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## IV. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

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### A. OVERVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This section provides a brief overview of the proposed project site's regional and local setting. Additional descriptions of the environmental setting as it relates to each of the environmental issues analyzed in this EIR are included in the environmental setting discussions contained within Section V (Environmental Impact Analysis). Also provided in this section is a list of related projects, which is used as the basis for the discussions of cumulative impacts throughout Section V (Environmental Impact Analysis).

#### **Regional Setting**

The 6.19-acre proposed project site is within the community of Woodland Hills in the City of Los Angeles. As illustrated in Figure III-1, proposed project site is approximately one mile south of the Ventura Freeway (I-101), approximately 11 miles west of the San Diego Freeway (I-405) and approximately 25 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles.

#### **Project Site**

The 6.19-acre project site is composed of two parcels located at 22241 and 22251 Mulholland Drive. The irregularly-shaped project site is bounded by San Feliciano Drive to the west and north, Mulholland Drive to the south and east, Girard Reservoir to the northeast and single-family residences to the west (see Figure IV-1, Existing Site Plan).

The proposed project site is within the Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan Area, which designates the proposed project site as low residential. The project site is currently zoned with a residential designation of R-1 in the No. 1 Height District. As described in the Community Plan, the project site also lies within the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan ("Specific Plan") area, which is comprised of Mulholland Drive and the areas immediately adjacent to the Parkway right-of-way. The entire project site is located within 500 feet of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway right-of-way, which is referred to as the Inner Corridor (see Figure IV-2). The Specific Plan contains density requirements, building standards and grading restrictions that are applicable to the Inner Corridor. The proposed project site is within the jurisdiction of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Design Review Board, the Mountain Fire District, and the Hillside Grading Ordinance.

**Figure IV-1, Existing Site Plan**

**Figure IV-2, Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan**

A chain link fence surrounds the project site. A vacant two-story single-family residence, sheds and an aged kennel occupy the project site. These structures are located at the east-central portion of the property along Mulholland Drive. The house is visible from adjacent portions of Mulholland Drive; however, neither the house, sheds nor kennels are visible from San Feliciano Drive. The remaining portion of land is undeveloped, open space occupied by various trees, shrubs, low-lying weeds and grasses. As indicated in Table IV-1, there are a total of 197 trees on the project site, including Coast Live Oaks, Southern California black walnuts, Willows, Mexican Elderberry and a variety of ornamentals. There are no National Register or California State Historic Resource properties, California Historical landmarks, California Points of Historic Interest or City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments on the project site.

**Table IV-1  
Onsite Tree Summary**

<b>Number of Trees</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Species Name</b>
1	King Palm	Archontophoenix cunninghamiana
1	Bottle Tree	Brachycton populneus
1	Fig	Ficus carica
2	Modesto Ash	Fraxinus velutina 'Modesto'
11	Southern California Black Walnuts	Juglans californica
1	English Walnut	Juglans regia
1	Glossy Privet	Ligustrum lucidum
1	Apple	Malus sp.
2	Plums	Prunus sp.
153	Coast Live Oak	Quercus agrifolia
2	Willows	Salix sp.
6	Mexican Elderberry	Sambucus mexicana
3	California Peppers	Shinus molle
1	Brazilian Pepper	Shinus terebinthifolius
1	Chinese Elm	Ulmus parvifolia
10	Mexican Fan Palms	Washingtonia robusta

As the project site is located in the hills of the Santa Monica Mountains, the topography of the project site and the surrounding area is variable with elevation changes, although the general trend is of a decreasing slope while moving northward (see Figure II-3). The surface elevation on the irregularly-shaped site fluctuates, with the southwestern edge approximately 1,048 feet above mean sea level (msl), decreasing to approximately 1,000 feet above msl toward the northern edge of the project site. The surface elevations at the central and southeastern edge of the project site are approximately 1,015 and 1,020 msl, respectively. Table IV-2 summarizes the slope of existing site topography.

**Table IV-2  
Existing Slope Analysis**

<b>Slope Category</b>	<b>Square Footage</b>	<b>Percentage of Site Area</b>
10% or Less	177,096 sq. ft.	65.6 %
10% - 15%	18,620 sq. ft.	6.9%
15% and Over	74,140 sq. ft.	27.5%

The existing topography consists of a north-draining main ravine and a secondary ravine. A north-trending bedrock spur-ridge separates the main and easterly secondary canyon. The existing residential structures were built on the bedrock ridge. Minor cut and fill grading techniques were employed to create level building sites for the structures. Past grading, associated with the construction of Mulholland Drive has consisted of placing fill where the roadway crosses the main and secondary canyons. Fill was also placed along the margins of the main canyon and within a secondary canyon to support residential development and San Feliciano Drive to the west. The abandoned Girard Reservoir was created by placing fill within the main canyon.

Photographs of the project site are presented in Figures IV-4 through IV-6. Figure IV-3 is the Photograph Location Map

## **B. LOCAL SETTING**

The project site is located in the Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan Area. The Area Planning Commission is the South Valley. The Neighborhood Council is Woodland Hills-Warner Center. The City Council District is CD 3.

As shown in the aerial photograph (Figure III-3), the surrounding area is almost entirely developed with suburban uses. Properties to the north, east and west of the project site consist of one- and two-story single-family residences. These properties are all zoned R1-1 (Residential One-Family) with a Height District Designation of "1". The Girard Reservoir and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Pumping Station are located adjacent to and northeast of the proposed project site and are also zoned R1-1.

Land uses surrounding the 6.19-acre project site include one- and two-story single-family homes to the north, east, and west, the Girard Reservoir and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Pumping Station to the northeast, a private parochial high school and convent to the southeast, and a two-story commercial office building with a surface parking lot and a small shopping center to the southwest. The City of Calabasas begins approximately 365 feet south of the project site, along Mulholland Highway. The private parochial high school, called Louisville High School, and convent property houses

multiple structures and contains a surface parking lot that parallels Mulholland Drive. The two-story commercial office building, called Mulholland Plaza, is located at the southwest corner of the intersection between Mulholland Drive and Mulholland Highway. The shopping center, called Gelson's Village Calabasas, is located in the jurisdiction of the City of Calabasas adjacent to Mulholland Plaza, and consists of retail and commercial stores, including a Gelson's Supermarket, yoga studio, Washington Mutual Bank, and dry cleaners. Adjacent to Gelson's Village Calabasas is a Shell gas station.

No surface water features or vegetation indicative of wetland areas (i.e., cattails and sedges) are found in the project area.<sup>1</sup> There are no City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments near the project site.<sup>2</sup> There are scenic vistas identified for the surrounding area.<sup>3</sup>

As discussed above, the Girard Reservoir, which was drained ca. 1989 and currently remains empty, and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Pumping Station are located adjacent to and northeast of the proposed project site. According to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, there is some possibility that either the Conservancy, the Department of Recreations and Parks, or the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) could take over ownership and/or management of all but the northeastern once acre of the DWP's 5.91-acre Girard Reservoir property.<sup>4</sup>

Photographs F through J (Figures IV-6 and IV-7) present views of the area surrounding the project site.

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<sup>1</sup> *Wildflower Productions, TOPO! Interactive Maps on CD-ROM, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Surrounding Rec. Areas, version 2.3.2 (or upgraded to 2.7.8), 1999.*

<sup>2</sup> *Source: City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, Historic-Cultural Monument Report, website: <http://www.lacity.org/pln/complan/HCM/hcm.cfm>, July 26, 2004.*

<sup>3</sup> *California Scenic Highway Mapping System, State of California Department of Transportation, website: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/cahisys.htm>, July 26, 2004.*

<sup>4</sup> *Correspondence from Elizabeth Cheadle, Chairperson, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to Johathan Riker, City of Los Angeles Environmental Review Section, December 5, 2005*

**Figure IV-3 Photograph Location Map**

**Figure IV-4 Photographs A and B**



**Figure IV-5 Photographs C and D**

**Figure IV-6 Photograph E and F**

**Figure IV-7 Photographs G and H**

**Figure IV-8, Photographs I and J**

### **C. RELATED PROJECTS**

Section 15130 of the 2004 CEQA Guidelines stipulates that EIRs must consider the significant environmental effects of a proposed project as well as “cumulative impacts.” A cumulative impact is defined as an impact which is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15355). As stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(1), the cumulative impacts discussion in an EIR need not discuss impacts which do not result in part from the proposed project evaluated in the EIR. Cumulative impacts may be analyzed by considering a list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts [CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)(A)].

All projects that are proposed (i.e., with pending applications), recently approved, under construction, or reasonably foreseeable that could produce a cumulative impact on the local environment when considered in conjunction with the proposed project are included in an EIR. These projects can include, if necessary, projects outside of the control of the lead agency. If a concise list of related projects is not available, cumulative impacts may be analyzed using the regional or area-wide growth projections contained in an adopted or certified general plan or related planning document.

In this EIR, cumulative impact analyses are provided for each environmental issue discussed in Section V (Environmental Impact Analysis), and can be found in each respective subsection (e.g., Air Quality, Traffic, etc.). Table IV-3 lists the related projects that were considered in each cumulative impact analysis. The related project list consists of all potential projects located within an approximate one and one-half mile radius of the proposed project site, and was obtained from the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation, the City of Calabasas, and recent studies of projects in the area. In total, 24 projects have been identified, including retail, commercial, office, institutional and single and multiple-family land uses. The locations of the related projects are depicted in Figure IV-9.

**Table IV-3  
Related Projects Descriptions**

Map No.	Size	Unit	Description	Location (Address)
1	5,593	sf	Bank	21108 Ventura Bl.
2	3,500	sf	Fast-Food Restaurant w/Drive-Through Window	20952 Ventura Bl.
3	5,000	sf	Specialty Retail <sup>[1]</sup>	20956 Venutra Bl.
4	340 16,000	du sf	Apartment Retail	20600 Venutra Bl.
5	85	du	Assisted Living Facility <sup>[2]</sup>	20461 Venutra Bl.
6	21,000	sf	Discount Store	20801 Venutra Bl.
7	190	du	Apartment	6000 De Soto Av.*
8	200	st	Charter School	6036 Variel Av.*
9	3,444 583 973	sf sf sf	Convenience Store Coffee Shop Dry Cleaner	5960 Canoga Av.*
10	1,322,425	sf	Office	21261 Burbank Bl.*
11	3,763	sf	Bank	21800 Burbank Bl.*
12	3,860	sf	Credit Union	6041 Topanga Canyon Bl.*
13	44	du	Single-Family Residential	22201 Philipriimm St.
14	430	st	Adult School	5717 Rudnick Av.
15	1,600	st	High School	5607 Capistrano Av.
16	185	st	Private School Enrollment Expansion <sup>[3]</sup>	22816 Victory Bl.
17	200	st	Preschool/Day Care Enrollment Expansion	6221 Fallbrook Av.
18	156	st	School Expansion	5850 Fallbrook Av.
19	11 (1)	du du	Single-Family Residential <i>Single-Family Residential (to be removed)</i>	Lasher Rd. & Long Valley Rd.
20	8	du	Single-Family Residential	Bridle Trail Rd.
21	66	Du	Condominium	24141 & 24121 Ventura Bl.
22	70,504	sf	Self-Storage Facility	24003-A Ventura Bl.
23	8,700	sf	Restaurant	23577 Calabasas Rd.
24	122 15,000	du sf	Condominium Office	23500 Park Sorrento
25	65	st	Private School Enrollment Expansion <sup>[4]</sup>	23620 Mulholland Hwy.
26	6,744	sf	Office	22231 Mulholland Hwy.
27	9	du	Single-Family Residential	4200 Topanga Canyon Bl.

Note:

\* Project located within the Warner Center Specific Plan area; PM peak hour rates based on the Specific Plan

[1] ITE AM trip generation rates not available; used *San Diego Traffic Generators, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), 1998.*

[2] ITE trip generation rates for Assisted Living (Land Use 254) in terms of dwelling units not available; assumed 1 bed per dwelling unit.

[3] Traffic Analysis for Woodland Hills Private School, Crain & Associates, April 2001.

[4] Traffic Analysis for Viewpoint School Project, Crain & Associates, Revised January 2002.

Source: Crain & Associates, September 2006.

**Figure IV-9, Related Project Location Map**