

County of San Mateo
Planning and Building Department

**REVISED INITIAL STUDY
ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION CHECKLIST**
(To Be Completed by Planning Department)

Changes from the original published Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), dated September 17, 2025, are shown in double underline and overstrike.

1. **Project Title:** Smilin Dogs
2. **County File Number:** PLN2021-00432 & ~~PLN2022-00326~~
3. **Lead Agency Name and Address:** County of San Mateo, Planning & Building Department, 455 County Center, 2nd Floor, Redwood City, CA 94063
4. **Contact Person and Phone Number:** Summer Burlison, Senior Planner, 650/ 363-1815
5. **Project Location:** 123 Seaside School Road, San Gregorio
6. **Assessor's Parcel Number and Size of Parcel:** 081-250-030, 150 acres
7. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:** Konrad Thaler, Smilin Dogs, 251 Old County Road, San Carlos, CA 94070
8. **Name of Person Undertaking the Project or Receiving the Project Approval (if different from Project Sponsor):** N/A
9. **General Plan Designation/Local Coastal Plan Designation:** Agriculture
10. **Zoning:** Planned Agricultural District/Coastal Development (PAD/CD)
11. **Description of the Project:**

The applicant is seeking an After-the-Fact Coastal Development Permit (CDP), Planned Agricultural District Permit, Architectural Review Permit, and Kennel Permit to allow for a dog walking operation for a maximum of 75 dogs per day (Monday – Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., no weekends) within a fenced 23-acre portion of a 150-acre parcel located in San Gregorio. The dog walking operation supports a doggy daycare business, Smilin Dogs, located in the City of San Carlos, California. The subject San Gregorio project site is a day-use exercise/walking venue for the business. The ~~project~~ applicant also proposes to legalize a five-stall carport structure and 3 cargo storage containers that support the dog walking activity. A regularly serviced portable toilet is onsite for staff use.

Walking Operation

Each weekday approximately five converted Smilin Dog passenger vans, each containing approximately 10-15 medium to large size dogs (in excess of 25 pounds), travel from their licensed San Carlos dog daycare to the project site for off-leash walking within the six fenced upland fields consisting of approximately 23-acres. The dogs stay in groups with a staff handler as they move between the upland exercise fields. Dog waste is collected daily and taken to

San Carlos for disposal offsite. The exercise fields are mowed each spring, and no grading or tilling is necessary to accommodate the operation. Each field contains one or two small, simple strawbale and post shade structures for the dogs. Small plastic drinking water basins are filled only when the fields are in use and feeding is conducted at the San Carlos facility. No utilities are involved to support the onsite operation.

An existing dirt and gravel access road crosses the property from Seaside School Road to a level carport parking area. The access road was improved in the 1990s for irrigation pond construction access and staging.

After arrival, the dogs are unloaded into an enclosed covered pen where the dogs are provided water and allowed to relieve themselves before walking. One employee walks a pack of dogs through a fenced alleyway to one of six fenced fields. At separate intervals, five packs of dogs are each moved to their fields, which are rotated daily to reduce overuse. The fields are all enclosed with 6-foot-tall woven wire fencing. The dogs are always supervised.

Staff walk the same dogs on a weekly reoccurring schedule and in an orderly manner. The dogs are under voice control and positive reinforcement is used to keep the individual groups with their walkers. Each dog must pass a temperament test at the Smilin Dogs facility in San Carlos before being eligible for walking at the project site; this includes testing for recall and shyness/skittishness.

No changes to existing agricultural use on the property are proposed. An existing legal cottage onsite is being redesignated as an affordable housing unit in the northern portion of the property to relinquish a density credit for the Smilin Dogs operation; no physical site or building changes are proposed for the living unit redesignation. The project involves no tree removal and no grading. The project site is located within the Cabrillo Highway State Scenic Corridor and La Honda Road County Scenic Corridor. The CDP is appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

12. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:** The project parcel is located approximately ½-mile south of La Honda Road (Highway 84) and 1.3 miles east of Cabrillo Highway (Highway 1) in the San Gregorio area of San Mateo County. The 150-acre parcel consists of two residences and miscellaneous accessory agricultural buildings (i.e., barns, sheds) in the northern portion of the property, active agricultural crop fields in the middle section of the property and an adjacent man-made irrigation pond to the south of the ag fields. In the southern portion of the property is the approximately 23-acre fenced project site that consists of grassy, gently sloped, open fields. An intermittent stream with riparian corridor runs north of the irrigation pond and these features act as a visible delineation between the active agricultural fields and the southern dog walking fields. The project site is a former agricultural field that is fenced and includes a five-stall metal carport structure and three cargo containers used for storage. An existing access road leads from Seaside School Road to the project area. Surrounding properties include large rural parcels used for active crop fields, rural residential development, and open sloped terrain; the nearest neighboring residence is over 500 feet to the south of the project site area.
13. **Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required:** California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Responsible Agency)
14. **Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the**

determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?: No California Native American tribes have requested consultation for the project pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1. Furthermore, the result of a Sacred Lands File check by the Native American Heritage Commission was negative.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” or “Significant Unless Mitigated” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

	Aesthetics		Energy		Public Services
	Agricultural and Forest Resources		Hazards and Hazardous Materials		Recreation
	Air Quality		Hydrology/Water Quality		Transportation
X	Biological Resources		Land Use/Planning		Tribal Cultural Resources
	Climate Change		Mineral Resources		Utilities/Service Systems
	Cultural Resources		Noise		Wildfire
	Geology/Soils		Population/Housing	X	Mandatory Findings of Significance

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show 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 where 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 off-site as well as on-site, 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 Environmental Impact Report (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,” as described in 5. below, may be cross-referenced).

5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration (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. Sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

1. AESTHETICS. Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
1.a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, views from existing residential areas, public lands, water bodies, or roads?			X	
<p>Discussion: The project property forms part of the general rural agricultural backdrop to La Honda Road (Highway 84) and Cabrillo Highway (Highway 1). The site is more than 0.35 miles from La Honda Road and further from Cabrillo Highway. The dog walking operation involves low-intensity activities and minimal development that are compatible with the rural agricultural character of the area and would be minimally visible from any public view points due to the distance, travel speed, vegetation and topography, and relative prominence of foreground development. Therefore, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on the aesthetic character of the area.</p> <p>Source: Project location; Project plans.</p>				

1.b. Substantially damage or destroy scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
<p>Discussion: The project site is located in the Cabrillo Highway State Scenic Corridor; however, the project does not involve substantial impact to scenic resources. The project involves minimal development and activities that are compatible to the rural character of the area. Therefore, no mitigation is necessary.</p> <p>Source: Project location; Project plans.</p>				
1.c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, such as significant change in topography or ground surface relief features, and/or development on a ridgeline? (Public views are those that are experienced from 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?				X
<p>Discussion: The project site is in the rural San Gregorio area of San Mateo County. The project involves low-impact activities related to the use of existing open fields for daily dog walking, along with limited support structures. The project does not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views or its surroundings. No grading or vegetation removal, beyond routine mowing of the walking fields, has been or would be required for the project.</p> <p>Source: Project location; Project plans.</p>				
1.d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X
<p>Discussion: The project does not involve any new sources of light or glare that could adversely impact views in the area as no lighting is proposed for the dog walking operation. Dog walking occurs during weekday hours between 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Additionally, the limited support structures (i.e., carports, cargo containers, and porta-potty) consist of non-reflective finishes.</p> <p>Source: Project location; Project plans.</p>				
1.e. Be adjacent to a designated Scenic Highway or within a State or County Scenic Corridor?			X	
<p>Discussion: The project site is located in the Cabrillo Highway State Scenic Corridor and the La Honda Road County Scenic Corridor. Due to the project's low impact activities, limited supporting structures, distance from scenic corridor roadways, and topography, the project would not have any substantial adverse impacts to the natural scenic quality of the area.</p>				

Source: Project location; Project plans; San Mateo County GIS, Scenic Corridor Map.				
1.f.	If within a Design Review District, conflict with applicable General Plan or Zoning Ordinance provisions?			X
Discussion: The project site is not located in a Design Review District. Source: San Mateo County GIS, Zoning Map.				
1.g.	Visually intrude into an area having natural scenic qualities?		X	
Discussion: See staff's response to Question 1.a. through 1.e. Source: Project Location; project plans; San Mateo County GIS, Scenic Corridor Map.				

<p>2. AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST 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 forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:</p>					
		<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
2.a.	For lands outside the Coastal Zone, 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?				X
Discussion: The project site is not located outside the Coastal Zone. Source: Project location; San Mateo County GIS, Coastal Zone Map.					
2.b.	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, an existing Open Space Easement, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
Discussion: The project parcel is not encumbered by an Open Space Easement or Williamson Act contract. The parcel is zoned Planned Agricultural District/Coastal Development (PAD/CD). The General Plan Agricultural Lands Map classifies the project site area as Lands Suitable for					

<p>Agriculture. According to the PAD zoning regulations, the proposed commercial recreation use of the project site for dog walking is a conditionally permissible use on lands suitable for agriculture, subject to a PAD permit which is being sought by the business operator.</p> <p>Source: Project location; Project plans; San Mateo County Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and General Plan Agricultural Lands Map.</p>					
2.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 or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?				X
<p>Discussion: The project involves the use of open fields in the southern portion of the property for weekday dog walking. According to the Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program map viewer, the project site area is designated as grazing lands. While the sloped project site area had been used for grazing long ago, such activities ceased around the late 1980's. Furthermore, the project site area does not contain prime soil. Therefore, the project would not result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, California Important Farmland Finder.</p>					
2.d.	For lands within the Coastal Zone, convert or divide lands identified as Class I or Class II Agriculture Soils and Class III Soils rated good or very good for artichokes or Brussels sprouts?				X
<p>Discussion: The project parcel is located in the coastal zone; however, the project site area does not involve Class I or Class II soils, or Class III soils rated good or very good for artichokes or Brussels sprouts.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; Natural Resources Conservation Service, Web Soil Survey.</p>					
2.e.	Result in damage to soil capability or loss of agricultural land?				X
<p>Discussion: The project introduces a low-impact activity on land designated as grazing; however, the project site area has not been actively grazed for many decades. The exercise fields are mowed each spring, and no grading or tilling is necessary to accommodate the operation. Dog walking will rotate between fields daily to reduce overuse or permanent impacts to the natural condition of the soil or vegetation. Therefore, the project is not expected to result in damage to soil capability or loss of the land for future agricultural use.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>					
2.f.	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestland (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland				X

<p>Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?</p> <p><i>Note to reader: This question seeks to address the economic impact of converting forestland to a non-timber harvesting use.</i></p>				
<p>Discussion: The project site is not located on forestland or timberland property.</p> <p>Source: San Mateo County GIS, Zoning Map.</p>				

<p>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. Would the project:</p>				
	Potentially Significant Impacts	Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>3.a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?</p>				X
<p>Discussion: The 2017 Clean Air Plan (CAP), developed by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), is the current regulating air quality plan for San Mateo County. The CAP was created to improve Bay Area air quality with its primary focus on protecting public health and the climate by reducing population exposure to air pollutants throughout the region and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The CAP includes control measures to be incorporated into projects, as applicable, to achieve the plan's goals that include, but are not limited to, transportation sector, buildings sector, energy sector, agriculture sector, and natural and working lands. The project has been evaluated for control measure applicability and determined that none apply given the scope of the project. Therefore, the project will not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the BAAQMDs 2017 CAP. See also Section 8 (Climate Change) and Section 17 (Transportation).</p> <p>Source: Project location; Project plans; Bay Area Air Quality Management District, 2017 Clean Air Plan.</p>				
<p>3.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?</p>			X	
<p>Discussion: The San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin is currently designated as a nonattainment area for the California and national ambient air quality standards for ozone and particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10). The project involves passenger van transportation of dogs to and from the project site in San Gregorio. Dogs will be walked across open vegetated fields; minimal disturbance or construction is proposed to support the activity that would generate fugitive dust. Additionally, vehicle emissions would be generated but limited to approximately 5 passenger vans per weekday traveling from the business headquarter in San Carlos to the fields in San Gregorio; thus, ozone and exhaust emission as a result of the project would not be significant. Additionally,</p>				

the van vehicles used for transporting dogs are licensed with the State of California and therefore adhere to California Air Resources Board standards.

Source: Bay Area Air Quality Management District, 2022 CEQA Guidelines.

3.c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, as defined by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District?				X
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Discussion: Sensitive receptors include children, the elderly, and those with preexisting serious health problems. Land uses where sensitive receptors are most likely to spend time include schools and schoolyards, parks and playgrounds, daycare centers and preschools, hospices, dormitories, prisons, nursing homes, hospitals, and residential communities. The project site is in the rural area of San Gregorio with nearby surrounding land uses consisting of agriculture, open space, and rural single-family residences on larger sized parcels; the nearest residence is approximately 600 feet away on an adjacent parcel to the south. An environmental youth camp is located over 3 miles from the project site. Furthermore, there are no nearby schools, public parks, or nursing homes or hospitals that could support sensitive receptors in the area.

Source: Project location; Bay Area Air Quality Management District 2017 Clean Air Plan.

3.d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?				X
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Discussion: The project is not expected to result in other emissions, such as odors, adversely affecting a substantial number of people as the dog walking is proposed on a rural private parcel. No construction is proposed, and dog waste is collected in real time by dog walking staff and removed from the site daily.

Source: Project location; Project plans.

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:

	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
4.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 or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or National Marine Fisheries Service?		X		

Discussion: The 23-acre project site area consists of ruderal, nonnative grassland and coyote brush/poison oak scrub. Four special-status animal species and no special-status plants were

determined to have potential for occurrence in the project area according to a biological resources survey by Coast Ridge Ecology (2024). Special-status animals with some potential for occurrence include the California red-legged frog (CRLF), San Francisco garter snake (SFGS), and western pond turtle that may utilize the nearby irrigation pond and adjacent hillsides within the fenced walking fields.

CRLF is a species listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and is a California Species of Special Concern (SCC). SFGS is a fully protected species in California and listed as endangered under CESA and federal ESA. While no CRLF or SFGS were documented within the project site or adjacent aquatic habitat, the presence of burrowing mammals in the area indicate the project area may provide suitable foraging or breeding habitat for these species. Furthermore, CRLF and SFGS may migrate through and between suitable habitat in the area. Therefore, the project may result in the substantial reduction in the number or restriction in the range of a threatened or endangered species. If CRLF or SFGS are injured or killed, or their habitat is removed as a result of the project, the project may result in a substantial reduction in the number or restriction in the range of a threatened or endangered species.

Northwestern pond turtle (NWPT) is a state SCC and a candidate for listing under the federal ESA. The project site may provide suitable habitat for NWPT, therefore, ongoing dog-walking or related field mowing could potentially result in direct or indirect take of NWPT. Particularly mowing in the upland areas could injure or kill NWPT if they are basking or moving between upland and aquatic habitat, habitat loss or degraded site suitability due to mowing and the presence of dogs and people in the upland fields, and/or noise, could disrupt NWPT basking, nesting or foraging and ultimately prevent NWPT from completing all stages of their life cycle.

The following mitigation measures are recommended to ensure impacts to CRLF, SFGS, and NWPT are fully avoided:

Mitigation Measure 1: Prior to commencement of Project activities, focused surveys for California red-legged frog (CRLF) and San Francisco garter snake (SFGS) shall be conducted by a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)-approved qualified biologist experienced with CRLF and SFGS identification and life histories. Surveys shall follow protocols approved by CDFW.

If the results of focused surveys indicate CRLF and/or SFGS are present within or adjacent to the Project area, the Project proponent, in coordination with CDFW, shall create and implement additional measures to avoid all impacts to state and federally listed and fully protected species and their habitat.

Mitigation Measure 2: Prior to project mowing activities, an SFGS avoidance plan shall be prepared for implementation in coordination with CDFW. The SFGS avoidance plan shall be prepared by a qualified biologist experienced in the natural life history requirements of SFGS. At a minimum, the SFGS avoidance plan shall include the following elements:

- a. Depict locations of mowing with respect to grasslands, wetlands, riparian vegetation, and dense vegetation surrounding any ponds on a map. Create habitat buffers and avoid mowing areas that are sensitive or have increased potential for SFGS presence, such as dense wetland vegetation areas;
- b. Require a biological monitor on-site proficient in SFGS identification to walk ahead of the mower if mowing occurs during the months of February - November;
- c. Avoid mowing during peak active SFGS periods to the greatest extent feasible. SFGS are less active and often underground during late fall to early spring months;
- d. Increase mowing blade heights to cut grass as high as possible, i.e., eight inches;

- e. Limit mowing speed to a sufficiently slow rate to allow any undetected SFGS to leave on its own volition unharmed; and
- f. Implement sensitive species worker education for project staff and workers.

If any CRLF or SFGS take occurs or if either of these species is detected, CDFW shall be contacted immediately, and location information and photo documentation of the individual(s) shall be provided.

Mitigation Measure 3: Prior to Project construction or continuation of ongoing Project activities, including dog walking and mowing in uplands adjacent to riparian areas and the irrigation pond, focused surveys for Northwestern pond turtle (NWPT) shall be conducted by a CDFW-approved qualified biologist experienced with NWPT identification and life histories. Surveys shall follow protocols approved by CDFW.

If the results of focused surveys indicate NWPT are present within or adjacent to the Project area, the Project proponent, in coordination with CDFW, shall create and implement additional measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate all impacts to NWPT and their habitat. These measures could include, at a minimum, establishing best management practices for ongoing Project operations, creating buffers of sufficient size to protect habitat resources, and implementing worker education programming for construction workers, dog walkers, and all individuals who would be accessing and working in the Project site area.

~~However, these fields do not provide suitable upland cover for these species and the limited use of the fields for dog walking is not expected to present significant impacts to these species according to Coast Ridge Ecology.~~

Mitigation Measure 14: The dog walking fields shall be maintained free of straw bales to avoid attracting wildlife and reduce the likelihood of attracting protected wildlife species such as the California red-legged frog and San Francisco garter snake. The fields shall also be kept clear of clutter, pipes, tarps, wood, or other objects that could attract wildlife.

Mitigation Measure 25: A worker education program shall be conducted for each project-related staff person, including but not limiting construction workers, dog walkers, and all individuals who would be accessing and working on the project site that includes training on California red-legged frog (CRLF), San Francisco garter snake (SFGS), and western pond turtle (WPT) identification, penalties for harming these species or their habitat, and the protocol to be followed should these species be encountered. The worker education program should include color photo cards of CRLF, SFGS, and WPT that remain on the project site.

Additionally, two San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat middens were observed outside of the 23-acre project area but within 20 feet of the carport parking area. The following mitigation measures are recommended by Coast Ridge Ecology to ensure potential impacts to these special-status species are minimized:

Mitigation Measure 36: A 10-foot radius no disturbance buffer from San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat nests shall be maintained at all times.

Source: Biological Impact Form prepared by Coast Ridge Ecology, February 2024; California Department of Fish and Wildlife comment letter, dated September 29, 2025, for Smilin Dogs Mitigated Negative Declaration.

4.b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and			X	
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Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or National Marine Fisheries Service?				
<p>Discussion: According to Coast Ridge Ecology, the project area does not provide suitable habitat for special-status plant species due to the dominance of the site by nonnative plant species, and lack of soils that favor special-status plants.</p> <p>Source: Biological Impact Form prepared by Coast Ridge Ecology, February 2024.</p>				
4.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?				X
<p>Discussion: There are no wetlands or water features inside the project area. San Gregorio Creek is located 400 feet to the north of the project area, at its closest point, and is over 1800 feet (0.35 miles) from the project area's eastern edge near the covered parking area. Between the creek and the Smilin' Dogs operation is an active agricultural field. A three-acre man-made agricultural irrigation pond/reservoir is approximately 40 feet north of the project site area at its closest point. The pond is used for irrigation and is encircled by dense freshwater emergent marsh vegetation (i.e., cattail). The pond is perennial and the water level fluctuates based on water usage for agriculture and season. An unnamed seasonal drainage that is partially vegetated with freshwater riparian scrub is located along the northern boundary of the project area, runs north of the irrigation pond, and flows to San Gregorio Creek. Both of these features, the wetland and intermittent stream features, are located outside the project area and Coast Ridge Ecology concludes that no impacts from project activities were observed during the site visit, and none are expected based on project activities and distance to these features.</p> <p>Source: Biological Impact Form prepared by Coast Ridge Ecology, February 2024.</p>				
4.d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			X	
<p>Discussion: The 23-acre project site area consists of six fenced field areas for dog walking. According to Coast Ridge Ecology, these fences would prevent some larger wildlife species from moving through the walking fields, however, there is extensive open space surrounding the fields whereby wildlife can move freely between upland areas and San Gregorio Creek. Therefore, the project and activities would not present a significant barrier to wildlife movement within the surrounding area.</p> <p>Source: Biological Impact Form prepared by Coast Ridge Ecology, February 2024.</p>				
4.e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance (including the County Heritage and Significant Tree Ordinances)?		X		

<p>Discussion: There are no trees in the project area. Also, see staff's response to Questions 4.a through 4.d.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; Biological Impact Form prepared by Coast Ridge Ecology, February 2024.</p>					
4.f.	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X
<p>Discussion: The project site is not located in an area with an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other known approved regional or State habitat conservation plan.</p> <p>Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Natural Community Conservation Plans map.</p>					
4.g.	Be located inside or within 200 feet of a marine or wildlife reserve?				X
<p>Discussion: The project site is not located inside or within 200 feet of a marine or wildlife reserve.</p> <p>Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Ecological Reserves and Wildlife Areas of California Bay Delta Region map; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Wildlife Refuge System map.</p>					
4.h.	Result in loss of oak woodlands or other non-timber woodlands?				X
<p>Discussion: The project is located in open field areas that are void of trees, and therefore, no tree removal is necessary.</p> <p>Source: Project location.</p>					

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:					
		<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
5.a.	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?				X
<p>Discussion: According to a search of the California Historical Resources Information System and the California Office of Historic Preservation, the project site does not contain any historical resources. Additionally, a Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory prepared by Albion Environmental, Inc. (2022) concluded the project site area contains no historical resources.</p> <p>Source: California Office of Historic Preservation, Northwestern Information Center; Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory, Albion Environmental, Inc, December 2022.</p>					

5.b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Section 15064.5?				X
<p>Discussion: The project site contains no archaeological resources as concluded in a Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory prepared by Albion Environmental, Inc. (2022).</p> <p>Source: Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory, Albion Environmental, Inc, December 2022.</p>				
5.c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				X
<p>Discussion: Based on a cultural resource inventory for the project site, there is a low potential for human remains to exist in the project site area. Additionally, the project involves minimal ground disturbance.</p> <p>Source: Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory, Albion Environmental, Inc, December 2022.</p>				

6. ENERGY. Would the project:				
	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
6.a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?				X
<p>Discussion: The project involves a low-intensity land use that is limited to five passenger vans transporting dogs from San Carlos to the project site on weekdays between the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Additionally, the passenger vans are licensed vehicles regulated by the California Air Resources Board for vehicle emissions. Therefore, the project is not expected to result in significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				
6.b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.				X
<p>Discussion: The project involves low-intensity land use that would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency as no energy resources are needed for the project.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				

7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:				
	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
7.a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving the following, or create a situation that results in:				
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? <i>Note: Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42 and the County Geotechnical Hazards Synthesis Map.</i>				X
Discussion: The project involves low-intensity land use activity and minimal development or disturbance to land. Therefore, the project would not cause rupture of a known earthquake fault. Source: Project plans.				
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
Discussion: The project involves low-intensity land use activity and minimal development or disturbance to land. Therefore, the project would not cause strong seismic ground shaking. Source: Project plans.				
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction and differential settling?				X
Discussion: The project involves low-intensity land use activity and minimal development or disturbance to land. Therefore, the project would not cause seismic-related ground failure. Source: Project plans.				
iv. Landslides?				X
Discussion: The project is located on gently-rolling hills but involves low-intensity land use activity and minimal development or disturbance to land. Therefore, the project would not cause landslides. Source: Project plans.				
v. Coastal cliff/bluff instability or erosion?				X

<p><i>Note to reader: This question is looking at instability under current conditions. Future, potential instability is looked at in Section 7 (Climate Change).</i></p>				
<p>Discussion: The project site is not located near a coastal cliff or bluff. Source: Project location.</p>				
<p>7.b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?</p>				<p>X</p>
<p>Discussion: The project site area consists of ruderal, nonnative grassland, vegetation with some coyote brush/poison oak scrub vegetation. The dog walking fields are mowed each spring but no grading or tilling of the area is performed or required to accommodate the dog walking operation. At separate intervals, five packs of dogs are each moved to their fields, which are rotated daily to reduce overuse. Therefore, the project would not result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil. Source: Project plans.</p>				
<p>7.c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, severe erosion, liquefaction or collapse?</p>				<p>X</p>
<p>Discussion: The project involves no permanent development or activities that would cause soil instability. Source: Project plans.</p>				
<p>7.d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of Uniform Building Code, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?</p>				<p>X</p>
<p>Discussion: The project is not expected to be located on expansive soils. The project involves low-intensity use of the land for dog walking and would not create a substantial direct or indirect risk to life or property. Source: Project plans; Project location.</p>				
<p>7.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?</p>				<p>X</p>
<p>Discussion: The project does not involve the use of septic tanks or alternative onsite waste disposal systems. The project includes a portable toilet (i.e., porta-potty) located onsite for staff use and dog waste is collected in real time by staff and transported offsite daily. Source: Project plans.</p>				

7.f.	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X
<p>Discussion: Based on a Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory prepared by Albion Environmental, Inc., the project site is not expected to support a unique paleontological resource or site, or unique geologic feature.</p> <p>Source: Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory, Albion Environmental, Inc, December 2022.</p>					

8. CLIMATE CHANGE. Would the project:					
		<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
8.a.	Generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (including methane), either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
<p>Discussion: The project would not generate greenhouse gas emissions that could have significant impact on the environment; see staff's responses to Section 3 (Air Quality).</p> <p>Source: Project scope.</p>					
8.b.	Conflict with an applicable plan (including a local climate action plan), policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				X
<p>Discussion: The County's 2022 Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP) identifies priority actions to achieve the County's updated goals of 45% reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over 1990 levels by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2040. To achieve these goals, the CCAP is structured to focus on: Building Energy, Transportation, Waste, and Working Lands. The project will not conflict with the applicable focus areas of the County's CCAP as the project will not result in significant traffic and the operation will collect dog waste and transport it offsite for proper disposal. Therefore, the project conforms with the County's Community Climate Action.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; San Mateo County Community Climate Action Plan, 2022.</p>					
8.c.	Result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to non-forest use, such that it would release significant amounts of GHG emissions, or significantly reduce GHG sequestering?				X
<p>Discussion: The project is proposed on an open unforested area of an agricultural property in San Gregorio and therefore will not result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to non-forest use.</p>					

Source: Project location; Project plans.					
8.d.	Expose new or existing structures and/or infrastructure (e.g., leach fields) to accelerated coastal cliff/bluff erosion due to rising sea levels?				X
Discussion: The project site is not located near coastal cliffs/bluffs. Source: Project location.					
8.e.	Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving sea level rise?				X
Discussion: The project parcel is not located near the coast or in an area at risk of exposure to sea level rise. Source: Project location.					
8.f.	Place structures within an anticipated 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
Discussion: The project site is not located in a 100-year-flood hazard area. Source: FEMA Map Panels 06081C0359F and 06081C0380E, effective August 2, 2017, and October 16, 2012, respectively.					
8.g.	Place within an anticipated 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
Discussion: The project site is not located in a 100-year-flood hazard area. Source: FEMA Map Panels 06081C0359F and 06081C0380E, effective August 2, 2017, and October 16, 2012, respectively.					

9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:					
		Potentially Significant Impacts	Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
9.a.	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials (e.g., pesticides, herbicides, other toxic substances, or radioactive material)?				X

<p>Discussion: The project does not involve the routine use, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>					
9.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
<p>Discussion: The project does not involve activities that would result in conditions involving the release of hazardous materials.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>					
9.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
<p>Discussion: The project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school; and the project does not involve emittance or handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials.</p> <p>Source: Project location; Project plans.</p>					
9.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
<p>Discussion: The project parcel is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites.</p> <p>Source: Project location; California Department of Toxic Substances, Hazardous Waste and Substance Site List (EnviroStor).</p>					
9.e.	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				X
<p>Discussion: The project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of any known public airport or public use airport.</p> <p>Source: Project location.</p>					

9.f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
<p>Discussion: The project parcel is accessed off of Seaside School Road and the project is entirely located on private property, therefore, would not interfere with any adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. The San Mateo County Fire Department has reviewed and conditionally approved the project for compliance with emergency access requirements.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; San Mateo County Fire Department.</p>				
9.g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				X
<p>Discussion: The project parcel is located in a moderate fire hazard risk area, State Responsibility Area, for wildland fires. The project parcel is in the rural San Gregorio area of the County that consists of larger rural open agricultural land like the subject project parcel. The project has been reviewed and conditionally approved by the San Mateo County Fire Department to ensure health and safety risks are minimized.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; Project location; San Mateo County GIS; San Mateo County Fire Department.</p>				
9.h. Place housing within an existing 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
<p>Discussion: The project does involve the placement of housing within a 100-year flood hazard area.</p> <p>Source: FEMA Map Panels 06081C0359F and 06081C0380E, effective August 2, 2017, and October 16, 2012, respectively.</p>				
9.i. Place within an existing 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
<p>Discussion: The project site is not located in a 100-year-flood hazard area.</p> <p>Source: FEMA Map Panels 06081C0359F and 06081C0380E, effective August 2, 2017, and October 16, 2012, respectively.</p>				
9.j. 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

Discussion: The project is not located in an area at risk of flooding. The dog walking operation is located on sloped terrain and not in the pathway of a levee or dam.

Source: Project location; San Mateo County General Plan, Natural Hazards Map; San Mateo County Local Coastal Program, South Coast Hazards Map.

9.k. Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

X

Discussion: According to the County General Plan and Local Coastal Program Natural Hazards Maps, the project site is not located in an area of risk of seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

Source: Project location; San Mateo County General Plan, Natural Hazards Map; San Mateo County Local Coastal Program, South Coast Hazards Map.

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:

	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
10.a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality (consider water quality parameters such as temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and other typical stormwater pollutants (e.g., heavy metals, pathogens, petroleum derivatives, synthetic organics, sediment, nutrients, oxygen-demanding substances, and trash))?			X	

Discussion: The project includes approximately 4,800 sq. ft. of impervious surface for five carports and three cargo containers and minimal drainage features are proposed for the impervious surface. Otherwise, the remaining project site area (of approximately 23 acres) will remain in its natural pervious condition. No grading is proposed, and the project operation is not expected to generate erosion or siltation. Furthermore, no work is being conducted in a watercourse.

Source: Project plans.

10.b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

X

Discussion: The project involves low intensity use of gently sloped land with minimal ground disturbance. Dog walking activities will rotate daily between the fenced fields to minimize overuse and potential impacts to natural vegetation cover or terrain. The dog walking operation does not use groundwater. Minimal impervious structures support the dog walking activity and site drainage will

continue to naturally infiltrate back into the ground. Furthermore, the existing cottage being converted to affordable housing will continue to use an existing onsite domestic well for which Environmental Health Services has reviewed and conditionally approved.

Source: Project plans; Environmental Health Services.

10.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 that would:				
i. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;			X	

Discussion: The project involves low intensity use of gently sloped land with minimal ground disturbance. Dog walking activities will rotate daily between the fenced fields to minimize overuse and potential impacts to natural vegetation cover or terrain. Dog rinsing will be confined to bins that drain to a 2-inch pipe that conveys water under the gravel parking area and discharges to a rock outfall for energy dissipation to minimize erosion or siltation. Runoff from impervious areas, including the carports and cargo containers, will be retained in a gravel trench and allowed to percolate into the ground. No physical changes are proposed to the affordable housing unit area.

Source: Project plans; Project location.

ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;			X	
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Discussion: The project involves impervious area for carports and cargo containers to support dog walking; however, relative to the acreage of the project area, this impervious area is not significant. Nonetheless, drainage runoff from this added impervious surface area will be retained in a gravel trench and allowed to percolate back into the ground. Additionally, dog rinsing will be confined to bins and conveyed to an energy dissipator to minimize flooding or erosion.

Source: Project plans.

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				X
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<p>Discussion: The project would not generate significant runoff as much of the land will be maintained in its natural vegetative open field condition where stormwater will continue to infiltrate and sheet flow over the acres of land. Impervious surface associated with the project includes five carports and several cargo containers in a relatively flat area of the fields to support the dog walking operation. Runoff from these structures will be accommodated through onsite retention features to allow stormwater to naturally percolate into the ground.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				
iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?				X
<p>Discussion: The dog walking operation is not in an area that would be prone to flooding due to its gently sloped terrain and will be predominantly maintained in its pre-existing open field condition.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; Project location.</p>				
10.d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?				X
<p>Discussion: The project site is not in a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone.</p> <p>Source: Project location; San Mateo County General Plan Natural Hazards Map; San Mateo County Local Coastal Program South Coast Hazards Map.</p>				
10.e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?				X
<p>Discussion: The project is located across approximately 23 acres of open, undeveloped fields and involves minimal new impervious surface that will include features to collect and retain stormwater runoff. The project site is within the San Gregorio Valley watershed. Due to the project's low intensity use it will not conflict with the San Gregorio Creek Watershed Management Plan.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; Project location, San Gregorio Creek Watershed Management Plan.</p>				
10.f. Significantly degrade surface or groundwater water quality?				X
<p>Discussion: The project will not degrade surface or groundwater water quality as minimal physical changes are proposed, and the project does not introduce any uses that will significantly affect surface or groundwater. Also, see staff's response to Question 10.b.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				
10.g. Result in increased impervious surfaces and associated increased runoff?			X	
<p>Discussion: See staff's response to Questions 10.a., 10.c., and 10.f.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:				
	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
11.a. Physically divide an established community?				X
<p>Discussion: The project involves use of approximately 23 acres of open field for daytime dog walking. Minimal improvements are necessary to accommodate the operation. A majority of the parcel is used for crop production; however, this southern portion of the parcel contains gently sloped fields that have not been used for active agriculture for years. The project involves low intensity use of the open fields for dog walking and would not create a divide of land use in the San Gregorio area.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; Project location.</p>				
11.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?				X
<p>Discussion: The project does not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The project does not encroach upon any land that is currently or recently in agricultural production and the dog walking operation involves minimal development.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; Project location.</p>				
11.c. Serve to encourage off-site development of presently undeveloped areas or increase development intensity of already developed areas (examples include the introduction of new or expanded public utilities, new industry, commercial facilities or recreation activities)?				X
<p>Discussion: The project will not introduce any development or improvement to the land that could serve to encourage off-site development of presently undeveloped areas or support an increase in development intensity of already developed areas given the project's low intensity use and minimal supporting improvements.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; Project location.</p>				

12. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:
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	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
12.a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State?				X
<p>Discussion: The project site is not in any mapped mineral resources area.</p> <p>Source: San Mateo County General Plan, Mineral Resources map.</p>				
12.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
<p>Discussion: See staff's response in Section 12.a. above.</p> <p>Source: San Mateo County General Plan, Mineral Resources map.</p>				

13. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
13.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?			X	
<p>Discussion: The project could generate short-term noise associated with dog barking during daily use of the fields for dog walking (Monday – Friday between the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.). The dog walking fields are sloped downward from west to east, towards the remaining +100 acres of the parcel. The nearest neighboring development in the area is over 500 feet away on a neighboring parcel to the southwest of the project parcel. Given the location for the dog walking activities on the project parcel and surrounding topography and distance from nearby development on neighboring properties, it is not expected that any short-term noise increases from dog barking would be substantial to the area.</p> <p>Source: Project location; Project plans.</p>				
13.b. Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?				X

Discussion: The project consists of transporting dogs by passenger van to the project site and walking the dogs across the approximately 23-acres of fenced fields. The project would not generate excessive ground-borne vibrations or noise levels.

Source: Project plans.

13.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 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, exposure to people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
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Discussion: The project site is not within the vicinity of any known private airstrip or an airport land use plan, or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport.

Source: Project location.

14. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:

	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
14.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)?				X

Discussion: The project will not induce population growth in the area as the project is limited to daytime dog walking on the southern portion of the property. The dog walking activities are related to the primary dog care business located in the City of San Carlos. The project includes minimal improvements to support the operation, and no utilities are needed to serve the dog walking activity.

Source: Project scope.

14.b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
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Discussion: The project does not propose to displace people or housing. The project involves conversion of an existing cottage unit into an affordable housing unit, therefore, maintaining it in the stock of rural agricultural residential housing supply.

Source: Project scope.

15. PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered government facilities, the 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>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
15.a. Fire protection?				X
15.b. Police protection?				X
15.c. Schools?				X
15.d. Parks?				X
15.e. Other public facilities or utilities (e.g., hospitals, or electrical/natural gas supply systems)?				X
<p>Discussion: The project does not introduce a use that would adversely impact public services. No new utilities are proposed to serve the dog walking operation, and no public facilities are needed as a result of the project. The use will not create a significant demand for public services. The San Mateo County Fire Department has reviewed the project and provided conditional approval.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				

16. RECREATION. Would the project:				
	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
16.a. Increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
<p>Discussion: The project does not involve the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				
16.b. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X

Discussion: The project involves the use of private land for recreational dog walking. The project does not involve any new utilities or significant development. Dog waste will be collected daily by staff in real time and transported offsite for disposal. As concluded in this environmental evaluation, the project would not have any adverse physical effect on the environment.

Source: Project plans; Subject Initial Study.

17. TRANSPORTATION. Would the project:

	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
17.a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and parking?				X

Discussion: The project site is located in a rural area of the County. The project entails approximately five passenger vans traveling approximately 27 miles between the business's headquarter in San Carlos to the project site in San Gregorio each weekday during the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. which is outside of normal peak AM (7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.) and PM hours (4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.). These estimated 10 daily weekday trips would not significantly impact traffic conditions in San Mateo County. Additionally, the project will generate less than 100 average daily trips and therefore is not subject to the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County Transportation Demand Management Policy.

Source: Project plans; Project location; City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County Transportation Demand Management Policy.

17.b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, Subdivision (b) <i>Criteria for Analyzing Transportation Impacts</i> ? <i>Note to reader: Section 15064.3 refers to land use and transportation projects, qualitative analysis, and methodology.</i>				X
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Discussion: Section 15064.3 of the CEQA Guidelines provides specific considerations for evaluating a project's transportation impacts. Per Section 15064.3, an analysis of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) attributable to a project is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts. Based on the County Department of Public Works' Inter-Departmental Correspondence on VMT for determining transportation impacts under CEQA analysis, the significance of VMT impacts in rural areas are set on a case-by-case basis. Based on the use and minimal increase in trips that will be generated by the project, the project is determined to screen out of the need for a VMT study as a "small project" as it generates fewer than 110 daily trips, is consistent with the General Plan, and there is no evidence indicating a potentially significant level of VMT would result from the project.

Source: Project plans; Project location; San Mateo County Department of Public Works Inter-Departmental Correspondence for Change to Vehicle Miles Traveled as Metric to Determine Transportation Impacts under CEQA Analysis, dated September 23, 2020.				
17.c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
Discussion: The project is located entirely on private property and does not propose or require changes to roadway access to the project site. Additionally, the dog walking activity will occur within fenced fields to avoid dogs interfering with any onsite or offsite access. Source: Project plans.				
17.d. Result in inadequate emergency access?				X
Discussion: The project has been reviewed and conditionally approved by the San Mateo County Fire Department for ensuring adequate emergency access to both the dog walking site and redesignated affordable housing unit will be provided and maintained. Source: Project plans; San Mateo County Fire Department.				

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
18.a. 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 or 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:				
i. 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)				X

Discussion: A Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands search was completed, and the results were negative. The Commission also provided the contact information for Native American tribes who could have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. Staff have reached out to these tribes, along with outreach to the Tamien Nation for consultation; no consultation has been requested. Additionally, a cultural resources survey for the project site did not identify any resources that could qualify for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or in a local register of historical resources. Furthermore, the project site is not listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources and is not listed in a local register of historical resources, pursuant to any local ordinances or resolution as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k).

Source: Project location; Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory, Albion Environmental, Inc, December 2022; California Register of Historical Resources; San Mateo County Coastal Historical Resources Inventory.

<p>ii. 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.)</p>				X
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Discussion: See staff's response to Question 18.a. Additionally, no grading and minimal land disturbance is proposed with the dog walking operation.

Source: Project plans.

19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:

	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<p>19.a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?</p>				X

Discussion: The project does not involve the relocation or construction of new or expanded utilities. The dog walking operation includes an onsite porta-potty for staff that is regularly serviced, and water will be brought onto the site for the dogs. Stormwater runoff will continue to rely on sheet flow and natural infiltration with the proposal of some small drainage structures to help collect and

<p>convey to areas onsite that will minimize erosion and flooding. No utility changes are proposed for the existing cottage being redesignated to affordable housing.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				
19.b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?				X
<p>Discussion: The project does not involve any new sources of water supply to the project site. The dog walking operation will transport water onsite for daily use associated with dog walking use of the fields. Additionally, an existing onsite domestic water well will continue to serve the redesignated affordable housing unit in the northern part of the parcel.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				
19.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?				X
<p>Discussion: The dog walking operation does not require wastewater treatment services. A portapotty is located onsite for use by dog walking staff and dog waste will be collected daily and contained and transported offsite for proper disposal. Additionally, the redesignated affordable housing unit will continue to be served by an onsite private septic system.</p> <p>Source: Project scope.</p>				
19.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?				X
<p>Discussion: The project is not expected to generate excessive solid waste. Dog waste will be picked up daily and transported offsite for proper disposal by staff.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				
19.e. Comply with Federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X
<p>Discussion: The project is not expected to generate excessive solid waste. Dog waste will be picked up daily and transported offsite for proper disposal by staff. Therefore, the project is expected to comply with applicable solid waste regulations.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				

20. WILDFIRE. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
20.a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
<p>Discussion: The project site is located in a moderate fire hazard severity zone, state responsibility area. The project consists of a low-intensity use in open fields on the property that would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The San Mateo County Fire Department has reviewed and conditionally approved the project relative to fire risk and emergency service requirements.</p> <p>Source: Project plans; San Mateo County GIS; San Mateo County Fire Department.</p>				
20.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?				X
<p>Discussion: The project involves the use of open gently sloped fields for dog walking with some support accessory structures located on relatively flat terrain. The project site is in a moderate fire hazard severity zone, state responsibility area, and the project involves minimal disturbance or development. Therefore, the project would not result in exposure of project occupants to increased risks from wildfire.</p> <p>Source: Project location; Project scope.</p>				
20.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?				X
<p>Discussion: The San Mateo County Fire Department has reviewed and conditionally approved the project for emergency access and fire safety. A wet draft hydrant may be required but would be limited to use for emergency fire water. No infrastructure is proposed or required that would exacerbate fire risk or impacts to the environment.</p> <p>Source: Project plans.</p>				
20.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?				X

Discussion: The project has been reviewed and conditionally approved by the San Mateo County Fire Department for emergency access and fire safety. While the dog walking activity will occur on gently sloping terrain in the southern portion of the property, the project will not change existing natural topography of the area. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to significant risks as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability or drainage changes. No mitigation is necessary.

Source: Project location; Project plans.

21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.

	<i>Potentially Significant Impacts</i>	<i>Significant Unless Mitigated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
21.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?		X		

Discussion: Special-status animal species have the potential to occur in the project area. As discussed in staff's responses in Section 4 (Biological Resources), mitigation measures 1 through 3 are recommended to reduce potential project impacts on California red-legged frog, San Francisco garter snake, western pond turtle, and San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat to less than significant levels.

Source: See source citations in Section 4.

21.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.)			X	
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Discussion: The project is located in a rural area of the County and will be contained on private property. The use is low intensity and would not contribute to cumulatively considerable impacts beyond the individual potential impacts cited within this document.

Source: Project plans.

21.c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X
<p>Discussion: Based on the environmental analysis contained in this report, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings.</p> <p>Source: Subject Initial Study.</p>				

RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES. Check what agency has permit authority or other approval for the project.

AGENCY	YES	NO	TYPE OF APPROVAL
Bay Area Air Quality Management District		X	
Caltrans		X	
City		X	
California Coastal Commission	X		Appeals jurisdiction
California Department of Food and Agriculture		X	
County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC)		X	
Other: _____		X	
National Marine Fisheries Service		X	
Regional Water Quality Control Board		X	
San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)		X	
Sewer/Water District:		X	
State Department of Fish and Wildlife	X		Potentially Lake and Streambed Alteration and Take authorizations
State Department of Public Health		X	
State Water Resources Control Board		X	
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (CE)		X	
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)		X	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service		X	

MITIGATION MEASURES

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Mitigation measures have been proposed in project application.	X	
Other mitigation measures are needed.	X	

The following measures are included in the project plans or proposals pursuant to Section 15070(b)(1) of the State CEQA Guidelines:

Mitigation Measure 1: Prior to commencement of Project activities, focused surveys for California red-legged frog (CRLF) and San Francisco garter snake (SFGS) shall be conducted by a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)-approved qualified biologist experienced with CRLF and SFGS identification and life histories. Surveys shall follow protocols approved by CDFW.

If the results of focused surveys indicate CRLF and/or SFGS are present within or adjacent to the Project area, the Project proponent, in coordination with CDFW, shall create and implement additional measures to avoid all impacts to state and federally listed and fully protected species and their habitat.

Mitigation Measure 2: Prior to project mowing activities, an SFGS avoidance plan shall be prepared for implementation in coordination with CDFW. The SFGS avoidance plan shall be prepared by a qualified biologist experienced in the natural life history requirements of SFGS. At a minimum, the SFGS avoidance plan shall include the following elements:

- a. Depict locations of mowing with respect to grasslands, wetlands, riparian vegetation, and dense vegetation surrounding any ponds on a map. Create habitat buffers and avoid mowing areas that are sensitive or have increased potential for SFGS presence, such as dense wetland vegetation areas;
- b. Require a biological monitor on-site proficient in SFGS identification to walk ahead of the mower if mowing occurs during the months of February - November;
- c. Avoid mowing during peak active SFGS periods to the greatest extent feasible. SFGS are less active and often underground during late fall to early spring months;
- d. Increase mowing blade heights to cut grass as high as possible, i.e., eight inches;
- e. Limit mowing speed to a sufficiently slow rate to allow any undetected SFGS to leave on its own volition unharmed; and
- f. Implement sensitive species worker education for project staff and workers.

If any CRLF or SFGS take occurs or if either of these species is detected, CDFW shall be contacted immediately, and location information and photo documentation of the individual(s) shall be provided.

Mitigation Measure 3: Prior to Project construction or continuation of ongoing Project activities, including dog walking and mowing in uplands adjacent to riparian areas and the irrigation pond, focused surveys for Northwestern pond turtle (NWPT) shall be conducted by a CDFW-approved qualified biologist experienced with NWPT identification and life histories. Surveys shall follow protocols approved by CDFW.

If the results of focused surveys indicate NWPT are present within or adjacent to the Project area, the Project proponent, in coordination with CDFW, shall create and implement additional measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate all impacts to NWPT and their habitat. These measures

could include, at a minimum, establishing best management practices for ongoing Project operations, creating buffers of sufficient size to protect habitat resources, and implementing worker education programming for construction workers, dog walkers, and all individuals who would be accessing and working in the Project site area.

Mitigation Measure 14: The dog walking fields shall be maintained free of straw bales to avoid attracting wildlife and reduce the likelihood of attracting protected wildlife species such as the California red-legged frog and San Francisco garter snake. The fields shall also be kept clear of clutter, pipes, tarps, wood, or other objects that could attract wildlife.

Mitigation Measure 25: A worker education program shall be conducted for each project-related staff person, including but not limiting construction workers, dog walkers, and all individuals who would be accessing and working on the project site that includes training on California red-legged frog (CRLF), San Francisco garter snake (SFGS), and western pond turtle (WPT) identification, penalties for harming these species or their habitat, and the protocol to be followed should these species be encountered. The worker education program should include color photo cards of CRLF, SFGS, and WPT that remain on the project site.

Mitigation Measure 36: A 10-foot radius no disturbance buffer from San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat nests shall be maintained at all times.

DETERMINATION (to be completed by the Lead Agency).

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

X

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 of the mitigation measures in the discussion have been included as part of the proposed project. 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.



(Signature)

Senior Planner

11/19/25

Date

(Title)

Attachments:

A. Vicinity Map

- B. Project Plans
- C. Project Description
- D. Biological Impact Form, prepared by Coast Ridge Ecology, dated February 2024
- E. Comment letter from California Department of Fish and Wildlife dated September 29, 2025