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-e. Increases in population and/or density could result in increased use of public services that could impact the public services quality. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on public services. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with public services are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. 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?			X	
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?			X	

SETTING

Morro Bay offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities such as hiking, nature walks, bird watching and sightseeing. Active recreation such as water sports, such as surfing, fishing, diving, and recreational boating, are also prevalent along Morro Bay's shoreline areas. Morro Bay also has outdoor recreation facilities including sports fields, a roller hockey rink, a skate park, and basketball courts.

The state parks (including Morro Bay State Park, Morro Strand State Park and Montana de Oro State Park) offer camping facilities, passive recreational opportunities, and active recreational facilities. In addition, San Luis Obispo County operates the Morro Bay Golf Course in Morro Bay State Park. The City manages Del Mar Park, Anchor Street Park, Keiser Park, Morro Bay City Park, Centennial Park, Coleman Park, Bayshore Bluffs, Tidelands Park, Cloisters, Monte Young Park, Morro Bay High School, and Morro Rock Beach.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-b. Increases in population and/or density could result in increased recreation activity that could impact recreation quality. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on recreation. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with recreation are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC Would the project:				
a. Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?			X	
b. Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			X	
c. Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			X	
e. Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	
f. Result in inadequate parking capacity?			X	
g. Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?			X	

SETTING

Morro Bay is primarily a residential and commercial community that is cut by a major regional roadway, Highway 1. Highway 41 also terminates in Morro Bay bringing travelers from the east. Highway 1 and Main Street carry the highest levels of traffic in the community and are used for intra-community trips. Traffic flows well on these facilities during most periods. The bulk of the City's traffic is generated at the local residential road level and then flows to the arterials that connect to the adjacent highways.

Highways

Highway 1 bisects the town on a northwest-southeast alignment and provides regional access to Morro Bay. Highway 1 is designated as a State Scenic Highway. The highway contains 4 lanes within Morro Bay. Highway 1 carries between 19,000 and 24,000 ADT with the City.

Highway 41 intersects Highway 1 and provides regional access to and from Morro Bay and U.S. Highway 101. Highway 41 contains two lanes within Morro Bay and carries about 8,800 ADT west of the Highway 1 junction.

Arterial Roadways

Main Street extends southbound from Yerba Buena Street as a two-lane arterial through Morro Bay leading into State Park Road. The Main Street/Highway 41 intersection operates at LOS D during the P.M. peak commute period (Higgins Associates, 1999). The one-way stop intersection of Main Street/Highway 1 southbound operates at LOS A during the P.M. peak hour. Signals are present at the Main Street/Quintana Road intersection, which operates at LOS A.

Morro Bay Boulevard is classified as an arterial in the existing circulation element. This two-lane roadway extends west from the Highway 1 intersection through central downtown Morro Bay and serves commercial properties along the route. The Morro Bay Boulevard/ Highway 1 southbound off-ramp intersection operates at LOS E during the P.M. peak hour period. The Morro Bay Boulevard/Quintana Road intersection is also congested during the P.M. peak hour period. These poor service levels are primarily due to traffic exiting Highway 1 northbound and southbound traveling to and from destinations including downtown and the Embarcadero area. The Morro Bay Boulevard/Kern Avenue intersection serves as residential access and operates at LOS B during the P.M. commute period. The Morro Bay/Shasta Avenue operates at LOS A during the P.M. peak hour period.

Collector and Local Roadways

The City has several roadways that are currently designated as either major or minor collector roads. By definition, collector roads are intended to connect adjacent land uses to the arterial roadway system. In the case of Morro Bay, collector roads connect local residential roads to the arterial system that provide access to the surrounding highways. Some examples of the currently designed collector roads include San Jacinto Street, Kern Avenue and Ironwood Avenue. These roadways carry relatively low volumes (typically less than 1,000 ADT) and operate in the LOS A-B range.

Level of Service

Tables 1 and 2 summarize the existing volume and level of service information for the City's key intersections and roadways.

TABLE 1: INTERSECTION SERVICE LEVELS		
Intersection	Control	LOS
Route 1 / San Jacinto	Signal	LOS B
Route 1 SB / Route 41	1-Way Stop	LOS A
Route 1 NB / Route 41	1-Way Stop	LOS B
Main / Route 41	4-Way Stop	LOS C
Main / Route 1 SB	1-Way Stop	LOS A
Main / Quintana	Signal	LOS A
Morro Bay Blvd / Shasta	4-Way Stop	LOS B
Morro Bay Blvd / Kern	2-Way Stop	LOS B
Morro Bay Blvd / Quintana	4-Way Stop	LOS D
Morro Bay Blvd / Route 1 SB	2-Way Stop	LOS E
<i>Source: ATE, 1999.</i>		

TABLE 2: ROADWAY SERVICE LEVELS		
Roadway	ADT	LOS
Highway 1	24,000	LOS A-B
Highway 41	8,800	LOS C
Main n/o Route 41	8,300	LOS A
Main s/o Route 41	9,900	LOS A
Main n/o Route 1	16,600	LOS D
Main s/o Morro Bay Blvd	6,200	LOS A
Harbor e/o Main	3,600	LOS A
Morro Bay Blvd e/o Main	5,000	LOS A
Morro Bay Blvd e/o Kern	12,200	LOS B
Quintana n/o Morro Bay Blvd	9,500	LOS D
Piney s/o Morro Bay Blvd	3,000	LOS A
Kern s/o Morro Bay Blvd	3,400	LOS A
<i>Source: ATE, 1999.</i>		

Traffic Safety

There are several locations in the City that are prone to certain types of accidents. Morro Bay Boulevard at Quintana Road and Highway 1 has a series of conflicting movements that occur in a short distance, some vehicles are traveling at high speeds, and some drivers are unfamiliar with the street conditions. There are also accidents at the intersections on Highway 1 where movement from the side streets is in conflict with highway traffic. In particular, sideswipe accidents occur at the Highway 1/San Jacinto Avenue intersection. There are also some accidents to note at the downtown intersections at Main Street/Morro Bay Boulevard where visibility from side streets is sometimes blocked by parked vehicles.

Public Transit

Transit service within the city limits consists of Dial-A-Ride services (DAR). DAR is a door-to-door public transit system for all ages, which is also accessible to disabled persons.

Two transit plans constitute the City transit policies: the San Luis Obispo Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and the Short-Range Transportation Development Plan (TDP). The RTP was prepared by SLOCOG of which the City of Morro Bay is a member. This plan outlines a regional transportation system emphasizing coordination of transportation plans and programs on a countywide level. The RTP sets goals, policies and programs for public transit.

The purpose of the TDP is to increase effectiveness of public transit planning, management, and operations in Morro Bay by providing a comprehensive guide to assist the City in making decisions regarding the delivery of public transit services for the next five years. The TDP evaluates the inter-relationship between Morro Bay DAR and the regional public transit systems serving Morro Bay.

The City is a member of the Central Coast Transit Regional Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that operates Central Coastal Transit and is also a member of the San Luis Obispo County Area Transit Authority (TPA) that operates the Runabout.

Morro Bay trolley service began in 1994 with a single trolley; a second was added in 1999. The trolley route completes a one-half mile loop with 14 stops between Downtown Morro Bay and the Embarcadero. The trolley runs seasonally from Memorial Day to the first weekend in October.

Parking

Parking is accommodated for each land use either on the street or off the street or a combination of both. In the case of residential areas, usually one or two spaces per unit are provided on the property within garages or carports. These spaces are almost invariably for the use of the residents' own vehicles. Additional vehicles are generally parked on the street.

The City adopted a Parking Management area outlining the area where the City would accept in-lieu fees to meet parking requirements. Some of the requirements under the ordinance are that fees collected within the parking management area must be spent in the area.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-g. Increases in population could result in increased parking and transit need as well as an increase in vehicle activity that could impact transportation and traffic quality. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on the environment. The changes made were

largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

CONCLUSION

Impacts associated with traffic and circulation are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?			X	
b. Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
c. Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could have significant environmental effects?			X	
d. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements necessary?			X	
e. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?			X	
f. Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?			X	
g. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

SETTING

The unincorporated community of Cayucos and the City of Morro Bay share existing wastewater treatment facilities at 35 and 65 percent, respectively. Each community operates its own individual wastewater collection system. The Wastewater Treatment Plant provides advanced primary treatment to effluent, which is discharged through a 5,000-foot ocean outfall. The plant discharges an average of 1.5 million gallons per day (mgd).

Morro Bay has generally hilly terrain with several major watercourses passing through the City that carry storm runoff from large areas outside of the City. With the exception of those water courses, the storm drainage patterns of the City are urban in nature, i.e. smaller localized watersheds concentrating and conveying runoff from urban type development on the local street system and storm drainage facilities. As the town has grown, a system of storm drainage improvements has been constructed.

The City has two sources of water available for allocation to new development, “banked” water accumulated under its previous Water Allocation Model as approved by the Coastal Commission by the issuance of Coastal Development Permit 04-81-309A3, and new sources of water available to serve development identified in the adopted and certified Water Management Plan.

The Gas Company provides natural gas to the majority of the City. There are natural gas lines under most streets in the City. Electrical, telephone and cable television communication lines are located throughout the City. In many cases, these utility lines are located above ground, suspended from poles located in parkways or within easements in rear yards. The City requires utilities to be placed underground in all new developments. Solid waste disposal is located at Cold Canyon landfill.

DISCUSSION OF CHECKLIST ANSWERS

a-g. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on the environment. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

CONCLUSION

The impacts associated with utilities and service systems are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife species population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			X	
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, and the effects of probable future projects)			X	
c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

DISCUSSION

a-c. Under the Zoning Ordinance update, no changes were made to land use designations or zoning designations that resulted in increased density, increased population potential, major infrastructure upgrades, or other development that would have a significant impact on the environment. The changes made were largely procedural and reflect policies already adopted and approved by the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan which has undergone environmental review and for which a negative declaration was approved. The changes made were aimed at easing use and clarity.

CONCLUSION

The impacts associated with the Zoning Ordinance update are considered less than significant impact on the environment.

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CITATIONS

The following documents are incorporated by reference into this negative declaration:

- General Plan/Local Coastal Plan (Approved February 23, 2004 for California Coastal Commission Certification, Resolution 17-04)
- General Plan/Coastal Land Use Plan – Initial Study and Draft Negative Declaration (October 9, 2003)
- Title 17 – Zoning Ordinance (Public Review Draft, July 2004)
- Title 17 – Zoning Ordinance – Proposed Changes Matrix
- San Luis Obispo County Department of Planning and Building. San Luis Obispo County General Plan: Safety Element, 1999.
- NPDES Plan

LIST OF PREPARERS

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