

8.0 Effects Found Not To Be Significant



8.0 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The City of Whittier (City) conducted an *Initial Study* in December 2013 to determine significant effects of the proposed project. In the course of this evaluation, certain impacts of the project were found to be less than significant due to the inability of a project of this scope to create such impacts or the absence of project characteristics producing effects of this type. The effects determined not to be significant are not required to be included in primary analysis sections of the Draft EIR. In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15128, the following section provides a brief description of potential impacts found to be less than significant. A copy of the *Initial Study* is located in Appendix 11.1, *Notice of Preparation/Initial Study/Environmental Checklist*.

AESTHETICS. *Would the project:*

4.1.a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the General Plan, the City of Whittier has scenic qualities in the form of tree-lined streets, roadways leading into the hills, views of the Puente Hills from the community, and aerial views of the City from the surrounding foothills. The Project site is located in the western portion of the City, which consists of, and is surrounded by urban/developed land. Given the degree of urbanization and the intervening structures, there are no vistas present from within or involving this relatively flat portion of the City. Therefore, Project implementation would have a less than significant effect on a scenic vista.

AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES. *In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:*

4.2.a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No Impact. The Project site is designated as Nonirrigated Farmland.¹ The Project site is not designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Therefore, Project implementation would not convert Important Farmland to non-agricultural use.

¹ California Department of Conservation, *Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, California Important Farmland Finder*, <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx>, accessed on November 27, 2013.



4.2.b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. As depicted on the City's official Zoning Map, the Project site is zoned Specific Plan (SP, Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan). As shown on Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan (WBSP) Illustration 25, the Project site is in its entirety located within the WBSP's Workplace District. This zoning is intended for development of a job center for the City and not for agricultural use. Additionally, the Project site is not a part of a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.

4.2.c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact. As previously noted, the Project site is in its entirety located within the WBSP's Workplace District, which is intended for development of a job center for the City and not forest land or timberland use. Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestland, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production.

4.2.d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. The Project site was previously developed and is not occupied by or used as forest land. Therefore, Project implementation would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

4.2.e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. There is no Farmland or forest land located on the Project site or in its immediate vicinity. The Project site is located within an urbanized area. The proposed Project would not involve changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

AIR QUALITY. *Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:*

4.3.e. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook, land uses associated with odor complaints typically include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. The Project does not propose development of any uses identified by the SCAQMD as being associated with odors. Construction activities associated with the Project could generate detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust. However, construction-related odors would be intermittent, short-term in nature, and cease upon Project completion. Therefore, Project implementation would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.



BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. *Would the project:*

- 4.4.b.** *Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

No Impact. There is no riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities present on the Project site. Further, no areas associated with the Project site are subject to the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Project site also does not occur within areas designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as critical habitat for any federally listed species.² Project implementation would not significantly impact any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community.

- 4.4.c.** *Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*

No Impact. There are no federally protected wetlands present on the Project site. Additionally, there are no blue-line drainages or other aquatic environments associated with the Project site.³ Project implementation would not impact federally protected wetlands through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

- 4.4.d.** *Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?*

No Impact. The Project site consists of, and is surrounded by, urban/developed land that has been permanently altered due to the construction of aboveground improvements (e.g., buildings, parking lots, roads, and hardscapes). Therefore, Project implementation would not impact the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites and this topic will not be further analyzed in the EIR.

- 4.4.e.** *Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

No Impact. There are no local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance that are relevant to the Project site. Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

- 4.4.f.** *Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?*

² Glenn Lukos Associates, Biological Technical Report for the Proposed 76-Acre Mixed-Use Nelles Specific Plan Project, May 3, 2013.

³ Ibid.



No Impact. The Project site is not within the jurisdiction of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with the provisions of any such plan.

CULTURAL RESOURCES. *Would the project:*

4.5.d. *Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Given the highly disturbed condition of the site, the potential for Project implementation to disturb any human remains is remote. Additionally, no conditions exist that suggest human remains are likely to be found during Project construction activities. Nevertheless, if human remains were found, those remains would require proper treatment in accordance with applicable laws. Public Resources Code §§ 5097, *et seq.*, and Health and Safety Code §§ 7050.5-7055 describe the general provisions regarding human remains, including the requirements if any human remains are accidentally discovered during excavation of a site. The requirements and procedures set forth in Public Resources Code § 5097.98 would be implemented if human remains are discovered, including notification of the County Coroner, notification of the Native American Heritage Commission and consultation with the individual identified by the Native American Heritage Commission to be the “most likely descendant.” If human remains are found during excavation, excavation must stop in the vicinity of the find and any area that is reasonably suspected to overly adjacent remains until the County coroner investigates and the remains have been investigated and appropriate recommendations have been made for the treatment and disposition of the remains. Compliance with applicable law regarding human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries, would result in less than significant environmental impacts.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS. *Would the project:*

4.6.a.1. *Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42?*

No Impact. Seismically induced ground rupture is defined as the physical displacement of surface deposits in response to an earthquake’s seismic waves. Ground rupture is most likely along active faults, and typically occurs during earthquakes of magnitude five or higher. Ground rupture only affects the area immediately adjacent to a fault.

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy. The Act’s main purpose is to prevent the construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface trace of active faults. The Act requires the State Geologist to establish regulatory zones, known as “Alquist-Priolo (AP) Earthquake Fault Zones,” around the surface traces of active faults and to issue appropriate maps. If an active fault is found, a structure for human occupancy cannot be placed over the trace of the fault and must be set back from the fault (typically 50 feet). The Project site is not



affected by a State-designated AP Earthquake Fault Zone.⁴ Further, the Geotechnical Report prepared for the Project concluded the site is not located within a mapped Earthquake Fault-Rupture Zone and no known active or potentially active faults are known to exist within or in the immediate vicinity of the site.⁵ Therefore, Project implementation would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault.

4.6.a.4. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic Landslides?

No Impact. The Project site and its surroundings are relatively level. Onsite elevations range from approximately 185 feet above mean sea level on the southern portion of the site, to approximately 220 feet above mean sea level at the northeast corner.⁶ Given the site's topography, there is no potential for seismically-induced landslides. Therefore, Project implementation would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving seismic landslides.

4.6.e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No Impact. The Project site is located in a fully urbanized area. As such, sewer infrastructure is available for disposal of wastewater generated by the proposed development. Septic tanks and alternative wastewater disposal systems would not be required as part of the Project.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:

4.8.e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The nearest airport to the Project site is the El Monte Airport, which is located approximately 7.5 miles to the southwest. According to the El Monte Airport Influence Area Map,⁷ the Project site is not located within the El Monte Airport planning boundaries, which include the 65 and 70 CNEL noise contours. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in an airport-related safety hazard for people working at or visiting the Specific Plan area.

4.8.f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The Project site is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in a safety hazard for people working in the Project area associated with a private airstrip.

⁴ State of California, Department of Conservation California Geological Survey Website, *Alquist-Priolo Home Page*, http://www.quake.ca.gov/gmaps/ap/ap_maps.htm, Accessed December 10, 2013.

⁵ D. Scott Magorien C.E.G., Geology, Soils, and Seismicity Report Lincoln Specific Plan, February 28, 2014.

⁶ Google Earth, 2014.

⁷ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning Website, Los Angeles County Airport Land Use Commission, *El Monte Airport - Airport Influence Area Map*, http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/aluc_airport-el-monte.pdf, Accessed December 10, 2013.



4.8.h. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

No Impact. The Project site consists of, and is surrounded by, urban/developed land. Therefore, Project implementation would not expose people or structures to a significant risk involving wildland fires.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. *Would the project:*

4.9.g. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

No Impact. Flood hazard areas identified on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) are identified as a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). A Special Flood Hazard Area is defined as the area that will be inundated by the flood event having a one (1) percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The one-percent annual chance flood is also referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood. The Project site is located within Zone X, pursuant to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panel 1835, Map No. 06037C1835F (September 26, 2008).⁸ Zone X is an area of minimal flood hazard. The Project site is not located within a Special Flood Hazard Area. Therefore, Project implementation would not place housing within a Special Flood Hazard Area.

4.9.h. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows?

No Impact. As concluded in Response 4.9.g above, the proposed Specific Plan is not located within a 100-year flood hazard area. Therefore, Project implementation would not place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows.

4.9.i. Increase expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

No Impact. No portion of the Project site is located within a levee or dam inundation area. Therefore, Project implementation would not increase the exposure of people or structures to a significant risk involving flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam.

4.9.j. Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

No Impact. A seiche is an earthquake or slide-induced wave that can be generated in an enclosed body of water of any size from swimming pool, to a harbor, or lake. There is no enclosed body of water that is located in the vicinity of the Project site.

A tsunami is a sea wave generated by an earthquake, landslide, volcanic eruption, or even by a large meteor hitting the ocean. An event such as an earthquake creates a large displacement of water resulting in a rise or mounding at the ocean surface that moves away from this center as a sea wave. Tsunamis generally affect coastal communities and low-lying (low-elevation)

⁸ Federal Emergency Management Agency Website, Map Service Center, <https://msc.fema.gov/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/mapstore/homepage/MapSearch.html>, Accessed December 15, 2013.



river valleys in the vicinity of the coast. Buildings closest to the ocean and near sea level are most at jeopardy. According to the California Geological Survey Los Angeles County Tsunami Inundation Maps,⁹ the Project site is not located within a tsunami inundation area. Additionally, based on the distance of the Project site from large bodies of open water, the possibility of seiches and/or tsunamis affecting the site is considered remote.¹⁰

Potential risk from mudflow (i.e., mudslide, debris flow) does not exist within the Project area, as steep slopes are not located on or in proximity to the Project site.

Therefore, Project implementation would not expose people or structures to potential hazards from inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

LAND USE AND PLANNING. *Would the project:*

4.10.a. Physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The Project site consists of approximately 76 acres generally bound by Whittier Boulevard and Sorensen Avenue to the northeast and northwest, respectively with office, commercial uses, and parking to the north; Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital to the southeast, commercial uses to the east and single-family residential and commercial uses to the west. The Project site is currently developed with a former youth correctional facility area (approximately 74 acres) and an adjacent commercial area (approximately 2 acres) located in the eastern corner of the site. The Lincoln Specific Plan proposes a varied mix of residential, commercial, and open space land uses. The Project site is surrounded by existing residential neighborhoods and commercial uses, and thus, would be considered a continuation of the existing land use pattern. Therefore, Project implementation would not physically divide an established community.

4.10.c. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?

No Impact. Refer to Response 4.4.f.

MINERAL RESOURCES. *Would the project:*

4.11.a. 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?

No Impact. No state-designated mines or mineral producers currently exist on the Project site or in its vicinity.¹¹ As discussed in the General Plan Environmental Resources Management Element Background Report, no significant aggregate mineral resources have been identified in the Whittier area. Therefore, Project implementation would result in no impact involving the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state.

⁹ State of California, Department of Conservation Website, *Los Angeles County Tsunami Inundation Maps*, http://www.quake.ca.gov/gmaps/tsunami/tsunami_maps.htm, Accessed December 15, 2013.

¹⁰ D. Scott Magorien C.E.G., *Geology, Soils, and Seismicity Report Lincoln Specific Plan*, February 28, 2014.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Conservation, *SMARA Mineral Land Classification Maps website*, <http://www.quake.ca.gov/gmaps/WH/smaramaps.htm>, accessed December 5, 2013.



4.11.b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

No Impact. Refer to Response 4.11.a.

NOISE. *Would the project:*

4.12.e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The Project site is located approximately 7.5 miles southwest of El Monte Airport. According to the El Monte Airport Influence Area Map,¹² the Project site is not located within the El Monte Airport planning boundaries, which include the 65 and 70 CNEL noise contours. Therefore, the proposed Project would not expose people working in or visiting the Specific Plan area to excessive noise levels associated with El Monte Airport.

4.12.f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The Project site is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip. Therefore, the proposed Project would not expose people working in the Project area to excessive noise levels associated with a private airstrip.

POPULATION AND HOUSING. *Would the project:*

4.13.b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. Although group housing exists within the correctional facility area of the Nelles site, it is currently vacant and has been vacant since the facility's closure in 2004. Therefore, Project implementation would not displace housing or people, such that construction of replacement housing is necessary.

4.13.c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. Refer to Response 4.13.b.

¹² County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning Website, Los Angeles County Airport Land Use Commission, *El Monte Airport - Airport Influence Area Map*, http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/aluc_airport-el-monte.pdf, Accessed December 10, 2013.



PUBLIC SERVICES. *Would the project:*

4.14.a.5. *Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered library facilities, need for new or physically altered library facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Other public services that could potentially be impacted by the proposed Project include public libraries. The Project site is served by two libraries: Whittier Public Library, located at 7344 South Washington Avenue; and Whittwood Branch Library, located at 10537 Santa Gertrudes. The Project proposes development of 750 DU, thus, would induce substantial population growth within the City, generating a demand for public library facilities and services. Whittier Municipal Code (WMC) Chapter 3.48 applies to all fees imposed by the City to finance public facilities attributable to new development, including library facilities, among others. Compliance with WMC Chapter 3.48, which requires payment of a development impact fee, would minimize any potential impacts to library facilities. Therefore, the Project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the need for new or physically altered library facilities.

TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. *Would the project:*

4.16.c. *Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?*

No Impact. The Project site is located approximately 7.5 miles southwest of El Monte Airport. The Project involves development of 750 DU and 208,350 square feet of non-residential land uses. Given the nature, scope, and location of the proposed Project, any increased air travel would not be such that a change in air traffic patterns would occur. Additionally, no change in location involving El Monte Airport would occur. Therefore, Project implementation would not result in a substantial safety risk associated with increased travel.



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