

## 3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section describes the environmental setting, existing conditions, regulatory context, and potential impacts of the Project in relation to cultural and historic resources. Cultural resources include places, objects, and settlements that reflect group or individual religious, archaeological, or architectural activities. Such resources provide information on scientific progress, environmental adaptations, group ideology, or other human advancements. By statute, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is primarily concerned with two classes of cultural resources: “historical resources,” which are defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) § 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5 and “unique archaeological resources,” which are defined in PRC § 21083.2. The information and analysis presented in this section is based on the following source: *Cultural Resources Assessment* (BCR Consulting LLC, 2019). See **Appendix E** for the report.

### 3.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

#### PREHISTORY<sup>1</sup>

##### **Paleoindian (12,000 to 10,000 Before Present [BP]) and Lake Mojave Periods (10,000 to 7,000 BP)**

Climatic warming characterizes the transition from the Paleoindian Period to the Lake Mojave Period. This transition also marks the end of Pleistocene Epoch and ushers in the Holocene. The Paleoindian Period has been loosely defined by isolated fluted (such as Clovis) projectile points, dated by their association with similar artifacts discovered in-situ in the Great Plains. Some fluted bifaces have been associated with fossil remains of Rancholabrean mammals approximately dated to ca. 13,300-10,800 BP near China Lake in the Mojave Desert. The Lake Mojave Period has been associated with cultural adaptations to moist conditions, and resource allocation pointing to more lacustrine environments than previously. Artifacts that characterize this period include stemmed points, flake and core scrapers, choppers, hammerstones, and crescentics. Projectile points associated with the period include the Silver Lake and Lake Mojave styles. Lake Mojave sites commonly occur on shorelines of Pleistocene lakes and streams, where geological surfaces of that epoch have been identified.

##### **Pinto Period (7,000 to 4,000 BP)**

The Pinto Period has been largely characterized by desiccation of southern California. As formerly rich lacustrine environments began to disappear, the artifact record reveals more sporadic occupation of the drier regions, indicating occupants’ recession into the cooler fringes. Pinto Period sites are rare and are characterized by surface manifestations that usually lack significant in-situ remains. Artifacts from this era include Pinto projectile points and a flake industry similar to the Lake Mojave tool complex, though use of Pinto projectile points as an index artifact for the era has been disputed. Milling stones have also occasionally been associated with sites of this period.

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<sup>1</sup> BCR Consulting, Inc. 2019. *Cultural Resources Assessment*.

### **Gypsum Period (4,000 to 1,500 BP)**

A temporary return to moister conditions during the Gypsum Period is postulated to have encouraged technological diversification afforded by the relative abundance of available resources. Lacustrine environments reappear and begin to be exploited during this era. Concurrently a more diverse artifact assemblage reflects intensified reliance on plant resources. The new artifacts include milling stones, mortars, pestles, and proliferation of Humboldt Concave Base, Gypsum Cave, Elko Eared, and Elko Corner notched dart points. Other artifacts include leaf-shaped projectile points, rectangular-based knives, drills, large scraper planes, choppers, hammerstones, shaft straighteners, incised stone pendants, and drilled slate tubes. The bow and arrow appear around 2,000 BP, evidenced by the presence of a smaller type of projectile point, the Rose Spring point.

### **Saratoga Springs Period (1,500 to 800 BP)**

During the Saratoga Springs Period regional cultural diversifications of Gypsum Period developments are evident. Influences from Patayan/Yuman assemblages are apparent in the southern inland areas and include buff and brown wares often associated with Cottonwood and Desert Side-notched projectile points. Obsidian becomes more commonly used throughout southern California and characteristic artifacts of the period include milling stones, mortars, pestles, ceramics, and ornamental and ritual objects. Large villages evidence more structured settlement patterns, and three types of identifiable archaeological sites (major habitation, temporary camps, and processing stations) emerge. Diversity of resource exploitation continues to expand, indicating a much more generalized, somewhat less mobile subsistence strategy.

### **Shoshonean Period (800 BP to Contact)**

The Shoshonean Period is the first to benefit from contact-era ethnography—and is subject to its inherent biases. Interviews of living informants allowed anthropologists to match artifact assemblages and particular traditions with linguistic groups and plot them geographically. During the Shoshonean Period, continued diversification of site assemblages and reduced Anasazi and Yuman influence both coincide with the expansion of Numic (Uto-Aztecan language family) speakers across the Great Basin, Takic (also Uto-Aztecan) speakers into southern California, and the Hopi across the Southwest. Hunting and gathering continued to diversify, and the diagnostic arrow points include desert side-notch and cottonwood triangular, which have been locally recorded. Ceramics continue to proliferate, though are more common in the desert during this period. Trade routes have become well established between coastal and inland groups during this period.

## **HISTORY<sup>2</sup>**

In southern California, the historic era is generally divided into three periods: the Spanish or Mission Period (1769 to 1821), the Mexican or Rancho Period (1821 to 1848), and the American Period (1848 to present). These periods are each represented in the history of the San Geronio Pass, summarized below.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

**The San Gorgonio Pass.** The Project site is located in the San Gorgonio Pass. The San Gorgonio Pass has always been a vital connection between southern California’s desert and the less arid interior and coast. Originally a Native American trade route, the pass was eventually occupied by Spanish ranchers living on the eastern frontier of lands administered by Mission San Gabriel. The region also served as a base from which Native Americans and Spaniards annually formed cooperative caravans from the mission via the pass to the “Salton Sea flat to gather enough of the almost pure salt to sustain the missions and pueblo of Los Angeles for another year.” During the Mexican Period, Rancho San Jacinto y San Gorgonio dominated the local economy. It was granted to Santiago Johnson in 1843 and sold to Louis Rubidoux in 1844. The American Period saw the breakup of most of the huge Mexican-era ranchos and San Jacinto y San Gorgonio was no exception. The San Gorgonio Pass remained an important travel corridor during the early American Period. Freight wagons and the Pony Express regularly crossed the pass before Wells Fargo surveyed and constructed an official stage line in 1862, and the Bradshaw Road was opened in 1863. Eventually five separate wagon routes were in regular operation through the pass, although the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1877 signaled the end of the stagecoach era. While most of the large Mexican ranchos were gone by the mid to late 19th century, the ranching tradition persisted, and to some extent remains locally viable. Banning was founded in 1884. It was named for Phineas Banning who ran a regular stage line between Los Angeles and San Pedro with his brother Alexander in the 1850s. Banning was a principal promoter of transportation infrastructure and is considered one of the “grand old men” of Los Angeles. Although the City of Beaumont retains a relatively rural character, low housing costs resulted in accelerated residential developments in the early 2000s and the communities of the San Gorgonio Pass have experienced the fastest population growth in Riverside County during this era.

### **History of the City of Beaumont<sup>3</sup>**

As early as the 1850s, the United States government surveying parties passed through the vicinity of what is now Beaumont. The location of the town of Beaumont was originally called San Gorgonia for a post office that was established on August 21, 1879, at the Southern Pacific Railroad’s Summit station. At the summit of the San Gorgonio Pass, the Southern Pacific’s Summit station served as a rest stop for railway travelers who had just crossed the Mojave Desert on their way to Los Angeles. The railroad station, comprising a small red building, an adjacent turntable, a water tank and well head, and a few other buildings were all that made up the location. In 1884, George C. Egan purchased the land at Summit station from the Southern Pacific and platted a 320-acre town site named San Gorgonio. In November 1887, an investment company run by H.C. Sigler, bought Egan’s share in the town site and renamed the town Beaumont, after Sigler’s hometown of Beaumont, Texas. The name “Beaumont” has been used extensively in place names, and is derived from the French word for “beautiful mountain.” Beaumont was incorporated as a city on November 18, 1912. It was around this same time that the first cherry trees were planted in Beaumont. By the 1960s, around 40 cherry groves dotted the landscape between Beaumont and Cherry Valley, while farther to the north at Oak Glen an apple industry has been thriving since the 1890s.

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<sup>3</sup> City of Beaumont 2020. *Draft PEIR for the Beaumont General Plan SCH No. 2018031022*. Section 5.5 Cultural Resources. <https://www.beaumontca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/36627/DEIR-090720> (accessed November 2021).

## EXISTING CULTURAL RESOURCES

### Methods Used to Identify Known Cultural Resources

Prior to fieldwork, a cultural resources records search was conducted at the Eastern Information Center (EIC) located at the University of California, Riverside. This included a review of all recorded historic and prehistoric cultural resources, as well as a review of known cultural resources, and survey and excavation reports generated from projects located within one mile of the Project Site. Tribal cultural resources were also analyzed, and discussion regarding these resources are found in **Section 3.14: Tribal Cultural Resources**. As required by CEQA, the City contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) to obtain a list of Native American tribes that should be contacted as part of the EIR process to ascertain their interest in engaging in consultation with the City regarding tribal cultural resources, and to obtain information whether any portion of the Project Site was listed on the Sacred Lands inventory maintained by NAHC. In addition, a review was conducted of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and documents and inventories from the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) including the lists of California Historical Landmarks (CHL), California Points of Historical Interest, Listing of National Register Properties, and the Inventory of Historic Structures.

### Field Survey

An archaeological pedestrian field survey of the Warehouse Site was conducted on April 11 and 12, 2019. The survey was conducted by walking parallel transects spaced 15 meters apart across 100 percent of portions of the Warehouse Site that exhibited high (70+ percent) surface visibility. Soil exposures, including natural and artificial clearings were carefully inspected for evidence of cultural resources. In areas of low visibility, transect width was narrowed to 10 meters and vegetation was removed at regular intervals to inspect the ground surface. The pedestrian survey was undertaken on just the Warehouse Site that would be graded for development. The 28.41 acres that is part of the Annexation Area, but for which no development plans are under consideration, was not surveyed on foot as no impact is proposed to occur on this portion of the Project Site.

During the field survey, BCR Consulting personnel carefully inspected the Warehouse Site, and identified no cultural resources within the Warehouse Site boundaries. Surface visibility was approximately 30 percent. Vegetation included seasonal grasses, non-native trees, and remnants of a coastal sage scrub vegetation community. Visible sediments included sandy silts mixed with granitic cobbles and gravels. No cultural resources (including prehistoric or historic-period archaeological sites or historic-period buildings) were identified during the field survey. Areas adjacent to the Project Site including the property immediately north of the Project Site where the new SR-60 interchange is under construction, and the area to the east of the Warehouse Site where ongoing construction and ground disturbance for the adjacent Potrero Boulevard and 4<sup>th</sup> Street extensions have been subject to severe disturbances related to excavation for road paving and utility installation. Both of these infrastructure improvements are being undertaken by public agencies, and are not a part of the Project.

## Cultural Resources Results

### Records Search

Data from the EIC revealed that eight cultural resource studies have taken place resulting in the recording of 12 cultural resources within one mile of the Project Site. Of the eight previous studies, none has assessed the Project Site and no cultural resources have been previously recorded within its boundaries. The records search is summarized as follows: **Table 3.4-1: Cultural Resources Previously Recorded within One-Mile Radius of Project Site.**

**Table 3.4-1: Cultural Resources Previously Recorded within One-Mile Radius of Project Site**

Cultural Resource	Description	Distance and Direction
P-33-1665	Prehistoric Ceramic Scatter	1/2 Mile SW
P-33-2836	Prehistoric Bedrock Mortar/Milling	3/4 Mile E
P-33-3667H	Historic-Period Railroad Refuse	1 Mile NW
P-33-3796	Historic Period Refuse and Well	1/2 Mile SE
P-33-5060	Historic Period Refuse	3/4 Mile W/SW
P-33-5061	Historic Period Refuse	3/4 Mile SW
P-33-6381	Historic Period Building	3/4 Mile NE
P-33-12639	Historic Period Bottle Fragment	1 Mile NW
P-33-13152	Prehistoric Isolated Hammerstone/Core	3/4 Mile SE
P-33-13153	Prehistoric Isolated Hammerstone/Core	3/4 Mile SE
P-33-15672	Unspecified Historical Archeologic Site	3/4 Mile W
P-33-23905	Prehistoric Isolated Chert Flake	1/8 Mile E

Source: BCR Consulting, LLC. (2019). *Cultural Resources Assessment Caprock Beaumont Project*, page 6. Beaumont, CA. David Brunzell.

## 3.4.2 REGULATORY SETTING

### FEDERAL

#### National Historic Preservation Act Section 106

Archaeological resources are protected through the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (54 United States Code [USC] 300101 et seq.), and its implementing regulations, Protection of Historic Properties (36 Code of Federal Regulation [CFR] Part 800); the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974; and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979. The NHPA authorized the expansion and maintenance of the NRHP, established the position of State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), provided for the designation of State Review Boards, set up a mechanism to certify local governments to carry out the purposes of the NHPA, assisted Native American tribes in preserving their cultural heritage, and created the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). Prior to implementing an “undertaking” (e.g., issuing a federal permit), § 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects of the undertaking on historic properties and to afford the ACHP and the SHPO a reasonable opportunity to comment on any undertaking that would adversely affect properties eligible for listing in the NRHP. As indicated in § 101(d)(6)(A) of the NHPA, properties of traditional religious and cultural importance to a tribe are eligible for inclusion in the NRHP. Under the NHPA, a resource is considered significant if it meets the NRHP listing criteria at 36 CFR 60.4.

## **National Environmental Policy Act of 1969**

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended (42 USC § 4321 et seq.; 40 CFR § 1500 et seq.), directs federal agencies to “preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage.” Compliance with NEPA is required prior to a federal agency undertaking a federal “action” as that term is defined by NEPA. An action is considered Federal funding or an undertaking (project) of a Federal agency. A Federal action would occur under subsequent permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

## **STATE**

### **California Historical Resource Status Codes**

A resource must meet at least one of the above-listed criteria and retain enough integrity to support its period of significance and association within a historical context. A resource is assigned a California Historical Resource (CHR) status code following evaluation, which identifies its significance level. The status codes and descriptions are listed below:

1. Properties listed in the NRHP or the CRHR.
2. Properties determined eligible for listing in the NRHP or CRHR.
3. Appears eligible for NRHP or CRHR through survey evaluation.
4. Appears eligible for NRHP or CRHR through other evaluation.
5. Properties recognized as historically significant by local government.
6. Not eligible for listing or designation as specified.
7. Not evaluated for NRHP or CRHR or needs re-evaluation

CHR Code 6 is determined ineligible for designation under any criteria and are not considered historical resources under CEQA. However, there are several subcategories that exist within each of the status codes that allow for various exemptions, such as whether or not a resource contributes to a Historic District.

### **California Environmental Quality Act**

The following CEQA statutes (PRC § 21000 et seq.) and CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) are of relevance to the analysis of archaeological, historic, and tribal cultural resources:

PRC § 21083.2(g) defines “unique archaeological resource.”

PRC § 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(a) define “historical resources.” In addition, CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(b) defines the phrase “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource”; it also defines the circumstances when a project would materially impair the significance of a historical resource.

PRC § 21074(a) defines “tribal cultural resources.”

PRC § 5097.98 and CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(e) set forth standards and steps to be employed following the accidental discovery of human remains in any location other than a dedicated ceremony.

PRC §§ 21083.2(b) and 21083.2(c) and CEQA Guidelines § 15126.4 provide information regarding the mitigation framework for archaeological and historic resources, including examples of preservation-in-place mitigation measures. Preservation in place is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to significant archaeological sites because it maintains the relationship between artifacts and the archaeological context and may also help avoid conflict with religious or cultural values of groups associated with an archaeological site.

Under CEQA, a project may have a significant impact on the environment if it may cause “a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” (PRC § 21084.1; 14 CCR § 15064.5[b]). If a site is listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or included in a local register of historic resources, or identified as significant in a historical resources survey (meeting the requirements of PRC § 5024.1[q]), it is a “historical resource” and is presumed to be historically or culturally significant for the purposes of CEQA (PRC § 21084.1; 14 CCR § 15064.5[a]). The lead agency is not precluded from determining that a resource is a historical resource even if it does not fall within this presumption (PRC § 21084.1; 14 CCR § 15064.5[a]).

## **REGIONAL**

### **County of Riverside General Plan**

#### ***Multipurpose Open Space Element***

The Multipurpose Open Space Element addresses protecting and preserving natural resources, agriculture and open space areas, managing mineral resources, preserving and enhancing cultural resources, and providing recreational opportunities for the citizens of Riverside County. The applicable policies related to cultural resources are listed below:

Policy OS 19.1: Cultural resources (both prehistoric and historic) are a valued part of the history of the County of Riverside.

Policy OS 19.2: The County of Riverside shall establish a Cultural Resources Program in consultation with Tribes and the professional cultural resources consulting community that, at a minimum would address each of the following: application of the Cultural Resources Program to projects subject to environmental review; government-to-government consultation; application processing requirements; information database(s); confidentiality of site locations; content and review of technical studies; professional consultant qualifications and requirements; site monitoring; examples of preservation and mitigation techniques and methods; curation and the descendant community consultation requirements of local, State and Federal law.

Policy OS 19.3: Review proposed development for the possibility of cultural resources and for compliance with the cultural resources program.

Policy OS 19.4: To the extent feasible, designate as open space and allocate resources and/or tax credits to prioritize the protection of cultural resources preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state.

Policy OS 19.5: Exercise sensitivity and respect for human remains from both prehistoric and historic time periods and comply with all applicable laws concerning such remains.

## LOCAL

### City of Beaumont General Plan

#### *Conservation and Open Space Element*

The Conservation and Open Space Element establishes goals and policies to protect, maintain, and enhance natural resources in the City. This Element complies with the State requirements for a Conservation Element and an Open Space Element. The Project's consistency with these goals and policies is discussed in **Table 3.10-3: Beaumont General Plan Consistency Analysis** of this EIR. The following goals and policies are applicable to cultural resources:

**Goal 8.11:** *A City where archaeological, cultural resources, tribal cultural resources, and historical places are identified, recognized, and preserved.*

Policy 8.11.1: Avoid or when avoidance is not feasible, minimize impacts to sites with significant archaeological, paleontological, cultural and tribal cultural resources, to the extent feasible.

Policy 8.11.2: Comply with notification of California Native American tribes and organizations of proposed projects that have the potential to adversely impact cultural resources, per the requirements of AB52 and SB18.

Policy 8.11.4 Require that any human remains discovered during implementation of public and private projects within the City be treated with respect and dignity and fully comply with the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, California Public Resources Code Amended Statutes 1982 Chapter 1492, California Public Resources Code Statutes 2006, Chapter 863, Section 1, CA Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, Public Resources Code Section 5097.94, SB 447 (Chapter 404, Statutes of 1987) and other appropriate laws.

### 3.4.3 STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G contains the Environmental Checklist Form, which includes questions concerning cultural resources. The questions presented in the Environmental Checklist Form have been utilized as significance criteria in this section. Accordingly, the Project would have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?
- b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?
- c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?



A “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” reflecting a significant impact under CEQA means “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired” (14 CCR § 15064.5[b][1]; PRC § 5020.1[q]). In turn, the significance of a historical resource is materially impaired when a project does any of the following:

1. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register; or
2. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to § 5020.1(k) of the PRC or its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of § 5024.1(g) of the PRC, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or
3. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA (14 CCR § 15064.5[b][2]).

## **METHODOLOGY AND ASSUMPTIONS**

The Project is evaluated against the aforementioned significance criteria/thresholds, as the basis for determining the impact’s level of significance concerning cultural resources. In addition to Project Design Features, this analysis considers the existing regulatory framework (i.e., laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards) that avoid or reduce the potentially significant environmental impact. Where significant impacts remain despite compliance with the regulatory framework, feasible mitigation measures are recommended, to avoid or reduce the Project’s potentially significant environmental impacts.

### **Approach to Analysis**

This analysis of impacts on cultural resources examines the Project’s temporary (i.e., construction) and permanent (i.e., operational) effects based on application of the significance criteria/thresholds outlined above. For each criterion, the analyses are generally divided into two main categories: (1) temporary impacts; and (2) permanent impacts. Each criterion is discussed in the context of Project components that share similar characteristics/geography. The impact conclusions consider the potential for changes in environmental conditions, as well as compliance with the regulatory framework enacted to protect the environment.

The baseline conditions and impact analyses are based on field observations conducted by BCR Consulting on April 11 and 12, 2019; a cultural resources records search, and Sacred Lands File search with the NAHC were conducted for the Project. The determination that the Project would or would not result in “substantial” adverse effects on historical and archaeological resources and human remains considers the existing site’s historical resource value and the severity of the Project implementation on resources that may be considered historical.

### 3.4.4 PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

**Impact 3.4-1: *Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?***

***Level of Significance: Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated***

The Project Site is currently vacant and undeveloped, but has been subject to agricultural activities in the past as the site was used for orchards. (see reference to aerial photos in **Section 3.8: Hazards and Hazardous Materials**). The records search and field survey did not identify any cultural resources (including prehistoric or historic archaeological sites or historic-period buildings) within the Project Site. Furthermore, research results combined with surface conditions have failed to indicate sensitivity for buried cultural resources. Therefore, no significant impacts related to archaeological or historical resources are anticipated.

### CONSTRUCTION

Conventional cut and fill grading would be utilized to construct the graded pads and roadways. Grading would involve approximately 968,130 cubic yards of cut and 970,624 cubic yards of fill, for an import of 2,495 cubic yards. Cut and fill slopes of approximately 20 to 30 feet may be necessary to achieve the proposed building pad grades.

The Cultural Resources Assessment performed for the Project did not indicate sensitivity for cultural resources within the Project boundaries. While no resources were located, ground-disturbing activities always have the potential to reveal buried deposits not observed on the surface during surveys.

Prehistoric or historic cultural materials that may be encountered during ground-disturbing activities include:

- Historic artifacts such as glass bottles and fragments, cans, nails, ceramic and pottery fragments, and other metal objects;
- Historic structural or building foundations, walkways, cisterns, pipes, privies, and other structural elements;
- Prehistoric flaked-stone artifacts and debitage (waste material), consisting of obsidian, basalt, and or cryptocrystalline silicates;
- Groundstone artifacts, including mortars, pestles, and grinding slabs; and
- Dark, greasy soil that may be associated with charcoal, ash, bone, shell, flaked stone, groundstone, and fire-affected rocks.

Although no historical resources were found on-site during the cultural resources assessment, as a precautionary measure, Mitigation Measure (MM) CUL-1 and MM-CUL-2 listed below are recommended to address the possible discovery of cultural resources during grading and site disturbance activities. With implementation of MM CUL-1 and MM-CUL-2, as well as MM TCR-1 in **Section 3.14: Tribal Cultural Resources**, the Project would result in a less than significant impact to historical resources.

## OPERATIONS

Following Project construction and completion of that phase of the Project, the Project would be utilized for industrial warehousing. These land use operations would not impact historical resources. Therefore, Project operations would have no impact on historical resources.

### Mitigation Measures

**MM CUL-1** During initial ground disturbance of the Project Site, a qualified archaeologist on an approved city or county list shall be present on-site to observe disturbance areas. The qualified archaeologist shall be able to halt work in the immediate vicinity should artifacts, exotic rock, shell or bone be uncovered during construction. In the event such cultural resources are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities by anyone other than the archaeologist, the Project contractor shall cease any ground-disturbing activities within 50 feet of the find and immediately contact the qualified archaeologist. Work shall not resume until the potential resource can be evaluated by the qualified archaeologist and a formal report provided to the City. The qualified archaeologist shall be empowered to halt or redirect ground-disturbing activities away from the vicinity of the find until the find has been evaluated, determined whether the find is culturally sensitive, and an appropriate short-term and long-term treatment plan has been designed.

**MM CUL-2** Prior to the issuance of any grading permits for the Project, a Cultural Awareness Training Program shall be provided to all construction managers and construction personnel prior to commencing any ground disturbance work at any locations on the Project Site. The training shall be prepared and conducted by a qualified archaeologist to the satisfaction of the City Planning Department. The training may be discontinued when ground disturbance is completed. Construction personnel shall not be permitted to operate equipment within the construction area unless they have attended the training. A copy of the training materials and/or training video, as well as a list of the names of all personnel who attended the training and copies of the signed acknowledgment forms shall be submitted to the City Planning Department for their review and approval.

**Impact 3.4-2:** *Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*

**Level of Significance:** *Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated*

See **Impact 3.4-1** above for discussion related to this impact.

The Project Site is currently vacant and undeveloped, with minimal history of development activities having occurred on the site. There has been some minor site disturbance resulting from use by vehicles as evidenced by numerous informal dirt roads crossing the site. Aerial photographs from 1949 to 2012 indicate that portions of the northwest and southwest areas in the Project Site may have been used as an orchard and have had small structures or trailers in place. As of 2016, aerial photos indicate these uses no longer occur. During the survey, surface visibility was approximately 30 percent and vegetative cover included seasonal grasses, non-native trees, and remnants of a coastal sage scrub vegetation community. Sediments that were visible included sandy silts mixed with granitic cobbles and gravels. The pedestrian

field survey did not reveal any cultural resources (including prehistoric or historic-period archaeological sites or historic-period buildings). Subsurface examination of the Project Site was not conducted.

As discussed above, the Warehouse Site would be graded requiring approximately 950,000 cubic yards of balanced cut and fill material. Grading and other ground-disturbing activities such as excavation or trenching have the potential to unearth and damage or destroy unknown buried archaeological resources. If grading and construction activities would result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource determined to be “historic” or “unique,” a significant impact could result. However, it should be noted that the significance of the impact would be based upon the criteria presented in the thresholds of significance (i.e., is archaeological resource determined to be “historic” or “unique”).

As defined in PRC § 21083.2, a “unique” archaeological resource is an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

According to CEQA, if a resource is neither unique nor historical, the effects of a project on that resource will not be considered significant effects on the environment (CEQA Guidelines § 15064(C)(4)). Under a worst-case scenario, it is assumed that any archaeological resources located within the development areas of the Project would be eliminated through grading and construction activities. Although no cultural resources were found on-site during the assessment, MMs CUL-1 and CUL-2 listed above would be applied to the Project. With implementation of MMs CUL-1 and CUL-2, the Project would result in a less than significant impact under this threshold.

### **Mitigation Measures**

MMs CUL-1 and CUL-2 are applicable.

***Impact 4.4-3: Would the Project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?***

***Level of Significance: Less than Significant Impact***

## **CONSTRUCTION**

The archaeological records search and field survey did not reveal any resources known to contain human remains within or near the Project site. While the Project area is not known to contain any sensitive archeological or cultural resources including human remains, ground-disturbing activities have the potential to disturb and reveal unknown buried human remains.

If human remains are found, those remains would require proper treatment in accordance with applicable laws, including Health and Safety Code (HSC) §§ 7050.5-7055 and PRC §§ 5097.98 and 5097.99. HSC §§ 7050.5-7055 describe the general provisions for treatment of human remains. Specifically, HSC § 7050.5 prescribes the requirements for the treatment of any human remains that are accidentally discovered during excavation of a site. HSC § 7050.5 also requires that all activities cease immediately, and a qualified archaeologist and Native American monitor be contacted immediately. As required by state law, the procedures set forth in PRC § 5097.98 would be implemented, including evaluation by the County Coroner and notification of the NAHC. The NAHC would then designate the “Most Likely Descendent” of the unearthed human remains. If human remains are found during excavation, excavation would be halted in the vicinity of the discovery and any area that is reasonably suspected to overlay adjacent remains shall remain undisturbed until the County Coroner has investigated, and appropriate recommendations have been made for the treatment and disposition of the remains. Compliance with the established regulatory framework (i.e., HSC §§ 7050.5-7055 and PRC §§ 5097.98 and 5097.99) would ensure potential Project impacts concerning human remains are reduced to less than significant. See also MM TCR-1 in **Section 3.14: Tribal Cultural Resources** of this EIR.

## OPERATIONS

Following completion of construction of the Project and associated disturbances of the site, the construction phase of the Project would cease. Operation of the Project would include use for industrial warehousing and subsequent disturbance of previously ungraded soils would not occur. Therefore, operation of the Project would not involve any activities that could impact human remains or their associated ties to cultural or archaeological resources.

### Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is necessary.

### 3.4.5 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable cultural resource impacts have been identified.

### 3.4.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

For purposes of cumulative cultural resources impact analysis, cumulative impacts are considered for cumulative development according to the related projects; see **Table 3-1: Cumulative Projects**. The geographic context for cumulative analysis of the cultural resources effects is localized to the City of Beaumont and The Pass Area Plan, which is located in the San Gorgonio Pass Area, located between the Coachella, San Jacinto, and Moreno Valleys.

The Project when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects, could encounter cultural resources. The potential exists for this cumulative development scenario to result in the adverse modification or destruction of historical and archaeological cultural resources. Potential cultural resource impacts associated with the individual developments are specific to each project. As with this Project, all cumulative development in the area would undergo environmental and design review on a project-by-project basis. All new development would be subject to compliance with the existing local,

state, and federal regulatory framework concerning the protection of historical and archaeological cultural resources. Additionally, implementation of site-specific mitigation measures can reduce potential project impacts to as-yet unidentified archaeological resources to less than significant levels.

Similarly, all future development with the potential to impact cultural resources would be required to demonstrate compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulatory requirements, including general plan goals and policies of the affected jurisdiction, intended to reduce and/or avoid potential adverse environmental effects (refer to **Section 3.0: Environmental Impact Analysis** for applicable prior CEQA documents that provide analysis and mitigation for cumulative impacts within the jurisdiction of the affected agency). As such, cumulative impacts to cultural resources would be mitigated on a project-by-project basis, and in accordance with the established regulatory framework, through the established regulatory review process. Therefore, the combined cumulative impacts to cultural resources associated with the Project's incremental effects and those of the cumulative projects would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

### 3.4.7 REFERENCES

BCR Consulting, LLC. 2019. *Cultural Resources Assessment*. April 2019.

California Historic Building Code. *Sections 18950 to 18961 of Division 13, Part 2.7 of California Health and Safety Code*.

City of Beaumont. 2020. *Draft Program Environmental Impact Report Beaumont General Plan SCH No. 2018031022*. <https://www.beaumontca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/36627/DEIR-090720>.

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