

## V. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

### A. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) requires that any significant impacts, including those that can be mitigated but not reduced to a less than significant level, be described and their implications discussed in an EIR. Impacts of the project are analyzed throughout Section IV, Environmental Impact Analysis, of this Draft EIR. As discussed therein, the only project-level significant unavoidable impact that would occur is related to aesthetics. As discussed in Section IV.A, Aesthetics, of this Draft EIR, the project would result in a contrast with the existing aesthetic image of the site and the surrounding area by transforming vacant portions of the site to a secondary school campus. While construction associated with the Rinaldi Street extension is reducing the degree of that contrast due to slope easements, grading, and the removal of vegetation, a contrast would still exist. This impact would be further lessened with the incorporation of the site's natural sloping landform into the design of the campus, the use of simple building massing and extensive landscaping, and the provision of a large open plaza, thereby creating a unified aesthetic environment. However, the project would still introduce a prominent and significant change to aesthetic conditions in the immediate area. While site-specific mitigation measures would reduce this impact to the fullest extent possible, the degree of contrast between proposed project features and existing features would, nonetheless, result in a significant unavoidable visual impact.

In addition, the project would contribute to a potentially significant and unavoidable cumulative impact related to noise, as the one dBA (CNEL) increase from the project at residences south of Rinaldi Street would shift noise levels from a "normally unacceptable" to "clearly unacceptable" compatibility category. This impact is considered cumulatively significant and unavoidable.

The project would also contribute to potentially significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts related to fire and police protection services. With regard to fire protection, if staffing and equipment does not keep pace with increased demand resulting from the proposed project and the related projects identified in Section III, Environmental Setting of this Draft EIR, a significant cumulative impact would result. Similarly, with regard to police protection, given population growth and new development in the project area, development of the proposed and related projects would further burden already understaffed conditions and result in a significant cumulative impact. However, cumulative impacts to both fire and police protections services would likely occur with or without development of the proposed project.

The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.2(b)) also require that, where there are significant impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design (e.g., significant visual impacts in the instance of the proposed project), the reasons why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding such impacts, be discussed in the EIR. The basic objectives of the Sierra Canyon Secondary School Project, which are listed in Section II, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, outline the primary reasons for the project. These objectives provide the basis for the project and illustrate why the project is being proposed in spite of the above-mentioned specific unavoidable impacts. Specifically, the primary objective of the project is to provide a state-of-the-art campus environment for a new independent secondary school program serving a critical mass of students from throughout the San Fernando Valley and neighboring communities. Many of the basic objectives that follow are specifically tied to the location of the proposed project as well as to achieving the aforementioned critical mass of students. Thus, in order to meet the objectives, the project is being proposed despite the significant and unavoidable visual

impacts and cumulative noise, fire, and police protection impacts. Furthermore, it must be noted that, should the Sierra Canyon Secondary School be developed at another location, new and potentially greater significant and unavoidable impacts could occur as a result of the school not being located within the area where a majority of the students reside, as well as from development at a less buffered location than the project site. Overall, the benefits realized through the achievement of the project objectives would justify the relatively minimal significant and unavoidable impacts.

## **B. SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) requires that an EIR analyze significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed project. This includes the use of nonrenewable resources during construction and operation of a project to such a degree that the use of the resources thereafter is unlikely. It also includes significant and irreversible environmental changes that could result from environmental accidents associated with the project.

Construction of the Sierra Canyon Secondary School Project would result in a commitment of limited, slowly renewable, and nonrenewable resources. Such resources would include certain types of lumber and other forest products; metals such as steel, copper, and lead; aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt (e.g., stone, gravel, and sand); and other construction materials such as plastic. In addition, fossil fuels used in construction vehicles would also be consumed during construction of the project.

Operation of the proposed project would involve the continued consumption of limited, nonrenewable, and slowly renewable resources similar to other school projects. These resources would include natural gas and electricity, petroleum-based fuels, fossil fuels, and water. Energy resources would be used for heating and cooling of buildings, transporting people and goods to and from the site, heating and refrigeration for food storage and preparation, heating and cooling of water, and lighting. Operation of the project would occur in accordance with Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulation, which sets forth conservation practices that would limit the amount of energy consumed by the project. In addition, the project would be subject to energy efficient planning and construction guidelines set forth by the City of Los Angeles. Additionally, the applicant has expressed an interest in integrating environmentally sensitive features into the project, particularly with respect to landscaping and water conservation. Nonetheless, the use of such resources would still continue to represent a long-term, irreversible commitment of these resources.

In addition, the limited use of common hazardous materials on the project site, including cleaning agents and pesticides for landscaping, would be used, handled, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations and standards. Thus, the project would not result in a significant and irreversible environmental change associated with the accidental release of hazardous materials.

The proposed project would transform the residentially zoned project site to an educational use and would thus, commit the land on which it is located to a particular use, representing a significant irreversible change. However, such a commitment would be justified, as educational uses are permitted on property zoned for residential uses by Conditional Use Permit per the City of Los Angeles Zoning Code.

In general, irreversible environmental changes that would occur as a result of the project would be similar to those that would occur with most projects of comparable size and purpose. Overall, construction and operation of the project would result in the commitment of limited, slowly renewable, and nonrenewable resources, which would limit the availability of these resources for future use. However, the use of these resources would be of a relatively small scale and would likely occur with or without development of the project, as much of the site is vacant and would eventually likely be developed in accordance with current zoning and plans. Thus, although irreversible environmental changes would result from the project, such changes would not be considered significant.

### **C. GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) requires that an EIR discuss growth-inducing impacts of a proposed project. Growth-inducing impacts are ways in which the project could "...foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment." This includes projects that would remove obstacles to growth. However, as stated in the Guidelines, "it must not be assumed that growth in any areas is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment."

The project would involve the construction and operation of a new secondary school on a 4.89-acre site that is currently largely vacant, with the exception of an estate-size single-family residence and ancillary structures that is owned by the school. The school would accommodate up to 550 students and employ approximately 100 faculty and staff members. No housing units are proposed as part of the project and, thus, the project would not directly result in a permanent, full-time population growth in the area. As such, the project would not impact existing schools or other community services in the area. In addition, while the project would increase the daytime population in the area due to the addition of students and employees, the project is not expected to induce people to move to the area. Additionally, the project would provide school facilities that would benefit area by alleviating some demand on public schools. The employment opportunities provided by the project would likely be filled by residents of the area, particularly from the San Fernando Valley. Similarly, the project would largely serve an existing student population currently attending Sierra Canyon Elementary and Middle School and the temporary secondary school campus, which are both located in the Chatsworth-Porter Ranch area. Thus, the project would not induce population growth, and while it could foster a small degree of economic growth due to the increase in employees, students, and visitors to the area, such growth-inducement would not be significant.

Furthermore, the project would not induce growth in an area that is not already developed with infrastructure to accommodate such growth. The extension of Rinaldi Street, which has been planned for ten years and is already in progress, would occur with or without construction of the project. In addition, other infrastructure is in place to serve the proposed project in the existing segment of Rinaldi Street, which terminated at the site's western boundary. However, the project would incorporate new infrastructure improvements, including some minor localized street improvements to accommodate access to the site as well as the extension of infrastructure delivery lines to serve the site. These infrastructure improvements would serve the proposed uses and any excess capacity that may be provided by such improvements would not be to such a degree so as to induce growth in the area.

Finally, as discussed in Section IV.G, Land Use, of this Draft EIR, the project is consistent with the applicable policies and objectives of the City's General Plan elements and other regional

plans. Furthermore, the project is permitted in the existing zone through the Conditional Use Permit process. Given the location of several other schools in the Chatsworth-Porter Ranch and neighboring Granada Hills communities, the project would not introduce a precedent setting land use into the area, which could thereby prompt other such development.

Overall, the project would not remove obstacles to population growth, result in an increase in the population that may tax existing community service facilities, or encourage or facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment or the area, either individually or cumulative. Thus, the project would not result in significant growth-inducing impacts.

#### **D. POTENTIAL SECONDARY EFFECTS**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(a)(1)(D) states that, "If a mitigation measure would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the effects of the mitigation measures shall be discussed but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed." In accordance with the Guidelines, the following provides a discussion of the potential impacts that could occur from implementation of the proposed mitigation measures.

##### *AESTHETICS*

Mitigation Measure V.A-1 involves landscaping and building treatments. If the additional measures called for in this mitigation would be necessary, they would not result in impacts beyond those analyzed for the proposed project. Mitigation Measures V.A-2 and V.A-3 call for the submission of design and landscape plans, which are procedural actions that would not result in significant impacts. Finally, Mitigation Measure V.A-4, which involves the regular maintenance of the project site (e.g., trash and graffiti removal), would be relatively small in scale and would not differ greatly from ongoing activities on the project site. Thus, no significant secondary impacts would result.

##### *AIR QUALITY*

Mitigation Measures IV.B-1 through IV.B-4 and IV.B-7 involve watering of the site during project construction. These measures would require the use of additional water. However, such watering would be done periodically and would be temporary (during project construction only). Thus, no significant impacts from implementation of these measures would occur. Mitigation Measure IV.B-5 and IV.B-6 involve the covering of haul truck loads and the capacity of haul trucks. Impacts associated with construction air quality and construction traffic are analyzed in this Draft EIR. Mitigation Measure IV.B-8 and IV.B-10 requires that operations on unpaved surfaces be suspended during high winds and smog alerts. No physical changes would result from these measures. Mitigation Measure IV.B-9, which limits traffic speeds on unpaved roads, would also not result in any secondary impacts. Finally, Mitigation Measure IV.B-11, which requires odor control and maintenance of the equestrian trail, could generate approximately two additional trips to and from the project site per week. This would not result in a significant secondary traffic impact.

### *BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES*

Mitigation Measures IV.C-1 and IV.C-4 involve the replacement of trees. Implementation of this measure would be in accordance with the landscape plan and pursuant to City of Los Angeles guidelines and would not result in significant secondary impacts. Mitigation Measure IV.C-2 involves the timing and, if necessary, surveying of tree and brush removal. The removal of on-site vegetation is part of the project and was, thus, analyzed as part of the project. Mitigation Measure IV.C-3 requires the preparation of a plot plan identifying existing on-site trees. This is not a physical measure and, thus, would not result in any secondary impacts. Mitigation Measure IV.C-5 requires adherence to the City's Landscaping Ordinance, which was assumed during project analyses.

### *CULTURAL RESOURCES*

The mitigation measures contained in Section IV.D, Cultural Resources, of this Draft EIR (Mitigation Measures IV.D-1 through IV.D-4) address the unanticipated discovery of archaeological or paleontological resources during project construction. These measures involve the analysis of such discoveries and would not result in secondary impacts.

### *SOILS AND GEOLOGY*

Most of the mitigation measure included in Section IV.E, Soils and Geology, of this Draft EIR involve specific construction-related measures that address soil conditions. These measures (Mitigation Measure IV.E-2 through IV.E-56 and IV.E-60 through IV.E-63) are considered part of the construction phase of the project and, thus, have been analyzed as part of the project. Mitigation Measure IV.E-1, which requires a pre-grading meeting, would not result in any significant secondary impacts. Mitigation Measure IV.E-57 addresses post-construction landscaping, which has been analyzed as part of the project. Mitigation Measure IV.E-58 involves the irrigation of landscaping. While this measure would require the additional use of water, there is adequate water to serve the needs of the site, including irrigation. Mitigation Measure IV.E-59 requires the control of burrowing animals. This would not result in significant secondary impacts.

### *HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY*

No mitigation measures related to hydrology and water quality are proposed as part of the project.

### *LAND USE*

No mitigation measures related to land use are proposed as part of the project.

### *NOISE*

Mitigation Measure IV.H-1 requires the use of mufflers on construction equipment. No physical changes would occur from implementation of this measure. Mitigation Measures IV.H-2, IV.H-3, and IV.H-8 address the notification of neighbors of potential noise generating activities and the receipt of noise-related complaints. These are procedural measures that would not result in any physical changes to the environment. Mitigation Measure IV.H-4 limits the hours of construction pursuant to the City's Municipal Code. These hours were considered in all of the applicable analyses (e.g., noise, transportation and circulation) of this Draft EIR and no secondary impacts

would occur. Mitigation Measure IV.H-5 calls for the use of a temporary noise barrier during construction of the project. While this barrier could result in visual impacts to the surrounding residences, such impacts would be temporary in nature and thus, less than significant. Mitigation Measures IV.H-6 and IV.H-7 involve specific design elements associated with noise reduction (e.g., insulation in the classroom building and the placement of outdoor chimes). These design elements are part of the project and would not result in secondary impacts.

#### *FIRE PROTECTION*

Mitigation Measure IV.I.1-1 and IV.I.1-2 require the installation of fire hydrants and sprinklers, respectively. The water (and water pressure) required for these hydrants and sprinklers was considered in the project analysis. Furthermore, they would be provided in accordance with Los Angeles Fire Department Standards and the Los Angeles Municipal Code. Thus, no secondary impacts would occur. Mitigation Measure IV.I.1-3 requires the construction of a fire lane on-site. The construction and operation of all internal roadways, including this fire lane, are considered part of the project and thus, have been analyzed in this Draft EIR. Mitigation Measure IV.I.1-4 and IV.I.1-5 address the location of on-site buildings in relation to roadways and fire hydrants. The project has been designed in accordance to these measures and thus, no secondary impacts would occur. Finally, Mitigation Measure IV.I.1-6 requires compliance with applicable state and local fire regulations. This is a procedural measure and no secondary impacts would occur.

#### *POLICE PROTECTION*

Mitigation Measure IV.I.2-1 and IV.I.2-2 require submission of project plans to the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) before and after construction of the project. These are procedural measures that would not result in secondary impacts. Should the LAPD require additional security measures pursuant to Mitigation Measure IV.I.2-1, these measures would not likely be to a degree that would result in significant secondary impacts. Mitigation Measure IV.I.2-3 addresses on-site security features. These features are design security guidelines that would not result indirect physical or secondary impacts

#### *TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION*

Mitigation Measure IV.J-1 requires the implementation of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program. The TDM program would not involve any physical changes to the environment and no secondary impacts would occur. Mitigation Measure IV.J-2 and IV.J-4 through IV.J-6 require that the Applicant make monetary contributions to traffic improvements. Such contributions would not result in any environmental impacts. Mitigation Measure IV.J-3 involves restriping and changing left-turn restrictions on Tulsa Street and De Soto Avenue. This measure would be implemented during construction of the project and appropriate practices (e.g., temporary traffic control measures) would be undertaken to ensure no traffic impacts would result. Finally, Mitigation Measure IV.J 7 requires that the school provide a newsletter with a section addressing parking and access to the campus. This measure would not result in any physical impacts.

## E. EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR contain a brief statement indicating the reasons that certain possible significant effects of a project were determined to be less than significant and thus, were not analyzed in the EIR. Discussions of those impacts found not to be significant are provided here:

### *LIGHT AND GLARE*

Security and landscape lighting must meet Planning Department requirements for low illumination levels and uplit fixtures as part of the Conditional Use process. Furthermore, the City's extension of Rinaldi Street in front of the property will introduce more intense lighting levels to the area that will largely dominate over, or obscure, night lighting of the project. The low-rise project would utilize many non-reflective materials in its construction as typical of other private schools in the region and would not be a source of substantial glare. At grade parking would be covered, with minimal opportunity for associated glare effects.

### *AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES*

Part of the site, as with some of the surrounding is zoned A2. However, the site is not currently used for agricultural purposes and the project would not result in the conversion of farmland. There is no active Williamson Act contract inclusive of the property and no loss of farmland or agricultural uses would result from the project.

### *HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS*

The proposed school uses do not involve the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials other than those typical of school uses such as those associated with science and art classes and for routine cleaning, maintenance and landscape management. Disposal of these materials would be highly regulated by current health and safety standards for secondary schools. Provision of an equestrian trail along the western edge of the property would be a source of animal waste as with current conditions and equestrian activity in the area. As the area includes horsekeeping facilities and equestrian activity, the provision of another trail would not be considered a significant public hazard in an existing equestrian area. No petroleum or chemical storage facilities, or other uses which could create foreseeable upset or accident conditions are located on the site. The project site is also situated in a residential area with no past history of industrial or noxious uses. The only structures on the property are associated with an existing single-family estate residence constructed in the 1970's. Existing easements and pipelines on the property are for the transfer of potable water in connection with off-site MWD and DWP facilities. Additionally, a Phase I Environmental Assessment completed for the property found that no regulatory or hazardous waste concerns have been identified within the project site. Neither the site nor adjacent properties are listed as hazardous sites or generators of hazardous materials, and the site does not warrant further investigation or clean-up.<sup>1</sup>

### *MINERAL RESOURCES*

As described in Section 18 of the City's Conservation Element, the only extractable mineral resources (sand and gravel) in the City are located in the Big Tujunga Alluvial Fan over 15 miles

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<sup>1</sup> National Environmental, Inc., Executive Summary, pages 2-3. The report is contained in its entirety in Appendix C of this Draft EIR.

to the east. The site is not located within an MRZ-2 zone as designated by state geologist. Therefore, the project could not have any impact on these resources.

### *POPULATION AND HOUSING*

The project does not involve the construction of substantial amounts of housing nor would it be a regionally significant employer that could result in resident relocation from outside of the SCAG region, or warrant the construction of new housing within the region. The project would be served by existing utility connections as well as new facilities in the Rinaldi Street extension. The project would not change the existing site zoning or Community Plan designation to a higher density or unanticipated use. The project would not provide through access to vacant undeveloped parcels whose development potential could otherwise be enhanced. The City's extension of Rinaldi Street, which would provide new through access from the Porter Ranch community, would occur independently of the proposed school and has been planned for over 20 years. The existing residence on the site is owned by the school with no permanent occupants. Removal of the residence would not displace permanent residents and no long-term housing would be removed from the market. New housing construction would not be needed to provide replacement housing.

### *RECREATION*

The project would provide ample recreational facilities for students including a multi-purpose gymnasium and aquatics center. No permanent residents would be added to the site that would place a demand on the area's recreational facilities. Additionally, there are 9 parks within a 5-mile radius of the site.

### *UTILITIES*

The extension of Rinaldi Street adjacent to the site will include extensive new infrastructure which will be available to serve the proposed secondary school (in addition to those existing facilities in the existing segment of Rinaldi Street which terminates at the western site boundary). Consequently, water and sewage facilities are available to serve the proposed project in adjacent streets. Some connections may be necessary to extend into the property, but such impacts would be highly localized and internal to the site. The project is a non-industrial, non-noxious land use and as such, will not generate unusual volumes or materials in excess of Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requirements. All sewage will be conveyed to existing City of Los Angeles sewer lines and facilities and will be regulated by applicable City of Los Angeles standards and requirements as imposed and enforced by the Bureau of Engineering, Wastewater Services Division. The project will be reviewed by the Bureau of Engineering, Wastewater Services Division prior to issuance of a building permit and will be required to comply with the City's Sewer Allocation Ordinance which regulates service requirements based on regional treatment capacity. The applicant is also required to pay a sewage facilities charge to the City of Los Angeles before a permit can be issued to connect to the City sewer per the Los Angeles Municipal Code, Section 64.16.1. The nominal contribution of the project to regional wastewater treatment facilities and the region's overall water consumption would not be sufficient to warrant their expansion or construction of new facilities. Water consumption would have a negligible impact on regional water sources and supplies. The project is consistent with the residential land use designation for the property by the Community Plan through the Conditional Use Permit process and as such, is considered a foreseen and anticipated use by the City of Los Angeles General Plan. Local facilities are available to serve the project without requiring new or expanded entitlements for water services.

Solid waste generated by the project is considered minimal compared to the total amount of solid waste generated within Los Angeles County and would not be sufficient in and of itself to warrant closure or opening of existing or new facilities. In accordance with AB 939, the City's Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE) and the City's Solid Waste Management Policy Plan (CiSWMPP), the applicant is required to prepare and submit a Source Reduction and Recycling Plan (SRPP) to the Planning Department in connection with new development prior to approval of Building Permits, documenting and outlining the incorporation of an on-site recycling/ conservation program which will further reduce the waste stream from the project.