
V. GENERAL IMPACT CATEGORIES

A. IMPACTS DETERMINED TO BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines states:

“An EIR shall contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail in the EIR. Such a statement may be contained in an attached copy of an Initial Study.”

It has been determined that there is no evidence that the proposed project would cause significant environmental effects in the following areas and that no further environmental review of these issues is necessary for the reasons described below.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

The California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Protection, lists Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance under the general category of “Important Farmland.” The Extent of Important Farmland Map Coverage maintained by the Division of Land Protection indicates that the project site is not included in the Important Farmland category. Furthermore, the project site is not the subject to the provisions of a Williamson Act contract. The proposed West Campus site is zoned A1-1-K (agricultural) zone and is currently developed with three residential homes. The site is predominantly vacant and does not support any agricultural uses. Due to the uneven topography of the site, the property does not appear to have been directly used for agricultural uses in the past. While the site is historically associated with the Sunshine Ranch Company which established agricultural operations in the San Fernando Valley in the early 1900s, the subject property was developed with a farm house and ancillary bunkhouses by 1917. As such the project site was not directly used for cultivation. Moreover, the project site is presently surrounded by urban residential development and does not provide suitable land area or soils to support agricultural uses. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts to agricultural resources and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

MINERAL RESOURCES

A significant impact could occur if the project was located in an area used or available for mineral resource extraction and the proposed project converted an existing or potential future mineral extraction use to another use or if the project affected access to a site used or potentially available for mineral resource extraction. No oil extraction activities have historically occurred or are presently conducted on

the project site. In addition, the project site is not located within an area that is known to contain significant mineral deposits (e.g. a city-identified MRZ-2 Zone, which identifies areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists). Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

A significant impact could occur if the proposed project were to locate new commercial, industrial or residential development within the City of Los Angeles, which would induce population growth, or if the project would permit new development to occur in previously undeveloped areas through the extension of infrastructure into an area previously unserved. The proposed project does not include any residential units and therefore would not result in a direct increase in permanent population growth in Los Angeles. The Hillcrest Christian School is a community serving land use that provides private school services to people who already reside within the Granada Hills area. The increase in employment on the project site would not likely result in an increase in a permanent population or associated demand for housing in the vicinity of the proposed project site for several reasons: wage levels for elementary, middle, or high school uses typically are not high enough to induce employees to relocate near the employment site; and because similar jobs are already provided in the area, many of the proposed project's employees may be from the existing labor force which is currently available throughout the City of Los Angeles. The project site is also located within an area of the City which is currently fully served by urban infrastructure systems and is already developed with residential and school related uses. Therefore, the project would not induce substantial population growth or generate the need to expand existing urban infrastructure and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

A significant impact could occur if the project would result in displacement of existing housing units. The proposed project involves the removal of three existing single-family residential uses on the site. The Hillcrest Christian School currently owns these properties and plans to demolish them to allow for development of the proposed expansion campus. Upon approval of the project Hillcrest plans to terminate the existing leases for these units and demolish the structures to allow for development of the proposed West Campus. The three families currently residing in these structures will need to relocate. This displacement, when considered in relation to the available housing stock and proposed residential development throughout the San Fernando Valley region would be incremental and less than significant. In addition, a number of residential developments are planned and currently under construction in the project local. Therefore, the loss of three residential units would be less than significant in terms of housing availability and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

RECREATION

A significant impact could occur if the proposed project included substantial employment or population growth that could generate demand for public park facilities, which exceeds the capacity of the park department responsible for serving the project site. The City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department (LARP) administer Parks and recreational facilities in the project area. The LARP currently provides approximately 1 acre of parks per 1,000 population. This is well below the City's parkland per capita goal of 4 acres of parks per 1,000 population. Existing parks in the project area include the following: Aliso Canyon Park, Zelzah Park, Gothic Rinaldi Park, Eddleston Park, Porter Ranch Park, Limekiln Canyon Park and Granada Hills Recreation Center. Larger and more regionally serving parks and recreation areas in the northern San Fernando Valley area include Omelveny Park, Hansen Dam Park, and the Los Angeles National Forest. Limited recreational opportunities are also provided at local schools (i.e., Robert Frost Middle School, Granada High School). The LARP has plans to expand the Granada Hills Recreation Center.¹

Implementation of the proposed project would result in an increase in the student population from 800 students to 1,200 students and the school staff from 70 to 130, which could increase the demand for parks and recreation services provided by the LARP. Recreational activities and facilities would be provided on-site to serve the proposed student population including a grass play area on the northern section of the West Campus site, outdoor basketball courts, and an indoor gymnasium. In addition, the grass play area proposed on the northern portion of the West Campus site would be made available to the public for recreational use during certain hours. The LARP has indicated that no impacts to parks and recreational services of facilities would result from the proposed project. Therefore, impacts to recreation service by the proposed project would be less than significant and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Wastewater

A significant wastewater treatment impact could occur if the proposed project would discharge wastewater that exceeds the regulatory limits established by the governing agency. The City of Los Angeles Public Works Department provides sanitary sewer service to the project area. The existing land uses on the project site, consisting of three single-family homes, generate and estimated 990

¹ City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, Camille Didiere, telephone conversation, October 1999.

gallons of sewage per day.² The City Public Works Department currently maintains an existing 10-inch sewer main beneath Shoshone Avenue and 15-inch and 10-inch mains beneath Rinaldi Street.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in an increase in the student population from 800 students to 1,200 students and the school staff from 70 faculty to 130 employees, resulting in a net increase of approximately 5,010 gallons per day (gpd) of sewage.³ The City Public Works Department has indicated that the existing sewer infrastructure could accommodate the sewage generation resulting from the proposed project. Furthermore, sewage from the project area is treated at the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant (Tillman Plant). The Tillman Plant has an existing treatment capacity of 80 million gallons per day (mgd) and currently treats approximately 67 mgd. The City forecasts that the treatment capacity of this plant will increase to 200 mgd by the year 2045. The Tillman Plant would have sufficient capacity to serve the project's demand for wastewater treatment. Therefore, sewer distribution impacts from the proposed project would be less than significant and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

Water Conservation

A significant impact could occur if the proposed project were to increase water consumption to such a degree that new water sources would need to be identified, or that existing resources would be consumed at an accelerated pace. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) provides potable water service to the project area. The DWP's sources of water include local groundwater and the Los Angeles-Owens River Aqueduct; the DWP is also a member of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). Water is currently provided to the project site by the existing infrastructure within the 1445-foot service zone which includes a 12-inch cast iron water main beneath Rinaldi Boulevard (west of Shoshone Avenue), an 8-inch cast iron water main beneath Rinaldi Street (east of Shoshone Avenue), and a 12-inch cast iron water main beneath Shoshone Avenue.

Assuming an average water consumption rate of 110 times the sewage generation rates, project water demands are estimated at approximately 5,511 gpd. The increase in demand for water would not have an adverse affect on the regional water supply, which is considered by the City of Los Angeles to be adequate through the year 2010. In addition, the DWP has indicated that the exiting water distribution

² *Based on a sewerage generation factor of 330 gpd per dwelling unit: City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering, Sewer Design Manual, Part F. 1992.*

³ *Based on a sewerage generation factor of 15 gpd per student (400 student increase – 990 gpd existing generation): City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering, Sewer Design Manual, Part F. 1992.*

mains should be sufficient to supply the project with domestic, fire, and irrigation services.⁴ Therefore, project impacts on water consumption would be less than significant and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

Solid Waste

A significant impact could occur if the proposed project were to increase solid waste generation to a degree that existing and projected landfill capacity would be insufficient to accommodate the additional solid waste. The existing occupied land uses on the project site, consisting of three single-family homes are estimated to generate approximately 12 pounds of solid waste per day. Solid waste collected in the project area is disposed at either the Bradley Landfill in Sun Valley or the Sunshine Canyon Landfill located just north of Granada Hills. The Bradley landfill is permitted to accept 10,000 tons of refuse per day. The Bradley Landfill has sufficient capacity to accept solid waste until the year 2003. The Sunshine Canyon Landfill is permitted to accept 6,000 tons of solid waste per day. In 1999, the Sunshine Canyon Landfill received permit approval to accept 55 million tons of solid waste over the next 25 years.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in an increase in the student population from 800 students to 1,200 students and the school staff from 70 faculty to 130 employees, resulting in the generation of approximately 450 pounds per day of solid waste. The three single-family homes currently occupying the project site would be removed prior to the development of the project. The City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation has indicated that the Bradley Landfill and the Sunshine Canyon Landfill have sufficient capacity to accommodate the solid waste generated by the proposed project. Therefore, project impacts on solid waste generation would be less than significant and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

Electricity

Energy consumption for new buildings in California is regulated by the State Building Energy Efficiency Standards, embodied in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. The efficiency standards apply to new construction of both residential and non-residential buildings, and regulate energy consumed for heating, cooling, ventilation, water heating, and lighting. The building efficiency standards are enforced through the local building permit process. Local government agencies may adopt and enforce energy standards for new buildings, provided that these standards meet or exceed those provided in Title 24 guidelines.

⁴ *Correspondence to Con Howe, City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, from Gayle Glauz, City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, West Valley Engineering, July 17, 2000.*

Electricity is provided to the project site and surrounding area by the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP). LADWP obtains power from four municipally-owned power plants within the Los Angeles Basin, LADWP hydro-generators on the Los Angeles Aqueduct, shared ownership generating facilities in the Southwest, and purchases power from the Southwest and Pacific Northwest regions.

The project site is currently developed with three residential homes with detached ancillary structures. The existing uses on the project site consume, on average, an estimated 46 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity per day.⁵ Electricity demands for the proposed 75,000 education building are estimated at approximately 2,158 kWh per day.⁶ Therefore, the net increase in electricity consumption for the project is estimated at 2,112 kWh per day. Currently, the LADWP has adequate energy supply and infrastructure to meet the electricity demands in the City of Los Angeles. Based on information presented in the Citywide General Plan Framework EIR (1995), LADWP anticipates it can support future growth within the City, in accordance with growth rates projected to the year 2010. Moreover, LADWP's refusal to sell off the utilities' power plants and to participate in the State's deregulation of electricity has left the City of Los Angeles unaffected by the recent statewide electricity shortages. As a result, DWP has a surplus of electricity and has made over 200 million dollars in profits over the last 18 months in selling surplus electricity to the state Power Exchange.⁷ Given the moderate net increase in electricity demand that would be generated by the proposed project, the project's consistency with the underlying zoning and general plan designations, and compliance with mandated Title 24 energy conservation standards, project impacts upon electricity would be less than significant.

Natural Gas

Natural Gas is provided to the project site and surrounding area by the Southern California Gas Company (TGC). The availability of natural gas is based upon present conditions of gas supply and regulatory policies. As a public utility, TGC is under the jurisdiction of the California Public Utilities Commission, but can also be affected by actions of federal regulatory agencies. Should these agencies take any action, which affects gas supply or the conditions under which service is available, gas service would be provided in accordance with those revised conditions.

⁵ Based on an estimated consumption rate of 5,626.5 kWh/unit/year for residential uses: SCAQMD, CEQA Air Quality Handbook (Table A9-11), 1993.

⁶ Based on an estimated consumption rate of 10.50 kWh/sq.ft./hour/year for High Schools: SCAQMD, CEQA Air Quality Handbook (Table A9-11), 1993.

⁷ *Los Angeles Times*, "DWP's Freeman: L.A.'s Latest Luminary", December 23, 2000.

The site is currently developed with three residential homes with detached ancillary structures. The existing uses on the project site consume, on average, an estimated 666 cubic feet (cf) of natural gas per day.⁸ Electricity demands for the proposed 75,000 education building are estimated at approximately 5,000 cf per day.⁹ Therefore, the net increase in natural gas consumption for the project is estimated at approximately 4,334 cf per day.

As reported in the City of Los Angeles Citywide General Plan Framework EIR (1995), TGC has indicated the ability to provide natural gas to the City given the City's 2010 growth projections. Therefore, given the moderate net increase in natural gas demands generated by the proposed project, the project's consistency with the underlying zoning and general plan designations, and compliance with mandated Title 24 energy conservation standards, project impacts upon natural gas would be less than significant.

⁸ Based on an estimated consumption rate of 6,665.0 cf/unit/month for residential uses: SCAQMD, CEQA Air Quality Handbook (Table A9-12), 1993.

⁹ Based on an estimated consumption rate of 2.0 cf/sq.ft./month for office uses (high school uses were not listed) :SCAQMD, CEQA Air Quality Handbook (Table A9-12), 1993.

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B. GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of the ways in which the proposed action could be growth-inducing. This would include ways in which the project would foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Section 15126.2(d) reads as follows:

“Discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects that would remove obstacles to population growth (a major expansion of a wastewater treatment plant might, for example, allow for more construction in service areas). Increases in the population may further tax existing community service facilities so consideration must be given to this impact. Also discuss the characteristic of some projects that may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed growth in any area is beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.”

The project could foster economic growth by increasing the number of employees, students, and visitors on the project site, who could in turn, also patronize local businesses and services in the area. Additionally, short-term employment opportunities would be provided during the construction phases of the proposed project. Although the project could potentially include some growth-inducing features, such growth inducement would not be significant. The project does not include housing and therefore, would not include permanent population growth. In addition, as discussed below, the project would not induce growth in an area that is not already developed with infrastructure to accommodate such growth.

The project site is within a highly developed urban setting. It is anticipated that the project could be adequately serviced by existing and/or extension of existing water, sewer, storm drains, and utility infrastructure. Further, the proposed project would be adequately served by existing public services such as fire/emergency and police services in the vicinity of the project site. The Hillcrest Christian School is a community serving land use that provides private school services to people who already reside within the Granada Hills area. No residential uses are proposed, thus, no direct permanent population growth would occur as a result of the project. In addition, as discussed previously in Section V.A., Impacts Determined to be Less than Significant (Population and Housing), the increase in employment on the project site would not likely result in an increase in a permanent population or

associated demand for new housing in the project area. Therefore, the project would not result in significant growth-inducing impacts.

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C. IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) indicates that “[u]ses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely.” These guidelines also indicate that “[i]rretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.”

The type and level of construction associated with the proposed West Campus Expansion Plan would consume limited, slowly renewable, and non-renewable resources. Such resources would include the following construction supplies: lumber and other forest products; aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt such as sand, gravel, and stone; metals such as steel, copper, and lead; petrochemical construction materials such as plastics; and water. Fossil fuels such as gasoline and oil would also be consumed in the use of construction vehicles and equipment. This consumption would occur during the construction phase of the project and would continue throughout its operational lifetime. The new development would require a commitment of resources that would include: (1) building materials; (2) fuel and operational materials/resources; (3) the transportation of goods and people to and from the project site.

The resources that would be committed during operation of the project would be similar to those currently consumed by the existing Hillcrest campus and surrounding land uses. These would include energy resources such as electricity and natural gas, as well as petroleum-based fuels required for the increased number of vehicle-trips to be generated by the project. Fossil fuels would represent the primary energy source associated with both construction and ongoing operation of the project, and the existing, finite supplies of these natural resources would be incrementally reduced. Increased consumption generated by the project would not be significant when compared with existing energy consumption levels Citywide. However, the energy requirements associated with the project would represent of long-term commitment of essentially non-renewable resources.

Development of the project represents an essentially irreversible commitment of land uses that would transform the existing uses on-site in response to local planning goals and policies. While in the very long-term, other uses may replace those proposed by the Developer, reversion to lower density or non-urban uses would be unlikely (See Section VI, Alternatives to the Proposed Project). Development would irreversibly increase the commitment of public services, such as providing police and fire services, a potable water supply wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal, to support the project throughout its lifetime. The commitment of resources required for the type and level of proposed development would limit the availability of these resources for future generations for other uses during the life of the project. However, this resource consumption would be consistent with growth and anticipated change in the Granada Hills/Knollwood Community Planning Area of the City of Los Angeles.