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## I. SUMMARY

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The proposed project will require approval of certain discretionary actions by the City of Los Angeles, and is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act, for which the City is the designated Lead Agency. The City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning administers the process by which environmental documents for private projects are prepared and reviewed by the City pursuant to the applicable provisions of the City Municipal Code and the City's guidelines for implementation of CEQA. On the basis of these procedures, it was determined that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment, and that an EIR should be prepared.

Based on public comments to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) and a review of environmental issues by the Los Angeles City Planning Department, the City identified the following environmental issues to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed project:

- Earth Resources
- Air Quality
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Biological Resources
- Noise
- Land Use
- Transportation/Circulation
- Cultural Resources
- Public Services
  - ◇ Fire Protection
  - ◇ Police Protection
  - ◇ Schools
  - ◇ Parks and Recreation

- Utilities
  - ◊ Water
  - ◊ Solid Waste
- Hazardous Materials

### **Notice of Preparation Issues (NOP)**

Comments from identified responsible and trustee agencies, as well as interested parties on the scope of the EIR, were solicited through a Notice of Preparation (NOP) process. The NOP for the proposed project was issued for a 30-day period on September 10, 1999, with written comments due on October 12, 1999. A “Request for Comments” notice was subsequently circulated to local Native American organizations and consultants for a 30-day period on November 30, 1999, with written comments due on January 4, 2000. This supplemental notice was circulated due to a letter received from a local resident (in response to the NOP), which indicated that there might be human remains buried on the project site. A total of nine comment letters were received in response to the NOP and supplemental notice, and are included in Appendix B to the Draft EIR.

### **Environmental Impact Report Processing History**

A Draft EIR for Tentative Tract No. 52539 was subsequently prepared and circulated for public review and comment. On September 15, 2000 the Draft EIR was released for circulation and a notice was published in the Los Angeles Times. The circulation period for the Draft EIR, established by the State Clearinghouse, was September 19, 2000 to November 2, 2000. The City of Los Angeles extended the public review period to Monday, November 6, 2000. The Biology section was recirculated from May 24, 2001 to July 9, 2001. Where appropriate, the following Summary has been revised to reflect specific comments received which required corrections and additions to the Draft EIR.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Summary of Proposed Project.** Tentative Tract No. 52539 for a 116-lot single-family residential subdivision. The proposed project includes the construction of 113 new single-family units; two existing single-family units and the YMCA childcare facility would remain on the site on proposed Lot Nos. 93, 115, and 116, respectively. In addition, two existing single-family homes and one small shed would be demolished in order to construct the proposed project. The proposed project will also require the

reconfiguration of an existing hospital staff parking lot and the rear northerly retaining wall of the YMCA facility to accommodate the project's primary and secondary (emergency) access.

The proposed project's on-site circulation system consists of a series of curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. Primary access to the site would be provided off of Mission Hills Road via an existing easement located between the Ararat Retirement Home and an existing hospital staff parking lot. Emergency access is proposed via the extension of Indian Hills Road between two existing single-family units. Another emergency access point is proposed to be located at the western boundary of "E Court." This emergency access point would be accessed via the existing driveway at the western end of the Ararat Retirement Home property; this driveway is situated within a Department of Water and Power right-of-way for existing electrical transmission lines and towers.

Utilities required for the proposed project (e.g. electricity, natural gas, sewer, water) would be extended onto the project site from either Mission Hills Road or Indian Hills Road. The grading phase of the proposed project would involve less than 500 cubic yards of soil; all grading would be balanced on-site. Landscape plans have yet to be prepared for the proposed project.

**Approval Requirements.** The City of Los Angeles is the Lead Agency for the proposed project. In order to construct the proposed project, the applicant is requesting approval of the following discretionary actions from the City of Los Angeles:

- A Zone Change from A2-1 to R1-1.
- A General Plan Amendment (GPA) for the project site from a "Residential-Very Low" to a "Residential-Low" land use designation.
- A Plan Approval (PA) to reconfigure an existing public parking lot.
- A tentative tract map for a 116-lot single-family residential subdivision.

The EIR is also intended to cover all federal, state, regional and/or local government discretionary approvals that may be required to develop the proposed project, whether or not they are explicitly listed below. Federal, state and regional agencies that may have jurisdiction over the proposed project include, but are not limited to the following:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- California Department of Fish and Game
- Regional Water Quality Control Board

- South Coast Air Quality Management District
- Native American Heritage Council

## OVERVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

**Project Site.** The 28.76-acre project site is located in the northern portion of the San Fernando Valley within the Mission Hills community of the City of Los Angeles. The project site is situated adjacent to the Golden Interstate (I-5) Freeway and approximately one-quarter mile from the San Diego Freeway (SR-405), and just south of the juncture of these two freeways. The site is located at 15065 Mission Hills Road, situated immediately north of the intersection of Mission Hills Road and Indian Hills Road.

The project site is characterized by relatively flat topography with a gentle slope from north to south. The average elevation of the project site is approximately 1,080 feet above mean sea level. Approximately 98 percent of the site is less than ten percent in slope, with the remaining two percent between 10 and 15 percent slope. Unimproved dirt roads and pathways provide access throughout most of the site. Access to the site is currently available from Indian Hills Road and an existing access road off of Mission Hills Road, just east of the Ararat Retirement Home.

The project site is zoned “A2-1” (Agricultural Zone) and has an existing General Plan land use designation of “Residential-Very Low.” The project site is currently used for flower cultivation and contains four single-family dwelling units (two are vacant), one small shed, and a YMCA childcare facility. The central and northern portions of the site have most recently been used for agricultural uses, whereas the southern portion of the site has been used for residential uses.

**Surrounding Locale.** Existing land uses in the vicinity of the project site include: single-family dwelling units to the north and east across the Golden State Freeway (I-5); the Ararat Retirement Home, Providence Holy Cross Medical Center, Greater Valley Medical Group Office Building, the closed Alemany High School and single-family dwelling units to the south; and single-family residential units to the west. Existing roadways and freeways in the project area include: the Golden State Freeway (I-5) to the north and east, Mission Hills Road, Indian Hills Road, and Rinaldi Street to the south, and the San Diego Freeway (I-405) approximately 1,350 feet to the west.

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## **SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

### **Summary of Net Unmitigated Significant Environmental Impacts**

Based on the analyses contained in this EIR, the proposed project would not result in any significant unavoidable environmental impacts.

### **Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

#### Earth Resources

##### *Seismic Impacts*

Strong ground shaking at the project site from earthquakes on nearby and regional faults is anticipated at least once during the lifetime of the proposed project. Therefore, all proposed structures on the site shall be of seismically resistant structural design. This requirement should reduce grounding shaking-related hazards to a less than significant level. The maximum potential ground acceleration (i.e., maximum credible site acceleration) at the project site is 1.89g (189 percent the force of gravity). This acceleration represents “peak horizontal ground acceleration” and could occur from a magnitude 6.9 earthquake on the Northridge (East Oak ridge) Fault zone which is located approximately one mile from the site. Ground shaking produced during an earthquake can result in a number of potentially damaging phenomena classified as secondary earthquake effects. These secondary effects include ground rupture, ground lurching, landslides, liquefaction, and seismically-induced settlement:

##### *Ground Rupture*

Due to the lack of evidence of faulting on-site, the potential for ground rupture associated with earthquakes on nearby faults is considered to be less than significant.

##### *Liquefaction*

The project site is located within the “Zone of Required Investigation for Liquefaction.” However, based on review of the proposed development plan and the proposed mitigation measure to remove and recompact unsuitable soils, only compacted artificial fill and bedrock will underlie the completed proposed project. However, if the mitigation measures listed below are implemented, the potential for liquefaction at the project site would be less than significant once grading has been completed.

### *Settlement Due to Seismic Shaking*

Granular soils, in particular, are susceptible to settlement during seismic shaking, whether the soils liquefy or not. Portions of the shallow on-site soils are loose and may be subject to seismically-induced settlement, which would be a significant impact of the project. However, compliance with the mitigation measures listed below would reduced the impacts to a less than significant level.

### *Mitigation Measures*

- Grading shall conform to the recommendations provided by the geotechnical report and to the specifications of the City of Los Angeles Landform Grading Manual guidelines, subject to the approval by the Advisory Agency and the Department of Building and Safety's Grading Division.
- Fill slopes shall be designed and graded at 2:1 gradients or flatter. All fills and fill slopes shall be constructed in accordance with recommendations of the approved geotechnical report and in accordance with the City of Los Angeles Grading standards. All fills shall be compacted to a minimum of 90 percent relative compaction.
- Cut slopes shall be designed at gradients of 2:1 or flatter, provided geologic conditions are favorable to slope stability.
- Artificial fills, natural soils, and alluvium shall be removed to competent Modelo Formation Bedrock or Pacoima Formation and replaced with compacted fill.
- Subdrain systems shall be placed in the excavated bottoms of removal areas in which groundwater was observed within the alluvium or where natural drainage courses are obvious.
- The project site shall be closely observed by an Engineering Geologist during grading to verify that if on-site faults are detected, they are dealt with appropriately (i.e., establishment of appropriate setbacks, special foundation design, etc.).

### Air Quality

Project development will entail considerable construction activity to demolish structures, grade the site and build the new homes. Construction has traditionally been considered mainly a source of potential nuisance from dust or odors such that these temporary emissions are typically categorized as insignificant in most air quality impact analyses. Dust is normally the primary concern during construction. Use of

the "standard" daily PM-10 emission factor would allow for the simultaneous construction disturbance of around 5.7 acres to generate a potentially significant emission level of 150 pounds per day (150 , 26.4 » 5.7). If strongly enhanced dust control procedures are implemented, as much as 15 acres of the project site could be under disturbance to maintain a less than significant daily PM-10 emission rate. Maintaining a less than significant temporary PM-10 emissions rate would require a combination of reduced daily grading area plus enhanced dust control measures. A menu of enhanced dust control measures capable of achieving a 10-pound per day per acre emission rate is included under impact mitigation. In addition to PM-10 emissions, construction will entail the use of internal combustion engines to power on-road trucks and off-road mobile, semi-mobile and semi-stationary equipment. Such sources are mainly diesel-powered and are often poorly regulated in terms of allowable emission levels. Average daily NOx emissions would be well above the threshold. The use of periodic low-NOx tune-ups for on-site equipment can reduce the NOx levels, but not to less than the significance threshold. All other pollutants will be at sub-threshold levels with a large margin of safety. However, the non-attainment status of the airshed dictates that reasonable and feasible available control measures to minimize construction equipment exhaust emissions should be implemented even if thresholds are not exceeded.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

- Water all active construction areas at least twice daily.
- Wet down and cover dirt hauled off-site.
- Suspend all operations on any unpaved surface if winds exceed 25 mph.
- Actively stabilize any cleared area that is planned to remain inactive for more than 30 days after clearing is completed.
- Establish an on-site construction equipment staging area and construction worker parking lot, located on either paved surfaces or unpaved surfaces subjected to soil stabilization treatments, as close as possible to a public highway.
- Control access to public roadways by limiting curb cuts/driveways to minimize project construction impacts upon traffic operations.
- Properly maintain non-vehicular equipment engines to minimize the volume of exhaust emissions.
- Where feasible, use electricity from power poles, rather than temporary diesel or gasoline-powered generators.

- Where feasible, use on-site mobile equipment powered by alternative fuel sources (i.e., methanol, natural gas, propane or butane).
- Encourage car-pooling for construction workers.
- Cover any on-site stockpiles of debris, dirt or other dusty material.
- Sweep access points daily.
- Require receipt of materials during non-peak traffic hours.
- Sandbag construction sites for erosion control where necessary.
- Conduct pre-construction assessments for ACM's and lead paint.
- Perform structural remediation consistent with air hazards criteria in SCAQMD rules and regulations as detailed in the City of Los Angeles "Threshold Guide."

#### Hydrology/Water Quality

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the construction of homes and streets on the project site, thus decreasing existing infiltration rates and increasing surface water runoff rates on the project site. To handle the developed conditions runoff, two new storm drains are proposed. The first is an extension of the existing 36-inch storm drain that currently outlets to Mission Hills Road in a westerly direction. The second proposed storm drain would pick up the runoff from the eastern portion of the project site that currently flows onto the Golden State Freeway right-of-way. Runoff from most of the developed site (i.e., 27.4 acres comprising Proposed Hydrologic Areas No. 1-9) will be directed as street flows toward the existing 36-inch storm drain (and its proposed extension). The applicant will be required to obtain an encroachment permit from Caltrans to allow for the extension of the new storm drain into Caltrans' right-of-way. Any upgrades that may be required to the Caltrans facilities will be done at the (fair share) expense of the applicant. No significant storm water runoff impacts from the proposed project are anticipated. The northwest portion of the project site is located within a designated mudflow area pursuant to the Flood Hazard Management Specific Plan (Ordinance No. 154,405). Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would introduce additional homes and residents to potential mud flow hazards. This is considered to be a potentially significant impact that can be reduced to less than significant levels through compliance with the requirements of the Flood Hazard Management Specific Plan (Ordinance No. 154,405) (e.g. debris walls, desilting areas, etc.). Construction of the proposed residential development has the potential to affect the quality of storm water runoff. According to the Bureau of Engineering, routine safety precautions for handling and storing toxic and hazardous materials,



and maintaining construction equipment in proper working condition, may effectively mitigate the potential pollution of stormwater by these materials. These same types of best management practices shall also be extended to non-hazardous stormwater pollutants such as sawdust and other solid wastes.

If not properly designed and constructed, the proposed project could increase the rate of urban pollutant introduction into stormwater runoff, and increase erosion, transport of sediment load and downstream siltation, all of which constitute avoidable impacts to surface water quality. In order to prevent these potential impacts, the project shall be designed in compliance with 1) Section 402 (p) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, or Clean Water Act (CWA); and 2) Order No. 90-079 of the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region, which regulates the issuance of waste discharge requirements to Los Angeles County and Cities tributary to the County under NPDES Permit No. CA0061654. Compliance with the NPDES requirements for controlling stormwater pollution will reduce the proposed project's impact on water quality (both short-term construction impacts and long-term operational impacts) to less than significant levels.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

The proposed project's storm drainage system improvements shall reduce hydrology-related impacts to a less than significant level. Nevertheless, the proposed project shall be required to submit site drainage plans to the City Engineer and other responsible agencies for review and approval prior to development of any drainage improvements.

The following mitigation measure shall apply the project site's location within a designated mudflow area:

- The proposed project shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Flood Hazard Management Specific Plan (Ordinance No. 154,405), which applies to the natural tributary drainage area north of the project site. Minimum design parameters to be used for the mud/debris flow control systems within drainage areas that are designated as "Subject to Mudflow" are:
  - a) A channel flow capacity of 10 cubic feet per second per acre of tributary drainage area; or
  - b) A temporary storage capacity of 400 cubic yards per acre of tributary drainage area.

The project's compliance with the required NPDES program described above will ensure that no significant water quality impacts will be generated by the proposed project. The following additional water quality mitigation measures required by the City shall also be implemented:

- All waste shall be disposed of properly. Use appropriately labeled recycling bins to recycle construction materials including: solvents, water-based paints, vehicle fluids, broken asphalt and concrete; wood and vegetation. Non-recyclable materials/wastes must be taken to an appropriate landfill. Toxic wastes must be discarded at a licensed regulated disposal site.
- Clean up leaks, drips and spills immediately to prevent contaminated soil on paved surfaces that can be washed away into the storm drains.
- Do not hose down pavement at material spills. Use dry cleanup methods whenever possible.
- Cover and maintain dumpsters. Place uncovered dumpsters under a roof or cover with tarps or plastic sheeting.
- Use gravel approaches where truck traffic is frequent to reduce soil compaction and limit the tracking of sediment into streets.
- Conduct all vehicle/equipment maintenance, repair, and washing away from storm drains. All major repairs are to be conducted off-site. Use drip pans or drop clothes to catch drips and spills.
- The project shall comply with Ordinance No. 172,176 to provide for Stormwater and Urban Runoff Pollution Control which requires the application of Best Management Practices (BMPs), including the following mitigation measures:
  - ◇ Pollution carried by on-site runoff from project site requires applicant to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to retain or treat the volume of run-off volume produced from  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch of rainfall in a 24 hour period using one of the four methods described in the SUSMP (Design Standards For Structural or Treatment Control (BMPs) to the satisfaction of the Department of Public Works Bureau of Sanitation, Watershed Protection Division. A list of approved structural BMPs to filter or infiltrate runoff is also described in the SUSMP. A signed certificate from a California licensed civil engineer or licensed architect that the proposed BMPs meet this numerical threshold standard is required.
  - ◇ Post development peak stormwater runoff discharge rates shall not exceed the estimated pre-development rate for development where the increase peak stormwater discharge rate will result in increased potential for downstream erosion.
  - ◇ Concentrate or cluster development on portions of a site while leaving the remaining land in a natural undisturbed condition.

- ◇ Limit clearing and grading of native vegetation at the project site to the minimum needed to build lots, allow access, and provide fire protection.
  - ◇ Maximize trees and other vegetation at each site by planting additional vegetation, clustering tree areas, and promoting the use of native and/or drought tolerant plants.
  - ◇ Preserve riparian areas and wetlands designated.
  - ◇ Any connection to the sanitary sewer must have authorization from the Bureau of Sanitation.
  - ◇ Install Roof runoff systems where site is suitable for installation. Runoff from rooftops is relatively clean, can provide groundwater recharge and reduce excess runoff into storm drains. For design details, please refer to the Development Best Management Practices Handbook.
  - ◇ Promote natural vegetation by using parking islands and other landscaped areas.
  - ◇ Stencil sign adjacent to storm drain inlets that prohibits the dumping of improper materials into the storm drain system. Prefabricated stencils can be obtained from the Dept. of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation, Watershed Protection Division.
  - ◇ Design an efficient irrigation system to minimize runoff including: drip irrigation for shrubs to limit excessive spray; shutoff devices to prevent irrigation after significant precipitation; and flow reducers.
  - ◇ Runoff from hillside areas can be collected in a vegetative swale, wet pond, or extended detention basin, before it reaches the storm drain system.
  - ◇ Any connection to the sanitary sewer must have authorization from the Bureau of Sanitation.
  - ◇ Reduce impervious surface area by using permeable pavement materials where appropriate, including: pervious concrete/asphalt; unit pavers, i.e. turf block; and granular materials, i.e. crushed aggregates, cobbles.
- The applicant shall be responsible its fair share of any upgrades required to Caltrans' storm drainage facilities that may be required as a result of the proposed project.

## Biological Resources

The proposed project would result in the loss of 17.9 acres of agricultural lands, 2.4 acres of disturbed and ruderal vegetation, 0.2 acre of mule fat scrub, 0.2 acre of willow scrub, and 1.2 acres of non-native woodland. These communities on the site do not provide habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species and are of low biological value due to the high level of disturbance, and their small size and fragmented nature. The loss of these plant communities is not considered a substantial loss of wildlife habitat and will not substantially affect special-status species; therefore, the loss of these habitats is not considered significant. The proposed development envelope generally includes habitat disturbed by agricultural activities. In addition, because of the relatively common nature of most of the wildlife species that would be displaced or inadvertently destroyed by construction activities, project implementation is not expected to cause an existing wildlife population on or adjacent to the project site to drop below self-sustaining levels. Therefore, no significant impacts on common wildlife species are expected to occur. However, bird nests with eggs or young are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code. The loss of an active nest because of construction or other site-preparation activities would be considered a potential violation of these laws. In addition, and depending on the total population number of native birds nesting on the site, the loss of active nests could substantially affect on-site bird populations. This would represent a potentially significant impact under CEQA.

No special-status plant species were observed or present on the site. Therefore, no significant impacts to special-status plant species will occur as a result of project implementation. Monarchs were observed on the site during the fall survey. Since it did not appear that monarchs are roosting on the site, no significant impacts on this species are expected to occur. However, should a roost be established prior to grading, impacts on any such roost would be considered a significant impact.

Although the California horned lark was not detected during the field surveys, suitable habitat is present on site within the agricultural fields and disturbed and ruderal areas of the site. Should this species be nesting on site, a direct loss of active nests, including eggs, young, or incubating adults, could result if construction and site preparation activities are conducted during the nesting season (March through July) of these species. This loss would be considered a potentially significant impact.

Based on consultation with CDFG and the December 27, 2000 field survey, it has been determined CDFG streambed jurisdiction exists on the property. The CDFG will require a streambed alteration agreement and mitigation for the loss of habitat associated with the unknown water source and agricultural basin. It is unlikely that Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) waters of the United States jurisdiction is present on the site; however, the ACOE reserves the right to make a jurisdictional determination on a case-by-case basis.

Therefore, prior to grading and construction activities, it is recommended that ACOE conduct a field visit of the site to confirm that ACOE waters of the United States jurisdiction is not present on the site.

### *Mitigation Measures*

The following measures shall be required in order to comply with city, state, and federal regulations regarding potential impacts to CDFG, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Regional Water Quality Control Board jurisdictional areas:

- Prior to grading and construction activities, it is recommended that ACOE conducts a field visit of the site to confirm that ACOE waters of the United States jurisdiction is not present on the site.
- Permitting as required by CDFG shall be executed pursuant to Section 1603 of the Fish and Game Code of California. Permitting, if needed and as required by ACOE, RWQCB, and NRCS, shall be executed pursuant to Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act and Food Security Act, for all impacts to waters of the United States. All conditions of the agreements with these agencies designed to minimize impacts to biological resources shall be implemented.

The following mitigation measures will reduce project impacts to Common and Special-Status Bird Nests, and Monarch Butterflies to a less than significant level:

- The applicant shall have a field survey conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if active nests of bird species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or the California Fish and Game Code are present in the construction zone or within 100 feet (200 feet for raptors) of the construction zone. The field survey shall occur no earlier than 3 days prior to construction or site preparation activities that would occur during the nesting/breeding season of native bird species potentially nesting on the site (typically March 1 through August 31). Additionally, raptor (nesting) surveys shall be conducted on the site prior to the commencement of construction related activities. Should an active raptor nest be discovered on the site, a 500-foot buffer shall be maintained between project-related activities and the nest until such time fledglings leave the nest and site and it has been determined by the sites' biological monitor that the nest is not being used for repeated, same season nesting attempts. If active nests are found (other than raptors), a minimum 50-foot fence barrier shall be erected around the nest, and clearing within the fenced area shall be postponed or halted, at the discretion of a biologist, until the nest is vacated and juveniles have fledged and there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting, as determined by a biologist. The biologist shall serve as a construction monitor during those periods when

construction activities will occur near active nest areas to ensure that no inadvertent impacts on these nests will occur.

- Prior to grading activities, a survey shall be completed by a qualified biologist to determine if a wintering roost of monarch butterflies has been established on the project site, particularly in association with the non-native woodlands and the trees associated within existing developed areas of the site. The survey shall be completed during the appropriate winter roost period for this species prior to on-site grading or construction. If a winter roost is located, the applicant shall consult with CDFG to determine appropriate measures to avoid significant impacts to butterflies or the roost. These measures can include conducting construction and/or grading activities outside the winter roost period of the monarch or avoiding the removal of the roost area.
- Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, a plot plan prepared by a reputable tree expert as defined by Ordinance 153,478, indicating the location, size, type, and condition of all existing trees on the site shall be submitted for approval by the Department of City Planning and the Street Tree Division of the Bureau of Street Maintenance. All trees in the public right-of-way shall be provided per the current Street Tree Division standards. The plan shall contain measures recommended by the tree expert for the preservation of as many trees as possible. Mitigation measures such as replacement by a minimum of 24-inch box trees in the parkway and on the site, on a 1:1 basis, shall be required for the unavoidable loss of desirable trees on the site, and to the satisfaction of the Street Tree Division of the Bureau of Street Maintenance and the Advisory Agency. The canopy of the trees planted shall be in proportion to the canopies of the trees removed per Ordinance No. 153,478, and to the satisfaction of the decision-maker.

### Noise

Code compliance would generally limit construction noise impacts to periods of reduced noise sensitivity and thus reduce sleep disturbance and other noise nuisance potential. The proximity of the freeway, emergency medical transportation, and light aircraft from San Fernando Airport all generate single event noise levels that will not be substantially different from construction equipment noise.

For the proposed project, only very minor earth-works are required. Heavy earth-moving use will be minimal. The distance between on-site construction and off-site receivers such as the Ararat Home will typically be well in excess of 200 feet. Construction equipment noise exposure will thus normally be well below maximum levels generally experienced at noise-sensitive receivers near the project site. The combined effects of minimal needed earth-moving, an elevated noise baseline, and adequate source-

receiver distances will maintain temporary construction activity noise impacts at less than significant levels.

Compared to existing traffic volumes on area roadways that create traffic noise, the project traffic increment will be very small. Farther and farther from the project site, the increment diminishes with each new directional travel choice. Because of the logarithmic nature of the decibel scale, it requires a substantial increase in project-related traffic volumes to create a perceptible noise change. No off-site traffic noise impacts, individually or cumulatively, meet or exceed identified significance thresholds.

Freeway noise levels at the rear lot lines of Lots 31-56 and Lot 97 were measured to be 84 dB CNEL. The future increase in I-5 traffic volumes of 20-25 percent will raise the design noise level to 85 dB CNEL in the absence of mitigation. As a practical matter, wall height was limited to 16 feet because of aesthetic concerns. The noise reduction effectiveness for a 16-foot barrier is 15 dB for a ground level receiver. The upstairs building facade, exposed to an 83 dB CNEL loading, with slightly greater setback, would experience an 8 dB reduction with such a noise wall. Installation of a 16-foot barrier would achieve a 70 dB CNEL rear yard noise exposure, and the upstairs facade would have a 75 dB CNEL loading.

An exterior level of 70 dB is at the upper end of the level considered acceptable for residential exterior recreational use. Although the noise level would still be in excess of the 65 dB CNEL exposure goal, it would be marginally acceptable within established guidelines. Standard construction and materials may provide a minimum of 20 dB of outdoor to indoor noise reduction. However, the specific outdoor to indoor noise reduction performance of each dwelling unit's rooms depend upon the actual amount of glazing, opaque wall and door areas.

At eastern perimeter lots, the building facade exposure for any upper story development of 75 dB CNEL would require 30 dB of structural noise attenuation to achieve a 45 dB CNEL interior. Although specific architectural design parameters have not yet been developed, one can formulate a generic architectural package that creates approximately a 30 dB noise level reduction. The generic package derives enhanced noise reduction through substantially upgraded windows, upgraded wall treatments, and baffled exterior vents or openings. Noise impacts from the Holy Cross heliport on the project site were calculated for six monthly emergency visits. The City/State/federal standard for aircraft noise is 65 dB CNEL. Baseline on-site noise levels are 65 dB CNEL in the middle of the site, and over 80 dB CNEL along the freeway. While infrequent helicopter traffic may be audible on a single-event basis, especially for nocturnal emergency visits, the combination of an elevated background and a very low monthly average noise impact level render helicopter noise as a less than significant source of impact.

### *Mitigation Measures*

- The project should comply with the City of Los Angeles Noise Ordinances Nos. 144,331 and 161,574, and any subsequent ordinances, which prohibit the emission or creation of noise beyond certain levels at adjacent uses unless technically infeasible.
- Construction should be restricted to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday.
- Construction activities should be scheduled so as to avoid operating multiple pieces of equipment simultaneously, which causes high noise levels.
- Grading and construction equipment should be stored on the project site while in use.
- The project applicant should use power construction equipment with state-of-the-art noise shielding and muffling devices.
- A 16-foot barrier along the eastern project perimeter along I-5 shall be installed (specifically along Lot Nos. 31-56 and 92), which will marginally meet City of Los Angeles exterior noise exposure standards.
- Structural attenuation of 30 dB shall be required to meet interior standards for upper stories of rooms less protected by the sound wall. Such a reduction is feasible with substantially upgraded windows, walls, doors and baffled wall/ceiling penetrations as shown in the prototype noise reduction package. Verification of the ability of proposed residences to meet the 45 dB CNEL interior standard is required when building plans are filed and reviewed by the Building Department.

### Land Use

The proposed residential project would be consistent with the existing land use pattern in this area of Los Angeles and generally with adjacent land uses which consist of the Ararat Retirement Home, single-family dwelling units, Holy Cross Hospital, Greater Valley Medical Center, Eden Memorial Cemetery, and the defunct Alemany High School. While the proposed project would result in an increase in short- and long-term impacts related to air quality, noise, traffic, biological resources, and hydrology, none of these impacts would be significant and unavoidable. In addition, the proposed project would not result in any significant environmental impacts to offsite properties. Therefore, no significant impacts would result from the proposed project with regard to land use compatibility.



The proposed project is generally consistent with the intent of the objectives and policies of the Mission Hills/Panorama City/Sepulveda Community Plan. Therefore, no land use impacts related to Community Plan consistency would be created by the proposed project.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required because no significant land use impacts have been identified.

### Transportation/Circulation

The traffic that will be generated by the proposed single-family residential development will result in one significant impact on the street and freeway network, as defined by the LADOT criteria. During the morning peak hour, there would be a significant impact at the intersection of Rinaldi Street and the Interstate 405 Freeway ramps. Therefore, mitigation measures would be required at that intersection. These include revised lane striping and modification of traffic signal equipment.

Based on a detailed analysis of the vehicle and pedestrian traffic flow, parking, and driveway operations along Indian Hills Road, it is concluded that Indian Hills Road will provide a satisfactory primary ingress and egress route for the proposed residential development.

The volumes of development traffic that will use each of the freeways will be of insignificant magnitudes, as defined by the criteria of the Congestion Management Program (CMP). The volumes of development traffic at the intersections of the freeway ramps and the streets will also be at levels that are considered not significant for CMP purposes. There will be no significant impacts on the CMP network, and no further CMP analysis is required.

### *Mitigation Measures*

- The lane striping on the westbound lanes of Rinaldi Street east and west of the intersection shall be revised to provide a second left-turn lane for westbound traffic turning to the southbound freeway on-ramp.
- The traffic signal equipment, including the vehicle detectors, shall be modified as necessary to conform to the new lane striping.

- Driveway access and streets shall be subject to the review and approval by LADOT and LAFD.

### Cultural Resources

Although the project will not adversely impact any known archaeological sites or artifacts, there is the potential that buried sites may be encountered during the course of project development. In particular, there are unconfirmed reports of burials on the knoll(s) at the south end of the property. Therefore, the proposed project should be considered to have the potential for adverse impacts to significant prehistoric or historic archaeological resources. The consulting archaeologist recommends extreme caution be exercised when and if subsurface grading takes place, including any demolition of existing structures and their mechanical removal. Mitigation measures are required to insure that potential archaeological sites (including burials) or artifacts, if any are discovered, are handled appropriately.

Investigations of the brick weir box and associated earthen reservoir existing on the project site indicate that the structures may be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 2, for their association with the San Fernando Mission Land Company. There are no buildings known to be related to the company extant, and the reservoir and weir box are believed to be the only remaining elements of the extensive water supply and irrigation system operated by the company.

The reservoir and weir box also appear to be eligible under Criterion 3, as embodying the distinctive characteristics of late nineteenth to early twentieth century water supply and control structures, an increasingly rare construction type in the region as suburban development steadily advances on formerly agricultural lands. The resource is significant at the local level.

A review of Tentative Tract Map 52539 indicates that if developed as proposed, the project would eliminate both the reservoir and the weir box. Because these are considered significant historic resources, their destruction would constitute a significant impact under CEQA, and therefore mitigation measures are required.

### *Mitigation Measures*

- In the event that archaeological resources are encountered during the course of grading, all development must temporarily cease in these areas until the archaeological resources are properly assessed and subsequent recommendations are determined by a qualified archaeologist.

- In the event that human remains are discovered, there shall be no disposition of such human remains, other than in accordance with the procedures and requirements set forth in California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. These code provisions require notification of the County Coroner and the Native American Heritage Commission, who in turn must notify the those persons believed to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American for appropriate disposition of the remains. Excavation or disturbance may continue in other areas of the project site that are not reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains or archaeological resources.
- Avoidance and preservation in place. This is the preferred strategy for mitigation of impacts to the weir box and reservoir. Ideally, both structures would remain completely intact and would be integrated into the development scheme. Avoidance of the former reservoir may not be possible within the current development plan. In light of the deteriorated state of the reservoir, which has been substantially filled through silt deposition during its functional life, and through years of agricultural activity on the site following its abandonment, documentation of the reservoir by a State DPR Form 523 completed for the resource should be sufficient to mitigate impacts on this part of the feature. A section of the east berm of the reservoir adjacent to the weir box should be left intact sufficient to provide structural support for the weir box, and also to give a sense of the nature of the construction of the historic reservoir. It is recommended that the area of preservation surrounding the weir box be a minimum of 10 feet on all sides.
- Alternatively, if preservation in place is determined to be infeasible due to the proposed project, a strategy of documentation would mitigate project impacts to the weir box by a program which would include:
  - (a) Excavation by a qualified historical archaeologist both within the interior of the weir box and adjacent to the exterior of the structure, to provide a further understanding of its construction, total depth, function and method of operation, to better establish its age and the duration of its use, and to facilitate;
  - (b) Production of a set of archival quality photographs and measured drawings of the structure which would follow Historic American Building Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) guidelines. Documentation would include large format photographs taken from various angles and photos of architectural details, in addition to measured drawings which may include site plan, plan elevation, sectional, and construction detail drawings.

### Fire Protection

Implementation of the proposed project would result in an increase in population on the project site, thus increasing the existing demands for fire service provided by the LAFD. The LAFD has indicated that the new demands for fire service created by the project can be accommodated by existing staff; no additional firefighters would need to be hired as a result of the proposed project. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) has also indicated that there are no water pressure deficiencies in the project area, and thus the fire flow requirements for the proposed project can be accommodated. Tentative Tract No. 52539 also meets LAFD's emergency access requirements by providing two emergency access points to the site in addition to the primary access location off of Mission Hills Road. Therefore, project impacts relative to fire protection would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

- The project should comply with all applicable Uniform Fire Code (UFC) and Hillside Ordinance requirements for construction, access, fire flow, fire hydrants, indoor heat sensitive sprinklers, and brush clearance.
- Prior to the issuance of building permits, Tentative Tract Map 52539 should be subject to review by the LAFD. All recommendations made by the LAFD relative to fire safety (e.g. emergency access) should be incorporated into the final tract map.
- Smoke detectors should be installed in each dwelling unit.

#### Police Protection

Implementation of the proposed project would result in additional residents in the project area (as well as pedestrian and vehicular traffic) which may increase the existing demands for the police protection and traffic enforcement services provided by the LAPD. The LAPD has indicated that the proposed project would not represent any unique law enforcement problems and that existing response times would not be significantly affected. However, in their response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) circulated for this EIR, LAPD indicated that the proposed project could have a significant impact on police services in the Foothill Area. The LAPD therefore made several suggestions on how to reduce the police protection impacts associated with the proposed project (see Mitigation Measures). Overall, police protection impacts from the proposed project are considered to be potentially significant, but can be mitigated to less than significant levels through implementation of the mitigation measures listed.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

- The applicant shall consult with the LAPD Community Liaison/Crime Prevention Unit (CL/CPU) regarding crime prevention features appropriate to the design of the project.
- Prior to the approval of the final site plan and issuance of each building permit, the project applicant shall submit plans to the LAPD for review and approval for the purpose of incorporating safety measures in the project design, including the concept of crime prevention through environmental design (i.e., building design, circulation, site planning, and lighting of parking structure and parking areas).

### Schools

Based on LAUSD student generation rates, the proposed project would generate approximately 126 students. Specifically, the proposed project would generate 57 elementary students, 29 middle school students, and 39 high school students. The proposed project would cause the operating capacity of Osceola Elementary School to be exceeded by three students. However, middle and high school students generated by the proposed project would not cause the operating capacities of San Fernando Middle School or Kennedy High School to be exceeded. While the operating capacity of Osceola Elementary School would be exceeded by three students, this amount is considered to be too small to require the construction of a new school for elementary students in the project area. Payment of the required school developer fees would reduce the proposed project's potentially significant impact to Osceola Elementary School to a less than significant level.

### *Mitigation Measures*

- The applicant shall pay the required school development impact fee as determined by the Department of Building and Safety.

### Parks and Recreation

Implementation of the proposed project would result in an increase in population on the project site, possibly increasing the demands to use the existing parks and recreational facilities in the project area. The proposed project would therefore further reduce the City's existing parkland acreage per capita deficiency. Local parks that may be impacted by the proposed project include Las Palmas Park, Brand Park, and Recreation Park. The track and fields at Alemany High School may also be used by future project site residents, although recreational opportunities at this school are limited due to existing high school recreation programs during and after school hours. The proposed residential project is required to conform with the Quimby Act to reduce its impacts to parks and recreation services. Because the project consists of more than 50 lots, the City Recreation and Parks Department can require the applicant to

provide parkland on the project site instead of the payment of Quimby fees. Because Tentative Tract No. 52539 does not include any parkland, project impacts to parks and recreational facilities are considered to be significant, but can be reduced to less than significant levels.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

- The applicant shall comply with the proposed project's Quimby obligation as determined by the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department.

#### Water

Development of the proposed project would result in an increase in water consumption during both the short-term construction and long-term operation phases of the project. Because the volume of water would be small and limited to the construction period, water usage during construction would be less than significant. The 113 new residential dwelling units would result in the generation of approximately 37,290 gallons of water per day. The existing YMCA facility and the two single-family units that are to remain on the site would use approximately 1,226 gallons of water per day. LADWP has indicated that the proposed project could be connected to either of the existing water mains located beneath Indian Hills Road or Mission Hills Road, and that these mains provide sufficient capacity to accommodate the project's domestic potable water demands. LADWP has also indicated that the water pressure in the project area is sufficient to meet the fire flow requirement of the proposed residential land uses. However, the proposed project includes a General Plan Amendment from a Residential-Very Low to a Residential-Low land use designation, and therefore has not been entirely addressed in LADWP's planned growth of the City's water system. This is considered a potentially significant impact that can be mitigated to a less than significant level through the implementation of the water mitigation measures.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

- The applicant shall obtain a "will serve" letter for potable water service from LADWP prior to the issuance of grading permits.
- Compliance with the City's Xeriscape Ordinance and all other applicable water conservation ordinances.
- Efficient irrigation systems shall be installed which minimize runoff and evaporation and maximize the water which will reach plant roots (e.g. drip irrigation, automatic sprinklers equipped with moisture sensors).

- Automatic sprinkler systems shall be set to irrigate landscaping during early morning hours or during the evening to reduce water losses from evaporation. Sprinklers should also be reset to water less often in cooler months and during the rainfall season so that water is not wasted by excessive landscape irrigation.
- Selection of drought-tolerant, low water consuming plant varieties shall be used to reduce irrigation water consumption.
- Incorporate low flow fittings, fixtures and equipment such as lower-volume water faucets, low-flush toilets, lower-volume water closets, and water-saving showerheads.
- Recirculating hot water systems shall be used where feasible in long piping systems (where water must be run for considerable periods before hot water is received at the outlet).

### Solid Waste

Development of the proposed project would increase solid waste generation during both the short-term construction and long-term operational phases of the project. Much of the debris resulting from demolition activities is recyclable. Materials not recycled would be disposed of at either of the local landfills. Because landfill capacities are sufficient to adequately accommodate solid waste generated by the demolition and construction phase of the proposed project, short-term construction impacts to solid waste service would be less than significant. The 113 new residential dwelling units would result in the generation of approximately 1,130 pounds of solid waste per day. The existing YMCA facility and the two single-family units that are to remain on the site would generate approximately 63.5 pounds of solid waste per day. This amount of solid waste generated by the proposed project would be reduced through participation in the City's curbside recycling program. Given the available disposal capacity at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill, the solid waste disposal impacts from the proposed project would be less than significant. In addition, the Bureau of Sanitation has indicated that the proposed 113 dwelling units represent approximately 1/5 of the solid waste collection route in the project area; therefore, the Bureau would accommodate the project without adding more trucks or drivers.

### *Mitigation Measures*

- To the maximum extent feasible, all recyclable construction and demolition debris should be salvaged and recycled.
- All residential units on the project site should participate in the City's curbside recycling program and should separate recyclable materials to maximize recycling rates. Landscape debris (or "green waste") should also be recycled.

- All household hazardous waste (e.g. paint, motor oil, etc.) should be disposed or recycled at an authorized hazardous materials disposal site.

### Hazardous Materials

The hazardous substance search and regulatory list review conducted in preparation of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) showed that the project site is not listed in any regulatory database as site known to generate, store, or be contaminated with hazardous materials. The site reconnaissance, aerial photograph review, and hazardous substance search revealed the potential for subsurface soil contamination from pesticide use during the project site's current use for flower cultivation and its historic agricultural use. A Phase II ESA was prepared to examine this potential. Testing of soil borings from the site as a part of the Phase II ESA determined that the soil on the project site is not contaminated from pesticide use and no further action is necessary.

Because the potential for Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) within existing onsite residential dwellings exists, a demolition level asbestos survey by a licensed contractor shall be conducted for the residential structures subject to significant demolition activities. Also based on the age of the residential structures, the potential also exists for these structures to contain lead-based paint. Prior to demolition activities, a qualified contractor shall conduct a survey to determine if these structures contained lead-based paint. If lead paint is found to be present on the structures to be demolished, the structures shall be abated in compliance with applicable state and federal rules and regulations governing lead paint abatement. In addition, it is possible that the onsite residential structures to be demolished utilize fluorescent light ballasts containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Thus, during their removal, all fluorescent light ballasts in these structures that are not labeled "no PCBs" shall be disposed of at an appropriate disposal center.

### *Mitigation Measures*

- Asbestos removal shall conform to Rule 1403 of the South Coast Air Quality Management District and EPA's NESHAP regulation.
- Prior to the issuance of the demolition permit, the applicant shall provide a letter to the Department of Building and Safety from a qualified lead paint abatement consultant that no lead paint is present in onsite buildings. If lead paint is found to be present on buildings to be demolished, it shall be abated in compliance with applicable state and federal rules and regulations governing lead paint abatement.



- All fluorescent light ballasts that are not labeled “no PCBs” shall be disposed of at a disposal center that is specifically prepared to accommodate the safe disposal of PCBs.

## **ALTERNATIVES SUMMARY**

Three alternatives to the proposed project were analyzed in the Draft EIR. A complete description of the three alternatives, a summary of the potential environmental impacts, and a comparison to the proposed project are provided in Section VI of the Draft EIR. The following alternatives to the proposed project were considered in the Draft EIR:

### **No Project (Existing Development to Remain With No New Development)**

Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed project would not be constructed and the project site would continue to be used for flower cultivation. The existing single-family residential units, two of which are vacant, would remain on the project site as would the YMCA childcare facility.

### **Community Plan Alternative**

Under the Community Plan Alternative, the project site would be developed in accordance with the site's existing Residential-Very Low land use designation adopted in the Mission Hills/Panorama City/Sepulveda Community Plan. The Residential-Very Low designation permits 1-3 dwelling units per acre. The residential density of the Community Plan Alternative is based on the maximum number of dwelling units allowed per acre under the site's current land use designation (i.e., 3 du/acre). As such, the Community Plan Alternative would consist of 86 dwelling units (28.76 acres x 3 = 86.28 dwelling units), or 30 fewer lots than the proposed project. The Community Plan Alternative would include 28,114 square feet (or .65 acres) of park space, which meets the City's Quimby requirements for the project site. While this alternative would include fewer lots or homes than the proposed project, the site plan would be generally the same as the project. Similar to the proposed project, the YMCA childcare facility would also remain onsite under this alternative.

### **Reduced Density Alternative**

Under the Reduced Density Alternative, the project site would be developed with 70 single-family dwelling units, which represents a 40 percent decrease in onsite density compared to the proposed project. The residential density proposed under the Reduced Density Alternative would still be within the range

permitted by the Mission Hills/Panorama City/Sepulveda Community Plan land use designation for the project site (i.e., Residential-Very Low, which permits 1-3 dwelling units per acre). The Reduced Density Alternative would include approximately 2 acres of park space, which exceeds the City's Quimby requirements for the project site. Some of the park space would be used to preserve the cistern and a portion of the onsite swale. While this alternative would include fewer lots or homes than the proposed project, the site plan would be generally the same as the project. Similar to the proposed project, the YMCA childcare facility would also remain onsite under this alternative.