

**Appendix L**

**Findings of Fact and Statement of  
Overriding Considerations**



**GRANADA HILLS-KNOLLWOOD COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE**

**Final Environmental Impact Report  
CEQA Findings of Facts and Statement of Overriding Considerations**

SCH No. 2008021061

LA CITY EIR NO. ENV-2006-5623-EIR

CPC No. CPC-2006-5568-CPU

# APPENDIX L - CEQA Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Consideration

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### **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) – HAVING RECEIVED, REVIEWED, AND CONSIDERED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AS WELL AS THE OTHER INFORMATION IN THE RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS ON THIS MATTER,**

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES FINDS, DETERMINES, AND DECLARES AS FOLLOWS:

#### **CERTIFICATION OF THE FINAL EIR**

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR), consisting of the Draft EIR published in October 11, 2012 and the Final EIR published in October 2, 2015 for the Granada Hills-Knollwood Recommended Plan (“Project”), identified significant environmental impacts that will result from the adoption of the Recommended Plan. The Los Angeles City Council (City) finds that the implementation of certain mitigation measures as a requirement of project approval will reduce most, but not all, of the potential significant effects to less-than-significant levels. Those impacts that are not reduced to a less-than-significant level are identified and overridden due to specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other feasibility considerations.

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City, in adopting these Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations, also adopts the Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMP) for the Recommended Plan included in the Final EIR. The City finds that the MMP meets the requirements of California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21081.6 by providing for the implementation and monitoring of measures intended to mitigate the potentially significant effects of the Recommended Plan.

In accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, the City adopts these Findings as part of the certification of the EIR for the proposed project. Pursuant to PRC Section 21082.1(c)(3) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15090(a) (3), the City also finds that the EIR reflects the City’s independent judgment as the lead agency for the proposed project.

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

CEQA requires that the description of the project include “the whole of an action” and must contain specific information about the Plan to allow the public and reviewing agencies to evaluate and review its environmental impacts, and that this description must include all integral components of the Plan. A proper project description is important to ensure that “environmental considerations do not become submerged by chopping a large project into many little ones – each with minimal impact on the environment – which cumulatively may have disastrous consequences.” (Bozung v. Local Agency Formation Commission (1975) 13 Cal.3d 263, 283-284.)

The Recommended Plan “the Project” is described in the City Planning Commission Staff Report, the DEIR, and the FEIR and includes all of the actions described therein. Corrections or minor modifications (as described in the Staff Report and Determination Letter) to the project description have been analyzed in the DEIR and FEIR and have been recorded in the EIR Text Changes (FEIR Section 14). These include modifications made as a result of comments received on the

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DEIR and the public hearing process. The changes do not constitute significant new information. The whole of the action includes the updated Community Plan Text and Land Use diagram, Zone and Height District Changes, revised Equinekeeping District, Granada Hills Specific Plan Amendment, Old Granada Hills Residential Floor Area (RFA) District, street redesignations and corresponding updates to related General Plan Elements (see Determination Letter for full list of Actions).

Project goals and objectives were summarized and restated in the FEIR (Chapter 13) to assist reviewers of the EIR; these goals and objectives can be found and are more fully discussed in the Community Plan Text (Chapters 1-5) and the City Planning Recommendation Report (Proposed Plan Summary). An overview of the Project is provided below.

### *SUMMARY OF PROJECT*

The Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan update directs future anticipated growth to already developed areas, redirecting growth away from undeveloped foothills and thereby preserving open space and natural resources. By lowering density in residential neighborhoods nearest these sensitive resources and redirecting growth toward areas with existing services and transportation infrastructure, the Project fosters sustainable planning principles such as those included in the General Plan Framework and the SCAG Sustainable Communities Strategy. The Project accommodates anticipated growth described by SCAG in its regional growth projections (SCS/RTP 2008, 2012).

The majority of the land use changes proposed by the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan consist of General Plan Amendments and Zone Changes to create consistency with Framework Land Use designation, create consistency between existing land uses and zoning, restrict incompatible uses, and correct minor errors. The land use and zone changes concentrate development along major corridors such as Chatsworth Street, Devonshire Street, and Balboa Boulevard, in order to preserve single family residential throughout, but especially in the hillsides with very low to minimum residential densities. Several planning sub-areas in the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA, such as the Old Granada Residential Floor Area (RFA) District, would also be zoned to reduce the allowed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to address massing and neighborhood character, and an amendment to the existing “K” Equinekeeping District to include a minimum lot size for future subdivisions in order to preserve equine uses. Beyond these changes, the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan does not introduce major changes to land use in the CPA.

The Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan EIR analyzes total reasonably anticipated development in the Community Plan area and analyses community-wide impacts anticipated to result from this total anticipated increase in development. Analysis of site-specific impacts as a result of increases in allowable density on any given site is not feasible, as it would be too speculative to identify potential site-specific changes as a result of the Recommended Plan. Rather these impacts are generally addressed in the EIR. Site-specific impacts will be addressed at the project level. The City's threshold for discretionary review of individual projects (if some other discretionary action is not requested) is the addition of 50 residential units or 50,000 square feet of commercial or industrial space. This threshold is not altered by the Recommended Plan. All projects over this size require a site-specific CEQA review process at the project level and the

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incorporation of all feasible mitigation measures to reduce any significant and potentially significant impacts is required. In addition, any project triggering any other discretionary action will require site-specific CEQA review, including all future subdivisions, variance applications, and projects within the Granada Hills Specific Plan and other implementation overlays.

### **SHORT TERM VERSUS LONG TERM IMPACTS**

The Recommended Plan updates the Existing 1996 Plan, which anticipated a mix of suburban and semi-rural uses. That Existing 1996 Plan anticipated and accommodated a reasonable expected population of 70,482 persons during its plan horizon. The Recommended Plan is intended to resolve existing land use conflicts and decrease overall development potential in the Plan Area. The Plan allows for better preservation of single-family residential neighborhoods (through changes to land use designations and zoning, and the Old Granada Residential Floor Area District) and equinekeeping neighborhoods (through revised conditions for the Equinekeeping "K" District), and more effectively preserves open space, hillside and foothill areas. By redirecting anticipated growth from less developed portions of the community, open space areas particularly in the foothills, would be preserved thereby preserving open space in perpetuity (a long term benefit). As recognized in the No Project Alternative, the Project does not cause new development to occur, as development in the area is currently allowed under the Existing 1996 Plan, rather it accommodates new development in a more sustainable manner shifting growth to areas where it complements existing development patterns and protecting sensitive areas from impacts of new development. With that said, the EIR analyzed impacts from all development allowed under the Proposed Plan consistent with the requirements of CEQA, recognizing the baseline as the existing physical conditions and not the current plan.

### **GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS OF THE RECOMMENDED PLAN**

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a Final EIR to discuss the ways the Recommended Plan could foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Growth inducing impacts include the removal of obstacles to population growth (e.g., the expansion of a wastewater treatment plant allowing more development in a service area) and the development and construction of new service facilities that could significantly affect the environment individually or cumulatively. In addition, growth must not be assumed as beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

The Recommended Plan as analyzed in the EIR allows for reasonable expected development to accommodate an estimated 66,168 persons during the plan horizon (2030). For CEQA purposes, the Recommended Plan must be evaluated as compared to Existing Conditions. As such, the Recommended Plan accommodates 9,112 or 5,478 more persons depending on the year population is measured from – the 2005 population of 57,056 persons or 2010 census population of 60,690, respectively. The DEIR analyzed the potential impacts associated with the 2005 Existing Conditions leading to a more conservative analysis of those impacts.

The Recommended Plan's reasonable expected level of development of 66,168 persons is slightly higher than the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) projection of 65,293 persons by 2030. The Recommended Plan is designed to satisfy the projected population

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growth forecast by SCAG and further address new policies included in SCAG's adopted Sustainable Communities Strategy, prepared to address regional land use and transportation obligations needed to meet SB 375 and AB 32. Since SCAG, which is the regional agency responsible for projecting growth, anticipates growth in the area, land use capacity changes and adjustments to accommodate anticipated growth would not be considered growth inducing; rather they are generally considered growth accommodating. While the Recommended Plan could allow slightly more population growth than identified by SCAG, such incremental additional growth would be consistent with state and regional policies (including those in the SCS, and more recently SB 743) directing growth to areas adjacent to transit. The Recommended Plan would accommodate slightly greater population growth than forecast by SCAG, a difference of approximately 3 percent. The Recommended Plan largely redirects anticipated growth to existing developed commercial areas and multiple-family residential areas and preserves single-family residential neighborhoods, equinekeeping properties, as well as open space and foothill areas. Therefore, it would not continue to place pressure on undeveloped areas to accommodate new development. In any case, any impacts from the Recommended Plan were analyzed in the Impact Analysis for the DEIR and FEIR. The Recommended Plan is not expected to induce growth beyond that analyzed in the Impact Analysis chapters of the EIR.

The Recommended Plan would not cause the city to extend infrastructure beyond that required to meet the anticipated needs of future development in Granada Hills-Knollwood. The Recommended Plan is anticipated to be served with upgrades and maintenance of existing infrastructure within the area and would not be expected to stimulate additional population growth than already expected and thus would not result in growth inducing effects.

### **SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE IMPACTS**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) states 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. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the Project. Irreversible commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.”

Development of the anticipated level and type within the Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan Area would cause the irreversible commitment of limited resources including energy and water for project development and operation. The construction phases and subsequent occupancy of new development would require the use of non-renewable resources (notably sand and gravel) for construction as well as a commitment of energy resources for building materials, fuel, operation, and the transportation of goods and people to and from the project sites. Commitment of resources during construction of future projects within the Community Plan Area would include: construction labor, materials used in construction, and fossil fuels consumed by project-generated traffic and construction equipment. Commitment of resources following project construction would be similar to existing conditions, including electricity and gas to operate the projects and fossil fuels used by project-related traffic.

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The assumed level of development within the Community Plan Area would incrementally reduce existing supplies of fuels including fuel oil, natural gas, and gasoline, since fossil fuels are currently the principal energy source. These changes are not considered significant when compared to existing energy consumption; however, this still represents a long-term commitment of non-renewable resources. Increasing commitment to renewable technologies will help offset demand. The construction of future projects within the Plan Area would also require the commitment or destruction of other non-renewable and slowly renewable resources. These resources include lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, petrochemical construction materials, steel, copper, lead and other metals, and water.

Commitment to the scale and type of future development allowed under the Recommended Plan would restrict future generations from other uses of development properties and supplies of resources for the life of the projects, approximately 50-100 years or more.

The commitment of resources required for the type and level of recommended development would limit the availability of these resources for future generations for other uses during the life of the Plan. However, this resource consumption would be consistent with growth and anticipated change in the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, and the Southern California region as a whole. Further, use of such resources would be of a relatively small scale in relation to the Recommended Plan's fulfillment of regional and local urban design and development goals for the area. These goals are intended to promote smart growth that would reduce resource consumption by preserving open space and sensitive environmental areas and redirecting growth within the CPA to areas along major commercial corridors. The strategy would help reduce vehicle trips and would incorporate sustainable design features, utilizing renewable resources and reducing energy and water consumption. Therefore, the use of such resources for future projects in the Plan Area would be reduced as compared to development in other locations that would not fulfill such goals as fully.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

CEQA requires that an EIR include an analysis of a reasonable range of feasible alternatives to a proposed project capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant adverse environmental impact associated with the project. (CEQA Guidelines, section 15126.6.) Feasible, for purposes of CEQA, means "capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors.

The significant environmental impacts of the Project and the alternatives were identified and evaluated in the Draft EIR (Chapter 6) and further described in Chapter 13 of the Final EIR.

### **RESPONSES TO COMMENTS**

The City evaluated comments on the environmental issues received from persons who reviewed the Draft EIR. In accordance with CEQA, the City prepared written responses describing the disposition of significant environmental issues raised. The Final EIR provides adequate, good faith and reasoned responses to the comments. The City reviewed the comments received and the responses thereto and has determined that neither the comments received nor the responses

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to such comments add significant new information regarding environmental impacts to the Draft EIR. The City Council has based its actions on a full evaluation of all comments in the Record of Proceedings, concerning the environmental impacts identified and analyzed in the Final EIR.

During the comment period, comments regarding the use of 2005 data were made. Specifically, commenters argued that the data from the 2010 Census required the City to adjust the baseline and assumptions used in the DEIR. These comments were addressed in the Final EIR, which includes an evaluation of potential impacts utilizing 2010 Census data. Based on this analysis, the City finds substantial evidence supports the analysis and conclusions in the DEIR.

### **MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM**

CEQA requires the Lead Agency approving a Project to adopt a Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMP) for the changes to the Project which it has adopted or made a condition of Project approval in order to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures during Project implementation. The mitigation measures included in the Final EIR as certified by the City Council and included in the MMP as adopted by the City Council serves that function. The MMP includes all of the mitigation measures and project design features that reduce potential impacts which were identified in the Final EIR.

In accordance with CEQA, the MMP provides the means to ensure that the mitigation measures are fully enforceable. The final mitigation measures are described in the MMP. Each of the mitigation measures identified in the MMP, and contained in the Final EIR, is incorporated into the Project. In accordance with the requirements of Public Resources Code § 21081.6, the City Council hereby adopts the MMP included in the FEIR in Chapter 11 and incorporated by reference into these findings. The City Council finds that the impacts of the Project have been mitigated to the extent feasible by the mitigation measures identified in the MMP, and contained in the Final EIR. In accordance with the requirements of Public Resources Code § 21081.6, the City Council hereby adopts each of the mitigation measures expressly set forth herein as conditions of approval for the Project.

### **OTHER AGENCY ACTIONS**

The City Council is approving and adopting findings for the entirety of the actions described in these Findings and in the Final EIR as comprising the Project. It is contemplated that there may be a variety of actions undertaken by other State and local agencies (who might be referred to as “responsible agencies” under CEQA). Because the City is the Lead Agency for the Project, the Final EIR is intended to be the basis for compliance with CEQA for each of the possible discretionary actions by other State and local agencies to carry out the Project.

### **SUBSTANTIAL EVIDENCE**

The City Council finds and declares that substantial evidence for each and every finding made herein is contained in the Draft EIR and Final EIR, and other materials found in the Record of Proceedings. Moreover, the City Council finds that where more than one reason exists for any finding, the City Council finds that each reason independently supports such finding, and that any reason in support of a given finding individually constitutes a sufficient basis for that finding.

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The City Council finds that the Final EIR provides objective information to assist the decision-makers and the public at large in their consideration of the environmental consequences of the Project. The public review period provided all interested jurisdictions, agencies, private organizations, and individuals the opportunity to submit comments regarding the Draft EIR. The Final EIR was prepared after the review period and responds to comments made during the public review period.

### **RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

For Purposes of CEQA and these findings the Record of proceedings for the Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan consists of the following documents, which includes, but is not limited to the following:

- (1) The Notice of Preparation for the Project (the “NOP”), and all other public notices issued by the City in connection with the Project;
- (2) The Final EIR, its corrections to the Draft EIR, and all technical appendices, dated October 2, 2015;
- (3) The Draft EIR, and all technical appendices, dated October 11, 2012;
- (4) All written comments submitted by agencies or members of the public during any public review comment period on the Draft EIR;
- (5) All written and verbal public testimony presented during noticed public hearings for the Project (consistent with City Council policy) at which such testimony was taken, including without limitation, the Report to City Planning Commission, Report to Council, including all attachment, any all presentations by City staff, the City’s consultants, the public, and any other interested party; and
- (6) The Mitigation Monitoring Program for the Project (the “MMP”);
- (7) The reports, studies and technical memoranda included and/or referenced in the DEIR and the FEIR and or their appendices;
- (8) All documents, studies, EIRs, or other materials incorporated by reference in the DEIR and the FEIR;
- (9) The Department of City Planning Recommendation Report and Determination Letter to City Council;
- (10) All Ordinances and Resolutions presented to and/or adopted by the City in connection with the Project; and all documents incorporated by reference therein, specifically including, but not limited to, this resolution and all of its exhibits, the plan amendment resolution, and the zone change ordinances;

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(11) Matters of common knowledge to the City, including but not limited, to federal, state, and local laws and regulations, adopted City plans, policies (including but not limited to the City of Los Angeles General Plan, General Plan Framework and Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan, and the professional qualifications of its staff members and consultants;

(12) Any documents expressly cited in this Resolution and its exhibits, the Report to City Planning Commission, Report to Council, the Final EIR or the Draft EIR; and

(13) Any other relevant materials required to be in the record of proceedings under Section 21167.6(e) of the Public Resources Code.

### **CUSTODIAN OF DOCUMENTS**

The custodian of the documents or other material which constitutes the record of proceedings upon which the City Planning Commission and City Council's decision is based is the City of Los Angeles, City Clerk, City Hall located at 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, California 90012; all other record of proceedings shall be kept with the Department of City Planning, and the Director of Planning shall be the custodian of the documents.

### **INDEPENDENT JUDGMENT**

CEQA requires that the lead agency exercise its independent judgment in reviewing the adequacy of a Final EIR and that the decision of a lead agency in certifying a Final EIR and approving a Project not be predetermined. The City Council finds that the Final EIR was prepared in compliance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. The City has conducted its own review and considered the Draft EIR, Final EIR, Appendices and all other related materials, per Section 15132 of the Public Resources Code, reflect the independent judgment and analysis of the Lead Agency and is exercising its independent judgment when acting as herein provided.

### **RELATIONSHIP OF FINDINGS TO EIR**

These Findings are based on the most current information available. Accordingly, to the extent there are any apparent conflicts or inconsistencies between the Draft EIR and the Final EIR, on the one hand, and these Findings, on the other, these Findings shall control and the Draft EIR and Final EIR or both, as the case may be, are hereby amended as set forth in these Findings.

### **FINDINGS OF FACTS REGARDING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

The City of Los Angeles makes the following findings in response to the potentially significant effects on the environment identified and analyzed in the Final EIR for the Recommended Project.

Section 21081 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines (the "Guidelines") require a public agency, prior to approving a proposed project, to identify significant impacts of the proposed project and make one or more of the three possible findings for each of the significant impacts. These findings are provided below and will be used hereinafter and referenced as identified below:

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CEQA FINDING 1. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR. (Guidelines Section 15091 (a)(1)); and

CEQA FINDING 2. Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency. (Guidelines Section 15091 (a)(2)); and

CEQA FINDING 3. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible, the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the final EIR. (Guidelines Section 15091 (a)(3)).

These Findings herein incorporate the facts and discussions of the significant environmental impacts that may occur as a result of the Project, and in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and CEQA Guidelines, the City of Los Angeles hereby adopts these Findings. For each of the significant environmental effects identified in Section 2, as set forth in greater detail in these Findings herein, the City of Los Angeles makes the finding under Public Resources Code Section 21081(a)(3) and CEQA Guidelines section 15091(a)(3). For each of the significant environmental effects identified in Section 3, as set forth in greater detail in these Findings herein, the City of Los Angeles makes the finding under Public Resources Code Section 21081(a)(1) and CEQA Guideline section 15091(a)(1). Although CEQA Guidelines Section 15091 does not require findings to address environmental impacts that an EIR identifies as merely “potentially significant,” these findings will fully account for all such effects identified in the EIR.

Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines does not require specific findings to address environmental effects that an EIR identifies as having “no impact” or a “less than significant” impact. Nevertheless, Section 4 in the Findings fully account for all resources areas, including those identified in the EIR as less than significant.

In accordance with the provisions of CEQA and The CEQA Guidelines, the City Council of the City of Los Angeles has independently reviewed the Record of Proceedings (see list of contents in this Section) and based on the evidence in the Record of Proceedings adopts these Findings of Fact.

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### SECTION 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FOUND TO BE SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE

The Final EIR indicates that potentially significant and unavoidable impacts attributable to the Recommended Plan are limited to Aesthetics, Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Noise, Transportation, and Utilities/Service Systems (Water Resources). As described below in the findings for these impacts, there are either no feasible mitigation measures or the feasible mitigation measure(s) would only partially mitigate this significant impact and the residual effect would remain significant.

The City of Los Angeles finds, based on the facts set forth in the record, which include but are not limited to the facts as set forth below, those facts contained in the Draft EIR and the Response to Comments, and any other facts set forth in materials prepared by the City and/or City consultants, that there are no feasible mitigation measures, changes, or alterations available to reduce the significant and unavoidable impacts attributable to the Recommended Plan to Aesthetics, Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Noise, Transportation, and Utilities/Service Systems (Water Resources).

#### A. AESTHETICS

**Impact 4.1-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

**Impact 4.1-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

**Impact 4.1-3** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.

**Impact 4.1-4** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could create a new source of substantial light or glare that could adversely affect day- or nighttime views in the area.

**Impact 4.1-5** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could result in development of structures that would shade shadow-sensitive uses for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM Pacific Standard Time (between late October and early April), or for more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time (between early April and late October).

**Findings:** These impacts are significant and unavoidable. The cumulative impacts are also significant and unavoidable.

#### Explanation

The Recommended Plan incorporates project features that are intended to minimize, to the extent possible, adverse impacts to aesthetics. For example, residential development would be limited in the northern portion of the CPA, which include foothill areas near the Santa Susana Mountains

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and the San Gabriel Mountains. New housing or commercial opportunities will be directed towards existing multiple-family residential areas and commercial corridors. In addition to land use and zone changes, the Recommended Plan includes an amendment to the Granada Hills Specific Plan, which adds new parcels to the specific plan boundaries, and updated design guidelines that ensure that new development is compatible with the general surrounding character. Overall, impacts to aesthetics would be primarily limited to targeted growth areas. While project features and mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would reduce this impact in many cases to less than significant, since specific development projects are unknown at this time, the adoption and implementation of the Recommended Plan could impact aesthetics. Due to the uncertainty regarding the specific details of future development, the EIR noted that the Recommended Plan could have a significant and unavoidable impact on aesthetics. The uncertainty of future projects also leads to the conclusion that surrounding scenic resources, scenic vistas, and visual character could be impacted; therefore, the Recommended Plan's cumulative impact would also be significant and unavoidable.

### **Mitigation Measures:**

**MM4.1-1** As a condition of approval for any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall address aesthetics concerns as appropriate to minimize site-specific aesthetic impacts, including impacts to views, scenic resources, lighting, and shading.

**Findings on Significance Impact:** The City adopts CEQA Findings 1 and 3.

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

#### **(a) Scenic Vistas**

The major scenic features in the vicinity of the Granada Hills-Knollwood CPA are the Santa Susana Mountains to the northwest, the San Gabriel Mountains to the northeast, and the San Fernando Valley and Santa Monica Mountains to the south. Generally, the land use and zone changes under the Recommended Plan would not disrupt views of the Santa Susana or San Gabriel Mountains. Since the changes focus on directing growth away from existing residential neighborhoods and the foothills towards existing multiple-family residential areas and along commercial corridors, potential adverse impacts on scenic vistas and views from development under the Recommended Plan would likely be limited to those targeted areas. However, most new development within the multiple-family residential and commercial areas would be subject to the Granada Hills Specific Plan regulations where projects would have to address aesthetic concerns through development standards that address building massing, building orientation, site layout, and building articulation. Additionally, the Specific Plan has height restrictions to ensure that new development complements the existing scale of neighborhood properties. Adoption of the Recommended Plan will not, by itself, result in significant impacts to scenic vistas. Although the Plan's goals and policies and existing city regulations encourage the preservation of scenic vistas, it may not be feasible in a given instance to implement sufficient preservation to reduce the impacts to scenic vistas to below a level of significance. While it is anticipated that scenic vistas would be preserved, the potential exists that scenic vistas could be impacted. It would be

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speculative to determine whether the implementation of MM4.1-1 would reduce impacts to a level of less than significant. Therefore, the impact to scenic vistas is considered significant and unavoidable.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (such as Plan policies, Specific Plan regulations, and other federal, state and local regulations) that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. Project alternatives would allow more widely dispersed growth in designated hillside and open space areas, which are areas that are likely to have scenic vistas, and would therefore, likely worsen the significant impact.

### **(b) Scenic Resources**

The major scenic resources in Granada Hills-Knollwood include the mid-century modern architecture of the Balboa Highlands, the Knollwood Golf Course and surrounding residential area, the designated Historical/Cultural Landmark Deodar trees between San Fernando Mission on White Oak Avenue and the lush landscaping and open spaces in the northern portion of the CPA. Additionally, the Transportation (Mobility) Element identifies portions of Balboa Boulevard, Sesnon Boulevard, Rinaldi Street, White Oak Avenue, and the SR-188 and I-5 freeways as scenic roadways. These roads provide public views of hillsides, open spaces in the northern portion of the CPA, and more distant vistas of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains and the greater San Fernando Valley.

Four sites in the CPA have been designated as Historic-Cultural Monuments and are therefore protected. Changes under the Recommended Plan would not change the overall land use pattern of the CPA. The Recommended Plan would further protect and preserve the area's scenic resources by limiting development in the foothills, and Mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would also help to reduce potential impacts for new development projects within the Granada Hills Specific Plan. Although the Plan's goals and policies and existing city regulations for historic monuments encourage the preservation of scenic resources, it may not be feasible in a given instance to implement sufficient preservation to reduce the impacts to below a level of significance. While it is anticipated that scenic resources would be preserved, the potential still exists that they could be impacted. It would be speculative to determine whether the implementation of MM4.1-1 would reduce impacts to a level of less than significant. Therefore, impacts to scenic resources are considered significant and unavoidable.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (such as Plan policies, Specific Plan regulations, and other federal, state and local regulations), that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. Project alternatives would allow more widely dispersed growth in designated hillside and open space areas, which are likely to have scenic resources, and would therefore, likely worsen the significant impact.

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### **(c) Visual Character of Site and Surroundings**

Elements contributing to the visual character of the CPA include low-scale buildings, rustic and ranch style development, as well as scenic vistas of the surrounding mountain ranges and of the expansive San Fernando Valley. The Recommended Plan would limit development along the foothills, preserve single-family residential and equinekeeping neighborhoods, and will retain open space areas. Future growth is being directed toward existing multiple-family residential area and along commercial corridors. Most of these areas would also be subject to the Granada Hills Specific Plan's regulations, which will address aesthetics through design guidelines and the design review component of all development project. In addition, mitigation measure MM4.1-1, would further protect the existing visual character of the area by requiring not only projects within the Specific Plan but other discretionary projects to address aesthetic concerns. Although the Plan's goals and policies and existing city regulations (i.e. building height and site layout requirements of the Zoning Code) encourage the preservation of scenic resources, it may not be feasible in a given instance to implement sufficient preservation to reduce the impacts to below a level of significance. While it is anticipated that scenic resources would be preserved, the potential still exists that they could be impacted. It would be speculative to determine whether the implementation of MM4.1-1 would reduce impacts to a level of less than significant. Therefore, impacts to scenic resources are considered significant and unavoidable.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (such Plan policies, Specific Plan regulations, and other federal, state and local regulations), that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. Project alternatives would allow more widely dispersed growth that would likely worsen the significant impact.

### **(d) Light and Glare**

As discussed above, impacts to aesthetics would be primarily limited to the existing multiple-family residential area and commercial areas. New lighting sources associated with additional dwelling units, businesses, street lighting and vehicle headlights would be anticipated in these areas. All new development would be required to be consistent with the LAMC, which would ensure that light-sensitive areas adjacent to or within new development would be protected from spillover or excessive lighting. Conformance to LAMC regulations as well as implementation of mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would help reduce this impact. Adoption of the Recommended Plan will not, by itself, result in significant new sources of light and glare. Although the Plan's goals and policies and existing city regulations (i.e. Zoning and Building Code regulations) limit the amount of light and glare that could adversely affect day- or nighttime views, it may not be feasible in a given instance to implement sufficient measures to reduce the impacts to below a level of significance. While it is anticipated that light and glare from new development projects would be limited, the potential still exists that they could be significant. It would be speculative to determine whether the implementation of MM4.1-1 would reduce impacts to a level of less than significant. Therefore, impacts to new sources of light and glare are considered significant and unavoidable.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (such Plan policies, Specific Plan regulations, and other federal,

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state and local regulations), that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. Project alternatives would allow more widely dispersed growth that would likely worsen the significant impact.

### (e) Shade Shadow - Sensitive Uses

Generally, the Recommended Plan would not change the overall land use patterns within the CPA. Existing residential neighborhoods, particularly equestrian-oriented neighborhoods, and open space areas would be protected. Additionally, the Old Granada Residential Floor Area (RFA) District addresses massing and scale in this particular residential neighborhood. Shade shadow impacts on sensitive uses would be primarily limited to the existing multiple-family residential and commercial areas. Sensitive uses are generally routinely useable outdoor spaces associated with residential, recreational or institutional land, as well outdoor eating areas for restaurants. For the most part, new residential development would be relatively low to low-medium density development and buildings generally two to three stories tall. Development within these areas would be subject to the Specific Plan which addresses shade and shadow impacts through height regulations. Adoption of the Recommended Plan will not, by itself, result in significant shade/shadow of sensitive uses. However, it may not be feasible in a given instance to implement sufficient measures to reduce the impacts to below a level of significance. While it is anticipated that light and glare from new development projects would be limited, the potential still exists that they could be significant. It would be speculative to determine whether the implementation of MM4.1-1 would reduce impacts to a level of less than significant. Therefore, shade and shadow impacts to sensitive uses are considered significant and unavoidable.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (such Plan policies, Specific Plan regulations, and other federal, state and local regulations), that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. Project alternatives would allow more widely dispersed growth that would likely worsen the significant impact.

## B. AIR QUALITY

**Impact 4.2-3** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could violate air quality standards or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

**Findings:** This impact is significant and unavoidable. The cumulative impact is also significant and unavoidable.

### Explanation

During construction and demolition activities, emissions from dust could adversely affect sensitive receptors in and around the CPA. Construction equipment is frequently diesel-fueled, which generates more pollutants than gas-powered construction equipment. Construction activities associated with the Recommended Plan would occur throughout the life of the Plan, and would be intermittent as market conditions allow for development opportunities. Emissions would be anticipated to be lower during years where, economically, the area is experiencing a slowdown, and higher during years where the economy is at peak. Implementation of mitigation measures

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MM4.2-1 through MM4.2-4 would reduce this impact, but not necessarily to a less than significant level. Due to the unknown level of construction activity that could occur on any given day throughout the life of Plan (i.e., construction schedule and specific location), construction emissions for individual projects allowed under the Recommended Plan cannot be quantified. Therefore, the daily average emission during the life of the Plan could exceed the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) recommended thresholds for construction emissions and impacts could be significant and unavoidable. The Recommended Plan would also contribute a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions as a result of construction activities under the Plan.

With regards to operational emissions, these are generated by both stationary and mobile sources which result from normal day-to-day activities within the CPA. For example, stationary area source emissions would be generated by the consumption of natural gas for space and water heating devices, and the operation of landscape maintenance equipment. Mobile emissions would be generated by the motor vehicles traveling to, within, and from the CPA. Development under the Recommended Plan would result in vehicle and area emissions that would exceed SCAQMD's daily thresholds for ROG, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> before mitigation, therefore, this impact would be significant and unavoidable. Implementation of mitigation measures MM4.2-1 through MM4.2-4 would reduce this impact; however, PM<sub>10</sub> emissions would still exceed regulatory thresholds. Granada Hills-Knollwood is located in the South Coast Air Basin, which has been designated as a nonattainment area for PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions and for ozone. Because emissions under the Recommended Plan would exceed the thresholds for PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and since the South Coast Air Basin is already impacted, new development under the Recommended Plan could have a significant cumulative impact on regional air quality.

### **Mitigation Measures:**

**MM4.2-1** As a condition of approval for any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require all contractors to include the following best management practices in contract specifications and print on plans:

- Use properly tuned and maintained equipment.
- Construction contractors shall enforce the idling limit of five minutes as set forth in the California Code of Regulations.
- Use diesel-fueled construction equipment to be retrofitted with after treatment products (e.g. engine catalyts) to the extent they are readily available and feasible.
- Use heavy duty diesel-fueled equipment that uses low NO<sub>x</sub> diesel fuel to the extent it is readily available and feasible.
- Use construction equipment that uses low polluting fuels (i.e. compressed natural gas, liquid petroleum gas, and unleaded gasoline) to the extent available and feasible.
- Maintain construction equipment in good operating condition to minimize air pollutants.

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- Construction contractors shall utilize materials that do not require painting, as feasible.
- Construction contractors shall use pre-painted construction materials, as feasible.
- Construction contractors shall provide temporary traffic controls such as a flag person, during all phases of construction to maintain smooth traffic flow.
- Construction contractors shall provide dedicated turn lanes for movement of construction trucks and equipment on- and off-site, as feasible.
- Construction contractors shall reroute construction trucks away from congested streets or sensitive receptor areas, as feasible.
- Construction contractors shall appoint a construction relations officer to act as a community liaison concerning on-site construction activity including resolution of issues related to PM10 generation.

**MM4.2-2** As a condition of approval for any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require projects that cover areas greater than 5 acres to provide appropriate analysis and modeling for CO, NOX, PM10, and PM2.5.

**MM4.2-3** In order to comply with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Air Quality and Land Use Handbook (June 2005) and achieve an acceptable interior air quality level for sensitive receptors, appropriate measures shall be incorporated into project building design. The appropriate measures shall include one of the following methods:

- The project applicant shall retain a qualified air quality consultant to prepare a health risk assessment (HRA) in accordance with the California Air Resource Board and the Office of Environmental Health and Hazard Assessment requirements to determine the exposure of project residents/occupants/users to stationary air quality pollutants prior to issuance of a demolition, grading, or building permit. The HRA shall be submitted to the Lead Agency for review and approval. The applicant or implementation agency shall implement the approved HRA recommendations, if any. If the HRA concludes that the air quality risks from nearby sources are at or below acceptable levels, then additional measures are not required.
- The applicant shall implement the following features that have been found to reduce air quality risk to sensitive receptors and shall be included in the project construction plans. These shall be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Division and the Building Service Division for review and approval prior to the issuance of a demolition, grading, or building permit.
  - Do not locate sensitive receptors near distribution center's entry and exit points.
  - Do not locate sensitive receptors in the same building as a perchloroethylene dry cleaning facility.

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- Maintain a 50' buffer from a typical gas dispensing facility (under 3.6 million gallons of gas per year).
- Install, operate, and maintain in good working order a central heating and ventilation (HV) system or other air take system in the building, or in each individual residential unit, that meets the efficiency standard of the MERV 13. The HV system shall include the following features: installation of a high efficiency filter and/or carbon filter-to-filter particulates and other chemical matter from entering the building. Either HEPA filters or ASHARE 85% supply filters shall be used.
- Retain a qualified HV consultant or HERS rater during the design phase of the project to locate the HV system based on exposure modeling from the mobile and/or stationary pollutant sources.
- Maintain positive pressure within the building.
- Achieve a performance standard of at least 4 air exchanges per hour of recirculation.
- Achieve performance standard of .25 air exchanges per hour of an unfiltered infiltration if the building is not positively pressurized.
- Project applicant shall maintain, repair, and/or replace HV system or prepare an Operation and Maintenance Manual for the HV system and the filter. The manual shall include the operating instructions and maintenance and replacement schedule. This manual shall be included in the CC&R's for residential projects and distributed to the building maintenance staff. In addition, the applicant shall prepare a separate Homeowners Manual. The manual shall contain the operating instructions and maintenance and replacement schedule for the HV system and the filters. It shall also include a disclosure to the buyers of the air quality analysis findings.

**MM4.2-4** As a condition of approval for any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require projects to implement applicable Greenhouse Gas reduction measures in the design of projects, including:

- Install energy efficient lighting (e.g., light emitting diodes), heating and cooling systems, appliances, equipment, and control systems).
- Install light colored "cool" roofs and cool pavements.
- Create water efficient landscapes.
- Install water efficient fixtures and appliances.

**Finding on Significance Impact:** The City adopts CEQA Findings 1, 2, and 3.

**Facts in Support of Findings:**

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All development within the City is required to implement “best management practices” specified by the SQAMD rules (i.e., Rules 403, 431.1, 431.2, 1109, and 1113). For instance, site watering, soil stabilization, covering truck and storage piles, as well as the use of low sulfur fuel for stationary construction equipment, are all practices required by existing regulations. Mitigation measures MM4.2-1 through MM4.2-4, as revised per the recommendation of SCAQMD, were included to minimize potential environmental effects with regards to construction and operational emissions. The City finds that the above measures are appropriate and feasible, and would substantially lessen the potential adverse environmental effects of the Recommended Plan by requiring the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce emissions. Even with the standard SCAQMD regulations and identified mitigations, construction activities would still generate emissions that exceed the SCAQMD’s thresholds. Because of the non-attainment status of the air basin and uncertainties regarding future attainment of ozone precursors, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable. No additional feasible measures are available to reduce this impact below a level of significance (Public Resource Code, 21002; CEQA Guidelines 15091, 15126.4, subd. (a)(2)). To the extent that this adverse impact will not be substantially lessened or eliminated, the City finds that specific economic, social and other considerations identified in the Statement of Overriding Considerations support the approval of the Recommended Plan.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (California Air Resource Board regulations) that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. In addition, the project alternatives would still violate air quality standards. Alternatives 1 and 2 would lead to widespread growth throughout the CPA, including development of vacant lots in the foothills and open space areas rather than targeting new development in existing multiple-family residential and commercial areas. Since the South Coast Air Basin is already a nonattainment area, construction impacts that result in PM10 and PM2.5 emissions under the project alternatives would still be significant.

**Impact 4.2-4** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors).

**Findings:** This impact is significant and unavoidable. The cumulative impact is also significant and unavoidable.

### Explanation

The South Coast Air Basin is designated as a nonattainment area for PM10 and PM2.5 emissions and for ozone. Long term air quality within the CPA, as well as within the basin, would be adversely affected by both mobile sources and area source emissions. Mobile sources include criteria air pollutant emissions, primarily from the addition of new mobile sources to the area, such as automobiles. Stationary area source emissions, which are associated with the operation of residential units, would be generated by the consumption of natural gas for space and water heating devices, while mobile emissions would be generated by motor vehicles traveling within the CPA, for example. The Recommended Plan includes project features that minimize

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development along the foothills and within the fringes of the CPA and requires new development within targeted areas such as the Granada Hills Specific Plan be designed to foster pedestrian activity. In addition to the project features, the implementation of measures MM4.2-1 through MM4.2-3 would help to reduce construction-related and operational emissions. Implementation of measures would reduce emissions from operational activities, except for PM10 emissions which would exceed SCAQMD's threshold. Since emissions under the Recommended Plan could be significant, and the CPA is within a nonattainment area, this is considered to be a potentially significant cumulative impact.

### **Mitigation Measures:**

MM4.2-1 through MM4.2-4, see above.

**Finding on Significance Impact:** The City adopts CEQA Findings 1, 2, and 3.

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.2), The City finds that the potential cumulative impact of net increase of any criteria pollutant is expected to be significant because PM10 would exceed the SCAQMD thresholds and the CPA is in nonattainment for this emission. The City further finds that the above measures are appropriate and feasible, and would substantially lessen, but not avoid the potential adverse environmental effects of approving and implementation of the Recommended Plan. Because of the nonattainment status of the air basin and uncertainties regarding future attainment, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable. No additional feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce this impact below a level of significance. To the extent that this adverse impact will not be substantially lessened or eliminated, the City finds that the specific economic, social and other considerations identified in the Statement of Overriding Considerations support the approval of the Recommended Plan.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (Specific Plan regulations, and California Air Resource Board regulations) that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. In addition, the project alternatives would still violate air quality standards. Alternatives 1 and 2 would lead to dispersed growth throughout the CPA, including development of vacant lots in the foothills and open space areas rather than targeting new development in areas served by transit. Since the South Coast Air Basin is already a nonattainment area, construction impacts that result in PM10 and PM2.5 emissions under the project alternatives would still be significant.

**Impact 4.2-5** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

**Findings:** The level for exceedance of the localized significance thresholds (LST) during construction is significant and unavoidable. The cumulative impact is also significant and unavoidable for LST.

### Explanation

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The air quality section addresses the impacts of the Recommended Plan on the exposure of people to hazardous pollutant concentrations. The pollutants of concern include criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants (TAC). Criteria pollutants are identified as carbon monoxide (CO) and suspended particulate matter, such as PM10, and toxic air contaminants, which are identified as particulate matter from diesel-fueled engines, asbestos, metals, and other contaminants.

### **Mitigation Measures:**

MM4.2-1 through MM4.2-3, see above.

**Finding on Significance Impact:** The City adopts CEQA Findings 1, 2, and 3.

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.2), a hotspot analysis for CO was conducted; the results of the level of service for the intersections studied concluded that no intersection would exceed national or state standards for 1-hour or 8-hour CO concentrations; therefore, the impact for CO concentration would be less than significant.

A TAC analysis was also conducted. This study focused on the level of diesel particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) emitted mostly from diesel-powered equipment during construction activities, chemicals from industrial uses, and exhaust from vehicles. Estimation of the cancer risk from diesel particulate matter assumes long-term exposure of the pollutant. Construction related exposure would be short-term in nature, therefore the health risk from air pollutants generated during construction is anticipated to be less than significant. However, operational activities may include the implementation of industrial processes that would emit TACs, or may locate sensitive receptors in the vicinity of existing TAC emitters, such as freeways. Diesel trucks could also be used to make deliveries to retail and commercial land uses within the CPA. Diesel particulate matter from mobile sources has been identified as a toxic air contaminant by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). Consequently, future residents in the CPA could be exposed to TACs from diesel sources that could exceed the health risk thresholds. In order to mitigate potential impacts, discretionary projects or projects that are within the Granada Hills Specific Plan would be required to comply with measures MM4.2-1 through MM4.2-3, making this impact less than significant.

A Localized Significant Thresholds (LST) analysis, which calculates PM10 and PM2.5 emissions, was not conducted because construction emissions are dependent on the number of construction and delivery vehicles operating, the length of time in operation, and the amount of soil that is disturbed on a daily basis. Without a known schedule or an anticipated annual or daily level of construction, emissions cannot be accurately estimated. As a condition of approval for any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City would require projects that cover areas greater than 5 acres to provide appropriate analysis and modeling for CO, NOx, PM10, and PM2.5. However, since a LST analysis was not conducted, implementation of the Recommended Plan could exceed LST thresholds during construction.

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Therefore, this impact would be significant and unavoidable for construction activities. The Recommended Plan would also have a cumulative significant and unavoidable impact for LST.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (Specific Plan regulations, and applicable California Air Resource Board regulations) that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. In addition, new development under the project alternatives, which would lead to dispersed development pattern throughout the CPA, could also exceed the localized significant thresholds during construction.

### C. GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS

**Impact 4.6-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would result in development that could contribute to substantial emissions of greenhouse gases.

**Impact 4.6-2** Project emissions of greenhouse gases would have the potential to conflict with the implementation of Assembly Bill (AB) 32.

**Findings:** These impacts are significant and unavoidable. The cumulative impacts are also significant and unavoidable.

#### Explanation

Implementation of the Recommended Plan would generate greenhouse gases through the construction of new residential, commercial or industrial uses. Greenhouse gas emissions from development under the Recommended Plan would specifically arise from project construction and from sources associated with project operation, including direct sources such as motor vehicles, natural gas consumption, and solid waste handling/treatment, and indirect sources such as electricity generation. Emissions of greenhouse gases for construction activities cannot be determined because the extent of equipment use and duration of individual construction projects are unknown. Estimated future emissions from area sources, electricity consumption, and landfills would increase during the life of the Plan. The Recommended Plan includes project features, such as directing growth to existing multiple-family residential and commercial areas, and limiting development in hillside and equinekeeping areas in order to minimize potential impacts. There are also state mandated regulations, such as Title 24, and measure MM4.6-1 that would help to reduce potential impacts from greenhouse gas emissions but not to a less than significant level.

Implementation of the Recommended Plan would comply with the goals and policies established by AB 32, such as requiring energy efficiency in buildings and appliances. However, because greenhouse gas emissions must include emissions generated during construction, the total impact on climate change cannot be determined. Mitigation measure MM4.6-1, along with state mandated regulations, would help reduce operational impacts, but not to a less than significant level. This impact is significant and unavoidable. Both impacts would also be cumulatively significant and unavoidable.

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### Mitigation Measures:

**MM4.6-1** As a condition of approval for any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require projects to implement applicable Greenhouse Gas reduction measures in the design of projects, including:

- Install energy efficient lighting (e.g., light emitting diodes), heating and cooling systems, appliances, equipment, and control systems.
- Install light colored “cool” roofs and cool pavements.
- Create water-efficient landscapes.
- Install water-efficient fixtures and appliances.

**Findings:** The City adopts CEQA Findings 1, 2, and 3.

### Facts in Support of Findings:

#### (a) Emissions of Greenhouse Gases

As discussed above, greenhouse gas emissions would arise from project construction and from sources associated with project operation. The Recommended Plan includes zone changes to preserve and limit single-family residential uses in hillside areas through project features such as the K-District. The Recommended Plan includes a few zone changes in established areas such as subarea 1820 on Chatsworth Street (zone change from A2-1 to RD2-1 to match the land use designation). Impacts from greenhouse gas emissions associated with the Recommended Plan would likely occur within these designated targeted areas and in existing multiple-family residential and commercial areas. Implementation of state mandated regulations (as required by the California Air Resource Board) would result in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Projects within most commercial areas in the CPA would be subject to the Granada Hills Specific Plan and would be required to comply with applicable regulations to ensure the development complements the surrounding area. Additionally, the mitigation measures identified would help reduce potential impacts from operational emissions. However, because the extent of equipment use and duration of individual construction projects are unknown, greenhouse gas emissions from construction activities cannot be determined and therefore, this impact would be considered significant and unavoidable.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. In addition, new development under the project alternatives would result in higher emissions of greenhouse gases because unlike the Recommended Plan, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by directing growth to areas to existing multiple-family residential areas and commercial areas, the project alternatives would lead to dispersed development pattern throughout the CPA that would increase operational and construction greenhouse gas emissions.

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### (b) AB 32

AB 32 required the California Air Resource Board (CARB) to develop a scoping plan that described the approach California would take to reduce greenhouse gases to achieve the goal of reducing emissions. Many of the greenhouse gas reduction measures (i.e., low carbon fuel standard, advanced clean car standards, and cap-and-trade) are beyond the scope of this project. Applicable reduction measures include making land use changes to encourage transit-oriented and infill development that reduce vehicle miles traveled (projected growth targeted in areas along commercial corridors), and improving energy efficiency in buildings and appliances. The Recommended Plan would comply with applicable goals and policies established under AB 32.

In addition to AB 32, Senate Bill 375 now requires MPOs, which in this case is SCAG, to include sustainable community strategies for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Since the Recommended Plan is consistent with SCAG's 2004 Regional Transportation Plan, it is also consistent with AB 32. However, because the greenhouse gas emissions must include emissions generated during construction, the total impact on climate change from implementation of the Recommended Plan cannot be determined. Therefore, this impact is deemed significant and unavoidable.

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.6), there are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. In addition, new development under the project alternatives would result in higher emissions of greenhouse gases because unlike the Recommended Plan, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by directing growth to areas that are served by transit, the project alternatives would lead to dispersed development pattern throughout the CPA increasing VMT and vehicle emissions along with increased operational and construction greenhouse gas emissions.

### D. NOISE

**Impact 4.10-5** Construction of development pursuant to the Recommended Plan could result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.

**Impact 4.10-7** Construction of development pursuant to the Recommended Plan could generate or expose persons or structures to excessive groundborne vibration.

**Impact 4.10-8** Construction of development pursuant to the Recommended Plan could result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project due to construction activities.

**Findings:** These impacts are significant and unavoidable. The cumulative impacts are also significant and unavoidable.

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### Explanation

Implementation of the Recommended Plan would result in construction activities associated with new development projects. While specific development plans are unknown at this time, it is likely that construction activities associated with projects pursuant to the Recommended Plan would be located near existing or future noise-sensitive uses (i.e., residences and schools). For instance, groundborne noise and vibration generated during construction activities could impact existing sensitive uses or result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity. However, construction related impacts would be primarily limited to existing multiple-family residential areas and commercial areas, which is where future infill development will likely occur. It is important to note that construction noise would be anticipated to be lower during years when the area is experiencing an economic downturn, and higher during years of economic growth. Implementation of mitigation measures MM4.10-2, and MM4.10-3 would reduce this impact, but not necessarily to a less than significant level. New projects would also be required to comply with the LAMC with regards to construction noise levels and hours of operation, performance standards for powered tools, and other regulations. However, due to the unknown level of construction activity that would occur on any given day throughout the life of the Recommended Plan (i.e., construction schedule and specific location), construction noise for individual projects allowed under the Recommended Plan cannot be quantified.

### **Mitigation Measures:**

- MM4.10-2** As a condition of approval for any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require all contractors to include the following best management practices in contract specifications and print on plans:
- Construction haul truck and materials delivery traffic shall avoid residential areas whenever feasible. If no alternatives are available, truck traffic shall be routed on streets with the fewest residences.
  - The construction contractor shall locate construction staging areas away from sensitive uses.
  - When construction activities are located in close proximity to noise-sensitive land uses, noise barriers (e.g., temporary walls or piles of excavated material) shall be constructed between activities and noise sensitive uses.
  - Impact pile drivers shall be avoided where possible in noise-sensitive areas. Drilled piles or the use of a sonic vibratory pile driver are quieter alternatives that shall be utilized where geological conditions permit their use. Noise shrouds shall be used when necessary to reduce noise of pile drilling/driving.
  - Construction equipment shall be equipped with mufflers that comply with manufacturers' requirements.
  - The construction contractor shall consider potential vibration impacts to older (historic) buildings.

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**MM4.10-3** As a condition of approval for any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require proposed industrial projects located within 1,000 feet of a residential land use to complete a noise study using the significance thresholds established in the City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide. Identified impacts shall be mitigated per the City's Noise Ordinance.

**Findings:** The City adopts CEQA Findings 1 and 3.

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

#### **(a) Construction Noise**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.10), the Recommended Plan could result in significantly increased noise levels during construction activities. Construction-related groundborne noise and vibration is generated mainly from the use of construction equipment such as pile drivers, bulldozers, trucks, and/or jackhammers. The groundborne noise and vibration generated during construction activities would primarily impact existing sensitive uses (e.g., residences, schools, and hospitals) that are located adjacent to, or within, the vicinity of specific projects. It may be possible that construction activities could occur as close as 25 feet from sensitive receptors that would result in these sensitive receptors experiencing groundborne noise and vibration impacts above the threshold of 85 Vdb. The maximum allowable noise level for most construction equipment within 500 feet of any residential zone is 75 dBA measures at 50 feet from the noise source. This restriction holds unless compliance is not technically feasible even with the use of noise "mufflers, shields, sound barriers, and/or other noise reduction devices or techniques." Construction activities may still be required in proximity to nearby sensitive receptors and construction-related noise levels which could exceed the 75 dBA threshold. The Recommended Plan directs new infill housing and commercial development to existing multiple-family residential areas and commercial areas, which is where construction-related noise will likely occur.

In general, construction activities associated with implementation of projects pursuant to the Recommended Plan would likely last for a period of several weeks and would generate noise levels at noise-sensitive uses ranging from 86 dBA Leq to as high as 107 dBA Leq. These noise levels would occur during various stages of individual project construction and could exceed the limits established by the City's CEQA Threshold Guidelines. Construction of development could result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project due to construction activities. These impacts would be considered significant and unavoidable. It is anticipated that project-specific environmental analyses of larger discretionary projects, will address this issue in more detail, potentially identifying further mitigation. However, due to the uncertainty regarding the specific details of future development and a set construction schedule, this impact would be considered to be significant and unavoidable even with the incorporated mitigation measures.

The project's contributions to cumulative noise impacts are temporary in nature as they occur during construction activities. Typically construction noise is a localized effect, but when multiple

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construction projects are underway in the same general area, cumulative construction impacts could occur.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. The project alternatives would still have a significant impact due to construction noise. Alternatives 1 and 2 would not limit construction noise, it would just lead to widespread growth throughout the CPA, including development of vacant lots in the foothills and open space areas rather than targeting new development in existing multiple-family residential areas and commercial areas. Therefore, the impact under the project alternatives would also be significant.

### E. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

**Impact 4.13-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could result in inadequate emergency access during construction unless mitigated.

**Impact 4.13-3** The volume-weighted average V/C ratio under the Recommended Plan would exceed that of existing traffic conditions and the percentage of roadway segments projected to operate at unsatisfactory levels of service would substantially exceed that of existing traffic conditions.

**Findings:** These impacts are significant and unavoidable. The cumulative impacts are also significant and unavoidable.

#### Explanation

Implementation of the Recommended Plan would direct projected growth to existing multiple family residential areas and commercial areas. This targeted growth strategy allows for the preservation of large residential lots and open space in the hillside areas of Granada Hills-Knollwood. This strategy will preserve single-family residential neighborhoods and natural resources, and will also provide new housing and commercial in areas that have supportive infrastructure and amenities. Impacts related to emergency access and traffic conditions on roadway segments would be concentrated in these areas. Mitigation measure 4.13-1 would help minimize the impact on emergency access but not to a less than significant level.

The Recommended Plan analyzed roadway segment Level of Service (LOS) to determine service capacity and projected deficiencies of various roadway networks in Granada Hills-Knollwood. LOS is a qualitative measure used to describe the conditions of traffic, ranging from excellent conditions at LOS A to overloaded conditions at LOS F. The Department of Transportation (LADOT) has established LOS D as a minimum satisfactory level of service. LOS is related to the ratio of traffic demand volume to capacity (V/C) for each street segment. Based on the analysis, it was determined that the weighted average V/C would exceed the existing baseline conditions, and would increase the number of roadway segments operating at LOS E or F.

#### **Mitigation Measures:**

**MM4.13-1:** As a condition of approval for any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, development review procedures shall be conducted

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to ensure that the applicable Mobility policies of the Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan are applied and implemented when such projects are considered for approval.

**Findings:** The City adopts CEQA Findings 1 and 3.

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

#### **(a) Emergency Access**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.13), one of the project features of the Recommended Plan is to direct growth to commercial corridors and preserve hillside and open space areas. Emergency access is an ongoing issue for hillside properties, particularly in Very High Fire Hazardous Severity Zones in the hilly northern and western portions of Granada Hills-Knollwood. The Recommended Plan includes policies and land use changes to preserve the existing character of the CPA's hillside and open space areas, so the Recommended Plan will not exacerbate existing emergency access in these areas. New development will likely be infill development in existing multiple-family residential areas and commercial areas. The City requires development plans to be submitted to the City for review and approval to ensure that all new development has adequate emergency access, including turning radius in compliance with existing City regulations. Projects would be subject to the City's permitting process, in which the Police and Fire Departments would review the project to ensure that temporary construction barricades or other obstructions do not impede emergency access. However, because the details about specific development projects are unknown at this time, the adoption and the Recommended Plan and implementing ordinances could impact emergency access. Additionally, there could be a potentially significant cumulative impact if construction occurs concurrently in a given area, which would mean that there would be a concurrent emergency access obstruction due to a number of construction projects.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (such as Specific Plan regulations, development review procedures), that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. Additionally, the project alternatives could still lead to adverse impacts to emergency access during temporary construction conditions. Alternatives 1 and 2 would still permit development projects, and in turn construction that could temporarily impact emergency access; it would lead to widespread growth throughout the CPA, rather than targeting new development along commercial corridors. Therefore, the impact under the project alternatives would still be significant.

#### **(b) Volume-Weighted Average (V/C Ratio)**

The volume-weighted average V/C ratio under the Recommended Plan would substantially exceed that of existing (2005) traffic conditions, and the number of roadway segments projected to operate at unsatisfactory levels of service would substantially exceed that of existing traffic conditions. As the Final EIR concluded, the implementation of the Recommended Plan would result in an unavoidable significant adverse transportation impact based on the City's adopted thresholds of significance. In 2030, under the Recommended Plan, the volume-weighted vehicle to capacity (V/C) ratio and the percentage of roadway links projected to operate at level of service

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(LOS) E or F would both substantially exceed that of 2005 baseline conditions. Total vehicle miles of travel (VMT) and vehicle hours of travel (VHT) also would be significantly increased. The traffic study for the EIR identified several intersections that would be significantly adversely impacted by increased traffic generated by the Recommended Plan. While these impacts may be improved through the identified mitigation measures, there is considerable uncertainty as to whether conditions at the time of implementation would make these measures feasible.

While these impacts could be reduced to a level of less than significant through effective implementation of the mitigation measure identified above, in some instances, these measures will not likely be feasible due to physical and operational constraints. Traffic congestion at impacted intersections would represent a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.

The Transportation Improvement and Mitigation Program (TIMP) includes recommendations for mitigating the projected increase in traffic volume and shift in traffic patterns associated with land use changes. The major emphasis of the TIMP is to encourage alternative modes of transportation – walking, bicycling, transit use - to reduce vehicle trips generated in the CPA, as well as on roadway improvements. The Recommended Plan provides opportunities for use of alternate modes of transportation (non-motorized trips and transit) by concentrating development along commercial corridors, such as Chatsworth and Devonshire Streets, and in existing multiple-family residential neighborhoods.

Policies included in the Recommended Plan would reduce traffic impacts in the area, but not to a less-than-significant level. There would still be a significant adverse transportation impact as a result of the Recommended Plan as compared to 2005 conditions. The percentage of roadway segments projected to operate at LOS E or F and the weighted V/C ratio are anticipated to increase as are the number of vehicle miles traveled and vehicle hours of travel decrease. While the Recommended Plan is anticipated to result in impacts on V/C ratio and roadway segments, it will be consistent with SB 375 and the Sustainable Communities Strategy. It is expected that as a result of focused development in targeted areas, this will correspondingly relieve development pressure in the outer edges of the CPA. Thus, although traffic and greenhouse gas emissions may increase in the commercial areas and multiple-family residential neighborhoods, it is anticipated that regionally vehicle miles travelled and greenhouse gas emissions will be less. Development under the Recommended Plan would contribute a portion of the cumulative traffic anticipated on local roadways, with the other portion attributed to regional traffic going through the CPA.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (such as Plan Mobility policies, Specific Plan regulations, development review procedures), that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. Additionally, the project alternatives could still lead to adverse impacts to V/C ratios of road intersection from traffic conditions. Alternatives 1 (the “No Project Alternative”) and 2 would still permit new development projects, which in turn could lead to an increase in traffic. The project alternatives may have a greater adverse impact on traffic than the Recommended Plan because the project alternatives would lead to widespread growth throughout the CPA rather than targeting

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new development in existing multiple-family residential neighborhoods and commercial areas. Therefore, the impact under the project alternatives would still be significant.

### F. UTILITIES/SERVICE SYSTEMS: WATER RESOURCES

**Impact 4.14-2** The Recommended Plan could impact the water supplies that serve the CPA. While water supply is expected to be adequate, LADWP is looking at a number of strategies to serve citywide growth, including additional conservation measures, use restrictions, recycling programs, and regulatory changes that may occur over the life of the plan. The City of Los Angeles is faced with the challenge of providing a sufficient supply of safe, reliable, and affordable water to a growing population and business sector, while, at the same time, dealing with the realities of water resources availability.

**Findings:** The impact on water supply is significant and unavoidable. The cumulative impacts are less than significant.

#### Explanation

Water supply continues to be one of the major challenges facing the City. The issues of water demand and supply are citywide concerns that transcend the boundaries of individual community plan areas that comprise the City (and the region). Each community plan area contributes to the City's need to provide an adequate supply of water to meet demand. As Los Angeles grows towards a more sustainable future, some areas of the City, which are mainly areas that are served by transit infrastructure, will be encouraged to grow more densely than in the past. The Recommended Plan includes land use and zone changes to concentrate development in along major corridors such as Chatsworth Street, Devonshire Street, and Balboa Boulevard, in order to preserve single family residential throughout, but especially in the hillsides with very low to minimum residential densities. Several planning sub-areas in the Granada Hills– Knollwood CPA would also be zoned to reduce the allowed Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Water demand is influenced by a number of variables, including demographics, weather, and the economy. Increasing regulation, environmental mitigation and groundwater contamination as well as other factors result in a changing water supply horizon. Any substantial increase in water demand in the City has the potential to significantly impact water supplies. Implementation of the Recommended Plan would direct growth along commercial corridors and in existing multiple-family residential neighborhoods. Population growth and new development would likely occur in these designated areas; therefore, these areas will likely account for the increase in water demand. Since the Recommended Plan would contribute to increased water consumption in the City and since any substantial increase in water demand in the City has the potential to significantly impact water supplies, the potential increase in water demand anticipated as a result of the Recommended Plan is considered potentially significant and unavoidable.

#### **Mitigation Measures:**

**MM4.14-1:** As a condition of approval for any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall work with Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) to ensure appropriate expansion, upgrade, and/or

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improvement of the local water distribution system within the Granada Hills-Knollwood CPA as may be necessary to accommodate anticipated growth.

**Findings:** The City adopts CEQA Findings 1 and 3.

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

The Recommended Plan directs planned growth along commercial corridors and in existing multiple-family residential neighborhoods; therefore, new water demand will likely occur in these targeted areas. In general, implementation of the Recommended Plan would contribute to increased water consumption in the City, which is projected to increase from 634,209 acre-feet per year in 2010 to 710,760 acre-feet per year in 2035 (based on the 2010 LADWP Urban Water Management Plan). Future projects that yield more than 500 dwelling units, which would require a separate environmental review, would also be required to prepare their own “water supply assessment” in order to quantify the water demand and assess whether the current water supply could support such a development. This would be a verification process to determine sufficient water supply prior to project approval. Projects under the Recommended Plan would be required to meet the City’s Water Supply Action Plan, the Emergency Water Conservation Plan Ordinance, the Urban Water Management Plan and the City’s standard mitigation measures intended to reduce water usage, which would reduce impacts to the extent feasible, but impacts remain potentially significant and unavoidable due to the uncertainty associated with the water demand of specific development projects.

There are no additional identified mitigation measures or project features that are not already a part of the Recommended Plan (such as Plan policies and local water conservation regulations), that could mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. Additionally, the project alternatives could still have a significant impact on water supplies. Alternatives 1 and 2 would represent more dispersed growth throughout the CPA, including development of vacant lots in the foothills and open space areas rather than targeting new development along major corridors. Therefore, the impact under the project alternatives would still be significant.

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### **SECTION 3 - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FOUND TO BE LESS-THAN-SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION**

The Final EIR identifies significant impacts which are reduced to a “less-than-significant” level by the inclusion of mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR. It is hereby determined that the significant environmental impacts that these mitigations address will be avoided or substantially lessened by their inclusion in the project.

#### **A. PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION: PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PARKS**

**Impact 4.12-3** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the need for new or physically altered school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for schools.

**Findings:** CEQA Finding 1 – less than significant with mitigation.

#### **Mitigation Measures:**

**MM4.12-1** Project applicants shall pay to the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) the prevailing State Department of Education Development Fee to the extent allowed by State Law. School fees exacted from residential and commercial uses would help fund necessary school service and facilities improvement within the LAUSD service.

#### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

##### **(a) Public Schools**

The above mitigation measure will reduce the likelihood of impacts from construction from new schools required by implementation of the Recommended Plan. The Recommended Plan is projected to result in an increased student population in 2030. Impacts were evaluated using enrollment data provided by LAUSD. The total student enrollment capacity as stated in the Draft EIR is 29,867, with a total planned capacity of 36,061. Based on the 2005 baseline, the additional 4,428 dwelling units would generate approximately 1,781 students, a total of up to 28,684 students under the Proposed Plan. With the planned student enrollment capacity at 36,061, public school service would accommodate the projected population. Nevertheless, it is possible that new residential development along commercial corridors or in existing multiple-residential neighborhoods (where infill opportunities are directed) could cause one single school to be overcrowded and require a school expansion or new construction. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Plan could result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the need for new or expanded school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives for schools. However, the Proposed Plan incorporates policies that help reduce impacts related to community-specific school service issues. In addition, the City of Los Angeles provides standard City mitigation measures that are applied on a project-by-project basis, where

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applicable. These standard City mitigation measures are part of the conditions of approval for projects that are subject to approval and permitting by the City. In addition to these programs and policies, Mitigation Measure MM4.12-1 would further reduce the impacts to less than significant.

### B. UTILITIES/SERVICES SYSTEMS: WASTEWATER FLOW AND ENERGY SUPPLY FACILITIES

**Impact 4.14-4** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could result in an inability to accommodate the CPA's projected wastewater flow, and require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

**Impact 4.14-7** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would increase solid waste generation but would not result in the need for additional solid waste collection routes, recycling, or disposal facilities to adequately handle projected solid waste generation and disposal needs. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.14-8** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not require new energy-supply facilities and distribution infrastructure or capacity-enhancing alterations to existing facilities to accommodate projected energy demand, the construction of which could cause a significant environmental impact.

**Findings:** CEQA Finding 1 – less than significant with mitigation.

#### Mitigation Measures:

**MM4.14-2** As a condition of approval of any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require that projects incorporate into the building design the City's water conservation measures, such as ultra-low-flush installation, to the maximum extent feasible.

**MM4.14-3** As a condition of approval of any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require that projects incorporate the City's Water Conservation Ordinance, as appropriate to address water concerns and minimize site-specific water impacts.

**MM4.14-4** As a condition of approval of any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require that projects incorporate the Solid Waste Integrated Resources Plan to maximize source reduction and materials recovery and minimize the amount of solid waste requiring disposal with the goal of leading the City to achieve zero waste by 2025.

**MM4.14-5** As a condition of approval of any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require that projects incorporate into the building design features that will promote energy conservation and efficiency to the maximum extent feasible.

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**MM4.14-6** As a condition of approval of any discretionary project or project located within the Granada Hills Specific Plan, the City shall require that projects incorporate into the building design the responsible use of natural resources in accordance to the City's environmental policies to the maximum extent feasible.

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

#### **(a) Wastewater**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.14), Plan policies, compliance with existing City regulations, and the required mitigation measures will reduce the likelihood for construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities or energy distribution infrastructure/capacity alterations. Since the Recommended Plan directs population growth to existing multiple-family residential areas and along commercial corridors, these are areas that will most likely account for the increased wastewater generation within the CPA. The City currently has water conservation measures, which in turn reduces the amount of wastewater that is generated. Additionally, the wastewater treatment plants that serve the City of Los Angeles have been sized to accommodate growth within build-out of the General Plan, including that of the Granada Hills-Knollwood CPA. Since there is remaining capacity to accommodate additional wastewater flow, which would not require additional treatment facilities, this impact is less than significant.

#### **(b) Solid Waste**

Since the Recommended Plan directs population growth to existing multiple-family residential and commercial corridors, these are areas that will most likely account for the increased solid waste generation rates in Granada Hills-Knollwood. All solid waste-generating activities within the City are subject to the requirements set forth in AB 939 and other local ordinances. Implementation of the Recommended Plan would be consistent with all waste reduction goals. In addition, all projects in the City undergo development review, which includes an analysis of project compliance with these programs. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to solid waste.

#### **(c) Energy**

The implementation of the Recommended Plan and the resulting increase in development would result in increased demand for electricity and natural gas during the planning period up to 2035. However, increasing energy conservation as well as the incorporation of alternative renewable energy sources (solar) into the project design, and price-sensitive user demand are anticipated to substantially reduce demand for electricity in the future. Additionally, sufficient natural gas resources will be available for the projected consumption resulting from the anticipated development due to the implementation of the proposed plan. As the EIR concluded, implementation of the Proposed Plan is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on the supply of natural gas.

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### **SECTION 4 - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FOUND TO BE LESS-THAN-SIGNIFICANT**

The EIR found the following environmental impacts to be less than significant. In making each of the findings below, the City has considered the project features, programs, and policies discussed in the Final EIR. The project features discussed in the Final EIR are part of the Recommended Plan. During the 30-day public review period for the Notice of Preparation (NOP), the City received comments from public agencies and individuals on the scope and content of the Draft EIR analyses. This process helped identify issues related to the project description, as well as helped identify feasible alternatives or mitigation measures to avoid potentially significant environmental effects. The following environmental impacts of the Recommended Plan will be less-than-significant. No mitigations are required.

#### **A. AIR QUALITY**

**Impact 4.2-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.

**Impact 4.2-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not result in objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

#### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

Consistency with regional policy documents reduce the likelihood that the Recommended Plan will conflict or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality management plan, and existing City regulations would reduce the likelihood of impacts from odors.

#### **(a) Consistency with Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP)**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.2), the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) is primarily responsible for developing the AQMP for the South Coast Air Basin. The AQMP, which primarily focuses on long-term sources of emissions, is based on technical information and planning assumptions, such as growth assumptions provided by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). Since the Recommended Plan incorporates information provided by SCAG and is consistent with the regional growth assumptions, implementation of the Recommended Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. Projects that are consistent with and accommodate the regional projections of employment, population, and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) forecasts are considered to be consistent with the AQMP. VMT estimates under the Recommended Plan are expected to be less than the AQMP projections. Furthermore, compliance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) exhaust standards and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) emission reduction strategies would ensure that construction of future development permitted under the Recommended Plan would not interfere with implementation of the AQMP.

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### (b) Odors

Although almost any land use has the potential to emit odors, some land uses are more likely to produce odors due to the nature of their operations. The Draft EIR disclosed that development projects within the Community Plan Area (CPA) may have the potential to emit odors; however siting requirements will be applied at the project level to ensure that odors are not objectionable or significant. The Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) currently has regulations related to trash enclosures that include a prohibition of open storage in commercial and multi-family residential zoned properties and regulations for the location of trash enclosures on site. For example, recycling buyback centers and other uses that typically generate odors are required to obtain a separate discretionary approval (i.e., Conditional Use Permit), which would require a separate environmental review and mitigation.

### B. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

**Impact 4.3-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and would not interfere with habitat such that normal species behaviors are disturbed to a degree that may diminish the chances for long-term survival of a sensitive species.

**Impact 4.3-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not 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.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

#### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

Plan policies and existing City regulations limit the impact on biological resources.

### (a) Candidate, Sensitive or Special Status Species

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.3), since the majority of Granada Hills-Knollwood is developed with a variety of land uses, future development occurring under the Recommended Plan would consist of infill of undeveloped or vacant properties, or the redevelopment of properties that do not likely contain habitat that supports candidate, sensitive, or special-status plant and animal species. Habitats that may have the potential to support sensitive plant and animal species, or special-status plants, are located primarily within the open space areas in the northwest portion of the CPA near the Santa Susana Mountains. These areas would remain designated as open space and there are no changes proposed by the CPA and implementing ordinances. The majority of the land use changes proposed by the proposed plans consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designations. Targeted change areas are located primarily along Chatsworth Street and at major commercial

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centers. No major changes in existing land use patterns would occur on lands within the open space areas beyond the existing limits of urban development. Furthermore, any future development will have to comply with applicable regulations that would protect unknown or previously identified biological resources.

### (b) Migratory Patterns or Corridors

Most wildlife movement is expected to occur in the open space areas occupying lands within the Santa Susana Mountains in the northern portion of the CPA, which provide important foraging, dispersal, migratory, and wildlife corridors for many common and sensitive species. This portion of the CPA would remain open space and no substantial changes in land use patterns are proposed as a result of the proposed plan. Areas where development and infrastructure projects are likely to occur as a result of the Recommended Plan are concentrated in the southern portion of the CPA. These areas are currently developed with residential and commercial uses and are densely populated; therefore, this portion of the CPA would not act as a major wildlife corridor, movement pathway, or linkage between large habitat areas for terrestrial wildlife.

## C. CULTURAL RESOURCES

**Impact 4.4-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.4-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.4-3** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.4-4** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

### Facts in Support of Findings:

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.4), a records search was conducted by an archeologist at the South Central Coast Information Center (SCCIC) to identify any prehistoric or historic resources recorded in Granada Hills-Knollwood. The search also included a review of California Points of Historical Interest, California Historical Landmarks, and other sources as noted in the Draft EIR. The SCCIC records search identified numerous archaeological resources within the CPA. These resources are predominately prehistoric-age archaeological sites of varying sizes. New development would primarily occur on previously developed urban land, and future projects

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will have to comply with applicable regulations that would protect unknown and previously unidentified resources. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was also contacted to determine if there were any known sacred sites within the CPA. The NAHC submitted a comment letter that summarized the responsibilities of the NAHC and requested that the appropriate Native American tribes be consulted on future development projects. The letter is part of the Final EIR Response to Comments section. There are six identified historic resources in Granada Hills-Knollwood, which means that future development projects that would impact these resources would be required to be reviewed by the Planning Department's Office of Historic Resources (OHR) to determine if it is in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and if the building alteration, demolition, or removal could result in the loss of or serious damage to a significant historical or cultural asset. Additionally, implementation of the Recommended Plan would not change existing cemeteries in the CPA.

### D. GEOLOGY/SOILS AND MINERAL RESOURCES

- Impact 4.5-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not cause or accelerate geological hazards that would result in substantial damage to structures or infrastructure, or expose people to substantial risk of injury by exposing people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.
- Impact 4.5-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not cause or accelerate geological hazards which would result in substantial damage to structures or infrastructure, or expose people to substantial risk of injury from strong seismic groundshaking. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.
- Impact 4.5-3** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not cause or accelerate geologic hazards that would result in substantial damage to structures or infrastructure, or expose people to substantial risk of injury involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction and/or landslides. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.
- Impact 4.5-4** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not create substantial risks to life or property as a result of expansive soils. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.
- Impact 4.5-5** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could result in development in areas subject to potential geologic hazards or unstable soils and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, or collapse. However, development will have to be in compliance with existing building code regulations.
- Impact 4.5-6** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not cause or accelerate instability from erosion so as to result in a geologic hazard to other properties,

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or accelerate natural processes of wind and water erosion and sedimentation, resulting in sediment runoff or deposition that would not be contained or controlled on site. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.5-7** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not destroy, permanently cover or materially and adversely modify one or more distinct and prominent geologic or topographic features such as hilltops, ridges, hill slopes, canyons, ravines, rock outcrops, water bodies, streambeds and wetlands. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.5-8** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not result in the loss of, or loss of access to, a mineral resource located in an MRZ-2 zone or other known potential mineral resource area, or result in the permanent loss of, or loss of access to, a mineral resource of regional or statewide significance. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

### Facts in Support of Findings:

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.5), Plan policies and existing City regulations limit the impact of geology, soils, and mineral resources on development under the Recommended Plan. As the Draft EIR concluded, development under the Recommended Plan would comply with all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to geological hazards. In addition, discretionary projects are subject to environmental review and mitigation measures are applied as part of the conditions of approval for the project. As such, no mitigation is required.

#### (a) Earthquake Faults, Seismic Groundshaking and Seismic-related Ground Failure

There are three earthquake fault lines - the Santa Susana, the San Fernando, and the Mission Hills fault zones - in the Granada Hills-Knollwood CPA. The Santa Susana Fault Zone runs along the northern portion of the CPA, which includes hillside and open space areas, and the San Fernando Fault Zone runs along the eastern portion of the CPA, near property designated as Open Space and owned by the Metropolitan Water District, and the Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones generally follow the surface traces of these two active fault zones. The third fault zone - the Mission Hills Fault Zone - runs through the northern portion of the CPA, generally following along Rinaldi St. The Recommended Plan directs growth away from hillside areas and directs future growth to existing multiple family neighborhoods and along commercial corridors, which are areas where future development will likely occur. Although likely new development may be near an identified fault line and/or within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone, all future projects will have to comply with the California Building Code (CBC) as well as the Los Angeles Building Code (LABC), which would ensure that all new development built under the Recommended Plan would have a less than significant impact related to earthquake faults, seismic ground shaking and seismic-related ground failure.

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### **(b) Soil**

The Recommended Plan directs growth away from hillsides, minimizing impacts to hazardous soil conditions and topographic features. In addition, future projects will have to comply with regulations such as the CBC and the LABC, which would ensure that new development built under the Recommended Plan would not lead to adverse impacts related to expansive soils, unstable soils, or landslides.

### **(c) Prominent Geological or Topographic Features**

The Recommended Plan directs growth away from hillsides and open space areas near the foothills, minimizing impacts to hazardous soil conditions, topographic features, or mineral resources. In addition, new development would primarily occur on previously developed urban land, and future project would have to comply with regulations, such as the CBC and LABC, which would not disturb geological areas and mineral resources. As such, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to geology and soils, therefore these impacts are less-than-significant.

Development in most of the hilly areas would be minimal because the areas not designated as Open Space are designated as Single-Family Residential and Public Facilities, which would not involve extensive land alteration. Many of the land use changes would remove zoning that allows develop of hillsides and, thus, would conserve hillsides, historic resources, and single-family residential uses. Development in most of the hilly areas would be minimal because the areas not designated Open Space would not involve extensive, if any, land alteration.

### **(d) Mineral Resources**

State-designated oil fields, which are listed as identified mineral resources, are located in the northern portion of the CPA. Much of this area is zoned as Open Space and would remain so under the Proposed Plan. There are some areas within the state-designated oil fields that have proposed plan land use changes. These areas are largely developed with single-family homes and the Recommended Plan would either limit hillside development or create consistency between the Framework land use designations and the Recommended Plan and would not restrict the extraction of oil from these areas. Some future development could occur within the state-designated oil fields and result in the potential to result in the loss of availability of a known and/or locally important mineral resource. City policies to allow and regulate oil fields are described in Section 13.01 of the LAMC, which identifies provisions for districts where production of oil and gas is permitted and how it shall be undertaken. Implementation of the City's Codes, regulatory requirements, proposed Community Plan policies, and existing policies described above would ensure that this impact would be less than significant, and no additional mitigation measures are required.

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### E. NOISE

**Impact 4.10-2** Development under the Recommended Plan could result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

**Facts in Support of Findings:** As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.10), Plan policies and existing City regulations limit noise impacts related to groundborne vibration.

#### (a) Groundborne Vibration from Operational Activities

Noise generated by implementation of development under the Recommended Plan would directly arise from stationary sources such as HVAC systems, which would most likely be mounted on the rooftops of future limited industrial, commercial and multi-family buildings. The Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) regulates the noise generated from such units, and the City's Building Code regulates the location of exterior living spaces so that they do not contribute to raising noise levels that would exceed the City's noise standards. As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.10), groundborne vibration resulting from operational activities would primarily be generated by trucks making periodic deliveries to the uses within the CPA. However, these types of deliveries would be consistent with deliveries that are currently made along roadways to commercial uses in the CPA boundaries and are not anticipated to increase groundborne vibration above existing levels because the Recommended Plan would increase the level of uses (residential) that do not typically require this type of delivery and decrease the level of uses (office and commercial) that do. Because no substantial sources of groundborne vibration would be built as part of the Recommended Plan, no vibration impacts would occur during operation of the Plan. Therefore, operational activities related to development projects would not expose sensitive receptors within the CPA to excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels, and this impact is less than significant.

### F. SAFETY/RISK OF UPSET

**Impact 4.7-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not create a hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Development will have to be in compliance with existing local, state, and federal regulations.

**Impact 4.7-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not create a hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.7-3** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not create a hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment

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related to Chlorine Gas or Methane Gas. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.7-4** Development under the Recommended Plan would not be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.7-5** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could result in the handling of acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of a proposed school, but would not create a risk to human health from such activities. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.7-6** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

**Impact 4.7-7** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not 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. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.7-8** Construction of future development under the Recommended Plan could occur adjacent to existing or proposed school sites, but would not result in increased hazards for schools.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.7), Plan policies and existing City regulations limit safety/risk of upset impacts.

#### **(a) Transport, Use, and Disposal of Hazardous Materials**

Exposure of the public or the environment to hazardous material could occur within the Granada Hills-Knollwood CPA, but the severity of potential effects varies with the activity conducted, the concentration of and type of hazardous material or waste present, and the proximity to sensitive receptors. To ensure that workers and others at individual sites are not exposed to unacceptable levels of risk associated with the use and handling of hazardous materials, employers and businesses would be required to implement existing hazardous materials regulations, with compliance monitored by the state. Businesses would also be required to comply with health and safety laws and regulations, and environmental protection laws and regulations, which would require businesses handling or storing certain amounts of hazardous materials to prepare a hazardous materials business plan.

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The transportation of hazardous materials could result in accidental spills, toxic releases, fire, or explosion. Implementation of the Recommended Plan could increase the amount of hazardous materials and/or waste brought to, or generated by, the CPA. However, impacts to safety/risk of upset would be primarily limited to the existing multiple-residential and commercial areas, which are areas that include potential increases in population density. Construction activities associated with new development could involve the transport or release of hazardous materials (i.e. lead or asbestos), and certain land uses may involve the use of hazardous materials (i.e. refrigerants or cleaners). All new development would be required to comply with applicable regulations, such as the CBC, that would ensure that new structures and activities do not expose people to injury as a result of hazardous materials or conditions. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to the transport, use and disposal of hazardous materials.

### **(b) Upset and Accident Conditions**

When construction occurs, there is the potential that demolition of existing buildings and construction of new buildings to release hazardous materials into the environment. With this type of activity, construction workers and nearby workers and/or future residents could potentially be exposed to airborne lead-based paint, dust, asbestos, mold, and other building contaminants. In addition, there is also a possibility that future development may uncover previously undiscovered soil contamination. Impacts would be primarily limited to existing multiple-family residential and commercial areas, which is where growth is being focused, but any new construction will be required to comply with all local, state, and federal regulations, including regulations to govern the renovation and demolition of structures where materials containing lead and asbestos are present. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to upset and accident conditions.

### **(c) Chlorine or Methane Gas**

Impacts would be primarily limited to the existing multiple-family residential and commercial areas, where growth is being focused. In the event of an accidental release an evacuation would be necessary. The Recommended Plan does not interfere with the adopted emergency response and evacuation plans for Chlorine or Methane Gas accidental releases. Therefore, the potential impacts associated with release of methane and/or the accidental release of chlorine gas would be less than significant.

### **(d) List of Hazardous Materials Site**

A significant hazard to the public would occur if a contaminated site were to be developed without proper treatment. However, as required by current regulation, development of these identified contaminated sites, which are listed on federal and state regulatory databases, would be required to undergo thorough site remediation and cleanup before construction activities could begin, which would ensure that this impact would be less than significant.

### **(e) Hazardous Materials and Construction near Schools**

The Draft EIR identified 22 schools within the Granada Hills-Knollwood CPA that are operated by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). It is possible that new development would occur

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in the vicinity of one or more of these schools. Potential impacts would be primarily limited to the existing multiple-family residential and commercial areas where growth is being focused. However, individual projects as part of the Recommended Plan will be required to comply with federal, state, and local hazardous materials regulations. Compliance with existing regulations would minimize the risks associated with the exposure of sensitive receptors, including schools, to hazardous materials.

### **(f) Emergency Response Plan and Evacuation Plans**

The Recommended Plan would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City Emergency Operations Emergency Response Plan, as the Recommended Plan would not change the overall land use pattern in Granada Hills-Knollwood. Although the Recommended Plan would accommodate an increase in population, which could delay police or emergency response times, compliance with policies in the Safety Element would help minimize potential interference with the applicable emergency response plan. New development projects would be reviewed by the Police and Fire Departments through the City's permitting process. The departments would review projects to ensure that emergency access is maintained at all times during construction and operation activities. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to emergency response/evacuation plans.

### **(g) Wildland Fires**

Areas designated as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone are located in the hilly northern and western portions of the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA. Most of these areas are designated as open space and surrounding areas are designated for low density residential. The Recommended Plan will maintain these land use designations. New construction in these areas would be required to comply with a variety of requirements, including provisions for emergency vehicle access, the use of approved building materials, building design requirements, and brush clearance requirements. Implementation of local regulations would help minimize wildland fire hazards. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to wildland fire.

## **G. HYDROLOGY/WATER QUALITY**

**Impact 4.8-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would minimally change stormwater flows and volumes but would not contribute to off-site flooding potential or changes in the amount of surface water or surface water flow direction or current.

**Impact 4.8-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could change stormwater flows and volumes but would not have the potential to harm people or damage property from flooding during a 50-year storm event or create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of the existing or planned stormwater drainage system.

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- Impact 4.8-3** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not expose people or structures to a 100-year flood hazard or place structures in locations that could impede or redirect flood flows.
- Impact 4.8-5** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could expose people or structures to flood inundation from dam failure. However, compliance with existing hazard mitigation programs that address emergency notification and evacuation would ensure this impact remains less than significant.
- Impact 4.8-6** Implementation of the Recommended Plan could expose people or structures to risk from mudflow/mudslides. However, compliance with existing hazard mitigation programs that address emergency notification and response would ensure this impact remains less than significant.
- Impact 4.8-7** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would minimally contribute additional stormwater runoff containing urban pollutants to local water bodies, but would not result in violation of regulatory standards.
- Impact 4.8-8** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would cause negligible changes in surface drainage patterns and surface water bodies in a manner that could cause erosion or siltation.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.8), Plan policies and existing City regulations will limit hydrology/water quality impacts.

#### **(a) Surface Water and Surface Water Flow**

Although the implementation of the Recommended Plan would minimally change stormwater flows and volumes, it would not contribute to off-site flooding potential, or changes in the amount of surface water or surface water flow direction or current due to existing regulations. The Recommended Plan seeks to preserve open space and hillsides areas, which are areas that help with stormwater retention and infiltration, and redirects projected growth to commercial corridors. Potential impacts would be limited to these targeted areas. Projects would be required to comply with the City's Low Impact Development (LID) Ordinance, which will ensure that new development under the Recommended Plan would not cause a substantial increase in the peak flow rates or volumes of storm water runoff that would cause on-site or off-site flooding. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to surface water quality.

#### **(b) Flooding During a 50-Year Storm Event**

The Recommended Plan does not substantially change land use patterns in Granada Hills-Knollwood. Since development will mostly likely be infill, it is not likely that there would be new large expanses of impermeable surfaces that would generate large amounts of stormwater runoff or peak flows. Implementation of the Recommended Plan would preserve existing hillside and

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open space areas, which are areas that naturally convey stormwater flows. In addition, the City's network of natural and constructed channels that convey stormwater flows, debris basins, pump plants, etc., are designed to handle an excess of water during localized street flooding or heavy rainfall. With the implementation of existing City of Los Angeles standards, such as the Low Impact Development (LID) Ordinance, the Recommended Plan would not lead to increased flooding by altering existing drainage patterns or cause flooding during a projected 50-year storm event that would have the potential to harm people, damage property or sensitive biological resources. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to a 50-year storm event.

### **(c) 100-Year Flood Hazard**

Within the Granada Hills-Knollwood CPA, the 100-year special flood hazard zone is located along the Los Angeles River channel, along the western boundary of the CPA. The flood hazard zone expands beyond the channel in the northwest portion of the CPA, northwest of Mission Road. Prior to any building activity in these areas, the City will review FEMA flood maps to determine if the project site is located within a 100-year flood hazard zone. If the analysis shows that the proposed development area is within the 100-year flood plain or floodway, appropriate flood plain management measures will be required to be incorporated into the design of all new buildings. Implementation of the existing regulatory requirements would ensure the housing or structures placed within a flood hazard zone or in an area that would impede or redirect flood flows would incorporate proper mitigation measures. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to flooding and inundation in a 100-year event.

### **(d) Inundation from Dam Failure, Mudflow/Mudslides, or Seiche**

The Los Angeles Reservoir, located in the northeastern portion of the CPA, is potentially susceptible to seiche events during strong earthquakes is a potential source of inundation for the area to the south. The Department of Water and Power regulates the level of water in its storage facilities and provides walls of extra height to contain seiches and prevent overflow. The Recommended Plan does not propose any activities that would alter the reservoir capacity or water levels. The potential for portions of the CPA to be affected by potential inundation is an existing condition that could occur regardless of whether the proposed plans are adopted. The Recommended Plan contains policies to maintain adequate emergency preparedness. However, to the extent implementation of the proposed plan could promote future development in already-developed areas, there could be additional structures and people that could be exposed to seiche hazard. The potential for risk of loss, injury, or death would be minimized through existing City permitting processes to ensure buildings are designed to withstand hydrostatic forces that could be associated with flooding, and through implementation of adopted emergency warning and response programs.

Historically, mudflows and mudslides originating from hilly terrain have affected this community and would be expected to pose a hazard in the future. The Recommended Plan does not propose any activities that would alter the reservoir capacity, and it also limits development near the foothills. Additionally, new development would be subject to adopted emergency warning and

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response programs. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to inundation from dam failure.

### (e) Surface Water Quality

The rate and volume of stormwater runoff as an indirect result of the Recommended Plan would not contribute a substantial addition in stormwater flows to the City's system, which discharges to the Los Angeles River. In addition, existing character of the CPA would be relatively unchanged, limiting potential changes in the types of pollutants in stormwater runoff compared to existing conditions. The City also has a variety of prevailing requirements for new developments to ensure that violations of water quality standards do not occur. Compliance with these regulations is required and the project proponent must demonstrate that the applicable regulations have been incorporated into a project's design before permits for construction would be issued. Therefore, the adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to surface water quality.

### (f) Groundwater

All new development will be required to comply with the City's Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) requirements, applicable Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) water quality standards, and the General Plan Framework, which would prevent significant groundwater quality impacts. Implementation of the Recommended Plan would cause negligible changes in surface drainage patterns and surface water bodies in a manner that could cause erosion or siltation. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to groundwater.

## H. LAND USE/PLANNING

**Impact 4.9-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

**Impact 4.9-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not result in a substantial increased potential for land use conflicts and nuisance relationships between existing and future land uses.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

### Facts in Support of Findings:

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.9), consistency with existing regional planning documents will limit adverse impacts from inconsistent land use planning.

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### **(a) Land Use Consistency**

The majority of the land use changes proposed by the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designation, create consistency between existing land uses, restrict incompatible uses, and correct minor errors. The land use changes included in the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan concentrate development in along major corridors such as Chatsworth Street, Devonshire Street, and Balboa Boulevard, consistent with adopted land use policies, regionally and locally adopted land use plans and policies, including the Southern California Association of Governments' Regional Transportation Plan (SCAG's RTP). Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to land use consistency.

### **(b) Land Use Compatibility**

The Recommended Plan does not propose any land use changes that would substantially change land use patterns in Granada Hills-Knollwood. Development that would occur under the Recommended Plan would be mostly in existing multiple-family residential and commercial areas. The Plan includes zone changes for consistency with the land use designation, protection of hillsides in the foothills and open space areas, protection of single-family neighborhoods (the Old Granada Hills Residential Floor Area District) and development of a pedestrian-friendly commercial corridor along Chatsworth Street (part of the Granada Hills Specific Plan area).

Land uses that could be incompatible include development within multiple-family residential areas, commercial areas, and the edge between these areas and adjacent single-family residential uses. Most of these areas are within the Granada Hills Specific Plan which includes regulations for building height, setbacks, use, and design guidelines to ensure that future development is compatible with the surrounding area. Other changes that would be implemented throughout the Granada Hills-Knollwood CPA include land use and zone changes to retain existing single-family and equine-keeping residential neighborhoods, and the Old Granada Residential Floor Area (RFA) District, which addresses massing and scale in a specific single-family residential neighborhood. These changes would help maintain the existing semi-rural character of these land uses in the CPA. None of the recommended changes would result in the construction of large blocks of development that would divide or isolate land uses in the CPA. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to land use compatibility.

## **I. NOISE**

**Impact 4.10-1** Operation of development under the Recommended Plan could result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies. However, development will have to be in compliance with Los Angeles Municipal Code regulations.

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**Impact 4.10-3** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.

**Impact 4.10-4** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not result in substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.10), compliance with existing City regulations will limit adverse impacts from noise.

#### **(a) Noise Levels**

Development under the Recommended Plan could result in exposure of persons or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies. Sources of noise generated by implementation of development under the Recommended Plan would include new stationary sources such as HVAC systems. New activity and noise would be primarily introduced to existing commercial areas and multiple-family residential neighborhoods. Compliance with the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 112.02 would ensure that noise levels attributed to new HVAC systems would not increase noise levels above City standards. In addition, implementation of CBC and LABC regulations would ensure that exterior living spaces, such as porches and patios, are constructed in a manner that noise levels do not exceed City noise standards. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to noise levels.

#### **(b) Ambient Noise Levels**

Although implementation of the Recommended Plan would lead to permanent increases in ambient noise, primarily as a result of increased traffic on local roadways due to the new mix of uses under the Plan, exterior noise levels would not increase to a level that is considered significant on the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL). Implementation of the Recommended Plan could also include special events or temporary activities that would cause an increase in ambient noise levels. Noise creating events such as parades and street festivals would not be located within residential areas and will be required to obtain permits and comply with the requirements of the LAMC regarding amplified sound, including the City's Noise Ordinance. There would be no temporary or periodic noise impacts to on- or off-site receptors due to operation activities related to development of the Recommended Plan. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to ambient noise.

## **J. POPULATION, HOUSING, AND EMPLOYMENT**

**Impact 4.11-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not induce substantial population growth directly (i.e., new housing or employment generators) or

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indirectly (i.e., accelerate development in an undeveloped area that exceeds projected planned levels) that would result in an adverse physical change in the environment, and would accommodate the potential growth in population and/or employment that has been forecasted to occur by 2030.

**Impact 4.11-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not result in inconsistencies with adopted City and regional housing polices.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.11), Plan policies and consistency with regional policy documents and the City's Housing Element will limit the likelihood that the Recommended Plan conflict with adopted City and regional housing policies.

#### **(a) Population**

The Recommended Plan is designed to accommodate projected population, housing, and employment growth in the CPA. Future development under the Recommended Plan would be considered infill development as the Plan does not propose any land use changes that would substantially change land use patterns in Granada Hills-Knollwood. The Recommended Plan directs growth away from hillsides and open space areas near the foothills, and focuses growth to existing multiple-family residential neighborhoods and along commercial corridors. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to population growth, and this impact is less than significant.

#### **(b) City and Regional Housing Policies**

The Recommended Plan focuses future potential growth in existing multiple-family residential neighborhoods and commercial areas. The majority of land use changes recommended are for the purpose of creating consistency with actual land uses in the CPA and to encourage housing development opportunities along major roads. This strategy is consistent with the policies provided in the Framework and Housing Elements of the City's General Plan, as well as SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and other applicable regional plans. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to housing.

## **K. PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION**

**Impact 4.12-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not foreseeably require the addition of a new fire station or the expansion, consolidation, or relocation of an existing facility to maintain service, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection and emergency response. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

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**Impact 4.12-2** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not foreseeably require the addition of a new police station or the expansion, consolidation or relocation of an existing facility to maintain service, nor cause the construction of which would cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for police services. Development will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations.

**Impact 4.12-4** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of 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 libraries.

**Impact 4.12-5** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered park facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

### **Facts in Support of Findings:**

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.12), Plan policies and consistency with existing City regulations will limit the impact from construction of new fire stations, police stations, libraries, or parks.

#### **(a) Fire Protection and Emergency Response**

The Recommended Plan's land use and zone changes would accommodate projected growth if it occurs. However, an increase in population and/or changes to land uses by itself would not increase demand for a new fire station. It is anticipated that a greater demand for fire protection and emergency services will occur as a result of a greater number of residents, employees, and commercial activities in Granada Hills-Knollwood, creating an increased demand for Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) services. The provision of a new fire station varies more as a function of not only the geographic distribution of physical structures but access to trucks, ambulances, and other equipment as well as the location of the CPA. In addition, areas within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity or Fire Buffer Zones are designated as open space or minimal residential development, and existing commercial areas and multiple-family residential neighborhoods is served by existing fire stations. The land use designations and policies of the Recommended Plan would not increase the demand for fire services. Furthermore, new individual projects would be required to submit development plans to the LAFD to ensure there would be adequate fire flow and proper hydrant siting, and that the overall site plan layout complies with the Fire Code. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to construction of a new fire station.

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### **(b) Police Protection**

The increase in people, dwelling units, commercial and retail uses created through development allowed under the Recommended Plan could potentially increase the demand for police protection services. As discussed in the EIR, the provision of a new police station varies more as a function of the crime rate and response time than population increases. In addition, due to the mobile nature of police services, it is unlikely that the need for additional officers created by the increase in demand for police services would result in the need for the construction of new or expanded police protection facilities. Instead, the number of officers on the street is more directly related to the realized response time. The Recommended Plan includes land use changes that will concentrate development along major corridors such as Chatsworth Street, Devonshire Street, and Balboa Boulevard. The Recommended Plan would concentrate future development as infill in the southern portion of the CPA, which is closer to the existing Devonshire Community Police Station which serves the CPA and other adjacent communities. Adoption of the Recommended Plan does not change the regulatory context of LAPD project level review prior to the issuance of building permits. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to construction of a new police station.

### **(c) Libraries**

Although the library space for the 2030 Recommended Plan is lower than the State library standards, other library services such as on-line services (on-line catalog, information databases, multimedia software) as well as free internet searching for the public would lessen the adverse impacts resulting from a mismatch between available physical library space and resources and the community's needs for library facilities. There are also nearby libraries that provide additional services for the CPA. Adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to construction of a new library.

### **(d) Parks**

Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not have a significant adverse impact on parks and recreation services. The CPA contains substantial open space in the north portion of the CPA, some of which is used for non-recreational purposes, but much of the open space is recreational, including Bee Canyon, O'Melveny Park, Zelzah Park, and Petit Park. Development under the Recommended Plan could allow for a population increase with no proposal for future park facilities in the CPA. Impacts were evaluated based on a standard of 4 acres per 1,000 residents for combined neighborhood and community parks. Even with increased population, the parkland ratio under the Recommended Plan would be 11.7 acres per 1,000 residents, which is still well above the standard of 4 acres per 1,000 residents that is required by the Public Recreation Plan. Substantial adverse physical impacts would not occur, and new park construction would not be required. Furthermore, projects that are subject to approval and permitting within the City will have to be in compliance with applicable regulations, such as Quimby fees, which are in-lieu fees that are a condition of approval for certain types of residential development projects.

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### L. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

**Impact 4.13-1** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but not limited to, level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

#### Facts in Support of Findings:

##### (a) Consistency with Congestion Management Plans (CMP)

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.13), according to the 2010 CMP for Los Angeles County, there are no CMP arterial roadway intersections in Granada Hills-Knollwood. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to CMP standards.

### M. UTILITIES/SERVICES SYSTEMS

**Impact 4.14-1** The Recommended Plan could impact the water delivery and distribution infrastructure that serves the CPA. However, compliance with existing regulations would ensure this impact remains less than significant.

**Impact 4.14-3** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board.

**Impact 4.14-5** Implementation of the Recommended Plan would not result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the proposed plans' projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments

**Impact 4.14-6** Development under the Recommended Plan would comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

**Findings:** Less-than-Significant

#### Facts in Support of Findings:

As discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 4.14), Plan policies and consistency with LADWP's Urban Water Management Plan and existing City regulations will limit the likelihood that the Recommended Plan would impact water delivery and distribution infrastructure, wastewater treatment requirements and solid waste.

##### (a) Water Delivery and Distribution Infrastructure

LADWP projects that citywide water demand, which is based on normal weather conditions, would be 710,760 af by 2035 with passive conservation measures. LADWP further projects water

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demand in 2035 with aggressive and passive conservation measures combined would be 641,622 af. The Granada Hills-Knollwood CPA is located in a suburban area of the City that is predominantly developed with residential uses. The Recommended Plan could result in the redevelopment of existing land uses or the development of undeveloped/vacant land within the CPA. However, the Recommended Plan would result in a relatively small growth in the CPA through 2030, with growth being directed to existing commercial areas and multiple-family residential areas. This additional development would increase the demand for water in the CPA, which would be due to the projected increase in population from 2005 to 2030 associated with the increase in dwelling units. The Los Angeles Aqueduct Filtration Plant (LAAFP) has capacity to provide the CPA with its projected water needs. While the majority of existing major water supply facilities in the CPA are considered to be adequately-sized for the anticipated growth, the upgrading and/or expansion of existing local distribution systems may be needed at certain locations within the CPA. New development under the Recommended Plan that would have to provide LAFD (Fire Department) or LADWP-required upgrades to the water distribution systems if they are required through the permit process. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to water delivery and distribution.

### **(b) Wastewater Treatment**

Existing regulations address wastewater issues by monitoring generation and flow quantities, treating wastewater to the standards set by law and regulatory agencies and expanding the system's capacity to accommodate growth and development. These policies would apply to existing and future development in the Community Plan Area. Future development under the Recommended Plan will be required to adhere to federal, state, regional, and local regulations, and the proposed goals and policies. Furthermore, any development resulting from the Recommended Plan will be required to provide LADBS-required upgrades to the wastewater distribution systems serving the CPA. In addition, implementation of the Recommended Plan would not exceed the capacity of the wastewater treatment system and there are no current plans to expand the facility because of insufficient capacity. Therefore, adoption of the Recommended Plan would not result in adverse effects related to wastewater treatment.

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### SECTION 5 - NO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

CEQA seeks to disclose environmental impacts associated with a proposed project.<sup>1</sup> The CEQA process is primarily designed to identify and disclose to decision makers and the public the significant environmental impacts of a proposed project prior to its consideration and approval. This is accomplished by the preparation of initial studies, negative declarations, and/or environmental impact reports. An initial study was conducted and determined that the following would have no significant environmental effects.

#### A. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

The Lead Agency, the Los Angeles Department of City Planning (the City), has determined through the preparation of an initial study that the Proposed Project would not result in a potentially significant impact related to agricultural resources. Section 15128 of the State 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.*

The Initial Study, dated March 2008, determined that the Proposed Project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on Agricultural Resources. Since the Project area is located within “urban and built-up land,” meaning it is located outside any unique farmland, prime farmland, farmland of statewide or local importance, or grazing land, the Proposed Project would not convert farmland or grazing land to non-agricultural uses.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the Recommended Plan would have no impact on agricultural resources. No further environmental review of this environmental issue area is required.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/SWFacilities/Permitting/CEQA/Overview/Purpose.htm#Objectives>

<sup>2</sup> California Department of Conservation, <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx>.

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### **SECTION 6 - ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROJECT**

The Project Objectives of the Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan, as discussed in the DEIR (Chapter 3) and further clarified in the Final EIR (Chapter 13), are:

#### Primary Goals:

- Accommodate projected population, housing, and employment growth
- Preserve single-family residential neighborhoods
- Retain and preserve Equinekeeping neighborhoods
- Preserve open space, hillsides, and the foothills areas

#### Secondary Goals:

- Improve the function and design of neighborhoods throughout Granada Hills-Knollwood
- Encourage and promote a variety of mobility options
- Protect historic and cultural resources
- Revitalize commercial core
- Create Consistency between Land Use and Zoning

### **GENERAL FINDINGS**

Based on the whole of the administrative record, the City finds that the Final EIR analyzes a reasonable range of project alternatives that would feasibly attain some of the basic objectives of the project and be expected to reduce the project's significant impacts (see Chapter 6 DEIR and Chapter 13 of the FEIR). The Final EIR (Chapter 13) also discusses other alternatives that were considered and eliminated from further evaluation due to not meeting the primary project goals. Project alternatives would not allow the flexibility to direct new development to well-suited areas such as existing multiple-family residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors like the Recommended Plan. Nor would they address existing land use incompatibilities to the extent addressed by the Recommended Plan (The Project). The City finds that the Final EIR adequately evaluates the comparative merits of each alternative. Specifically, the Final EIR considered the following alternatives: Existing 1996 Plan Reasonable Expected Development (No Project) and SCAG 2030 Projection. Having weighed and balanced the pros and cons of each of the alternatives analyzed in the Final EIR, each of these alternatives is hereby found to be infeasible based on the Final EIR's analyses, the Plan Objectives, these CEQA findings, and economic, legal, environmental, social, technological and other considerations. The project's objectives limited the range of alternatives. The primary objectives of this project are to accommodate projected population growth while preserving single-family residential neighborhoods, retaining and preserving equinekeeping areas, as well as conserving the foothills and open space areas. The Project reduces the overall development potential of the entire CPA compared to the 1996 plan Alternative. Compared to the SCAG Alternative, the Project allows for anticipated growth by focusing new development (as infill) in existing commercial areas and multiple-family residential areas and away from the foothills and sensitive habitat areas. The SCAG Alternative would allow

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a more dispersed growth pattern throughout the CPA. There are limited alternatives that would be able to accomplish the Project objectives.

ALTERNATIVE 1 – Existing 1996 Plan Reasonable Expected Development (No Project). This alternative is required by CEQA. Under the No Project Alternative, there would be no revision of the existing community plan. Development would be allowed to occur under the existing community plan that was adopted in 1996.

Impact Summary. The following significant and unavoidable impacts would occur under the No Project Alternative: Aesthetics, Air Quality (construction and greenhouse gas emission impacts), Noise (construction and operational impacts), Transportation, and Utilities (water supply), which are the same significant and unavoidable impacts that would occur under the Recommended Plan. Since population size and the number of dwelling units is greater under this alternative, there could also be an increase in certain impacts since development would be spread-out throughout the CPA rather than directed to established commercial corridors and multiple-family residential areas. In general, impacts associated with construction noise and vibration under this alternative would be greater under this alternative because construction activities could be more widely distributed throughout the CPA and affect a greater number of sensitive receptors compared to the Proposed Project. This alternative would also likely result in greater Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) than the Proposed Project, the significant and unavoidable impacts that are related to VMT, such as air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and traffic, would likely be greater than under the Proposed Project.

Finding. The City rejects this alternative as infeasible for any and all of the following reasons. With this alternative, some of the environmental impacts projected to occur from development allowed under the Recommended Plan would be incrementally increased as a result of higher levels of anticipated residential development, and none of the significant and unavoidable impacts would be avoided. Therefore, this alternative would not be an environmentally superior alternative to the Recommended Plan. Additionally the No Project Alternative does not fully meet the Project's primary objectives of preserving neighborhoods and open space, nor does it meet secondary objectives of improving commercial districts and design, promoting mobility, or protecting resources as well as the Recommended Plan. It is found pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(a)(3), that specific economic, legal, environmental, social, and technological or other considerations), make infeasible the No Project Alternative described in the Final EIR. Additionally, it is anticipated that targeting development along commercial corridors and in existing multiple-family residential areas (as in the Recommended Plan) will allow the preservation of existing residential equinekeeping neighborhoods, open spaces and habitat area, and hillside areas, consistent with SB 375 and the Sustainable Communities Strategy adopted by SCAG in April 2012.

Rationale for Finding. The No Project Alternative, in general, is anticipated to result in incrementally greater growth potential as compared to the Recommended Plan; it would continue the Existing 1996 Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan, which would accommodate greater growth in population than what is anticipated by the SCAG Forecast for 2030, which is 4,314 residents above the projected population growth for Granada

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Hills-Knollwood. As such, this alternative would meet an underlying purpose of the Recommended Plan to accommodate such growth. However, this alternative would not include components of the Recommended Plan designed to address the Project's objectives (see DEIR Chapter 3 and Chapter 6, and FEIR Chapter 13). For instance, preservation of existing single-family residential through the Old Granada Hills Residential Floor Area (RFA) District and preserving large lot equestrian-oriented neighborhoods (through requiring minimum lot size) would not be implemented through the existing land use and zoning regulations. Properties located within these areas in the expanded Granada Hills-Knollwood K District would be subject to future subdivision of land as it exists today leading to increased population density located farthest away from community centers. In addition, secondary goals and objectives, such as improving the function and design of commercial areas, promoting a variety of mobility options, protecting historic and cultural resources, and creating greater consistency between Land Use and Zoning classifications would not be met since the Granada Hills Specific Plan Amendment and other zone changes would not be adopted. This alternative, although it meets one of the primary objectives, does not feasibly attain other key objectives of the Project.

### ALTERNATIVE 2 – SCAG 2030 Projection.

The build-out of the SCAG 2030 Projection Alternative would result in slightly lower population and fewer housing units and jobs compared to the Recommended Plan. Overall, Alternative 2 would result in substantially similar levels of development as under the Recommended Plan and many of the environmental impacts from implementation of this alternative would be substantially the same as well. However, this alternative would result in more dispersed growth patterns throughout the plan area. Unlike the Recommended Plan, this alternative does not propose any land use and/or zone changes that preserve equinekeeping residential neighborhoods or address neighborhood compatibility in single-family residential areas (Old Granada RFA District). Unlike the Recommended Plan, this alternative does not concentrate future growth along commercial corridors, which could result in greater potential for historic and cultural resource impacts. This alternative would result in a more scattered growth pattern based on existing land uses and zoning, in contrast to the Recommended Plan, which would focus future development along commercial corridors and in existing multiple-family residential areas, and limit development within single-family and equinekeeping residential neighborhoods and the foothill areas near wildlife corridors.

Impact Summary. The following significant and unavoidable impacts would occur under the SCAG 2030 Projection: Aesthetics, Air Quality (construction and greenhouse gas emission impacts), Noise (construction and operational impacts), Transportation, and Utilities (water supply), which are the same significant and unavoidable impacts that would occur under the Recommended Plan. Since this alternative would result in a more scattered growth pattern, impacts associated with construction noise and vibration would be greater because construction activities could be more widely distributed throughout the CPA and affect a greater number of sensitive receptors compared to the Proposed Project. This alternative would also likely result in greater Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) than the Proposed Project, the significant and unavoidable impacts that are

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related to VMT, such as air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and traffic, would likely be greater than under the Proposed Project.

Finding. The City rejects this alternative as infeasible for any and all of the following reasons. With SCAG 2030 Projection Alternative, as with the No Project Alternative, some of the environmental impacts projected to occur from development allowed under the Recommended Plan would be slightly greater; for example, impacts associated with construction could be slightly greater because construction activities could occur more widely distributed throughout the CPA and affect a greater number of sensitive receptors compared to the plan's concentration along existing commercial corridors. However, none of the significant and unavoidable impacts would be avoided. As with the No Project Alternative, none of the significant and unavoidable impacts would be avoided under the SCAG 2030 Forecast Alternative. Additionally, this alternative does not fully meet the Project's objectives. Additionally, it is anticipated that targeting development along commercial corridors, as in the Recommended Plan, will allow the preservation of existing residential equinekeeping neighborhoods, open spaces and habitat areas, and hillside areas, consistent with SB 375 and the Sustainable Communities Strategy adopted by SCAG in April 2012.

Rationale for Finding. The SCAG 2030 Projection Alternative is anticipated to result in incrementally lesser growth potential than the Recommended Plan, and also less than the No Project Alternative. It would not include the same policies and programs as those included in the Recommended Plan. Although the SCAG 2030 Forecast Alternative is expected to accommodate the growth in population anticipated by the SCAG Projection for 2030, and would therefore meet one of the primary objectives of the Recommended Plan, this Alternative would not include components of the Recommended Plan that are designed to address other key objectives of the Project objectives (see DEIR Chapter 3 and Chapter 6, and FEIR Chapter 13) such as improving the function and design of commercial areas, promoting a variety of mobility options, protecting historic and cultural resources, and creating greater consistency between Land Use and Zoning classifications. As with the No Project Alternative, some of the existing land use inconsistencies that would be addressed by the Recommended Plan would not be addressed by the SCAG 2030 Projection Alternative. The SCAG 2030 Projection Alternative also would not include changes to land use designations to reduce existing land use conflicts and promote land use compatibility. This alternative would not include the Granada Hills Specific Plan Amendment, which includes new design guidelines and adds commercial and multiple-family residential properties within the plan boundaries to ensure that buildings and neighborhoods are well-designed, would not include revised lot conditions for the Equinekeeping "K" District that would preserve large residential lots, would not include the Old Granada RFA District to address neighborhood compatibility, and would not modify street standards to improve mobility options, which also accommodate equine trails.

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### **ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE**

Section 15126(e)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to identify an “environmentally superior alternative.” Between the No Project Alternative and the SCAG 2030 Projection Alternative, the SCAG 2030 Projection Alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative because it is anticipated to result in incrementally lesser growth potential than the No Project Alternative. However, the SCAG Alternative would not address existing land use conflicts or promote land use compatibility to the same extent as the Recommended Plan. Neither alternative would reduce impacts to any impact areas. Neither alternative would include amendments to the Granada Hills Specific Plan, which add commercial and multiple-family residential properties to the Specific Plan boundaries, to ensure that buildings and neighborhoods are well-designed. Neither alternative would include new conditions for the Equinekeeping “K” District that would preserve large residential lots. Finally, neither alternative would include the new Old Granada Residential Floor Area (RFA) District to address neighborhood compatibility and massing, nor would they modify street standards to improve mobility options to accommodate equine trails.

The Recommended Plan accommodates the growth in population forecasted for the year 2030, and allows for a slight increase in population and employment above the SCAG 2030 forecast to address goals of SB 375 and SCAG’s recently adopted Sustainable Communities Strategy through directing growth to areas along commercial corridors. It also meets the goals and objectives of preparing the community for the social and economic changes that are expected through the year 2030, with slightly more development capacity in the commercial areas, and therefore is incrementally preferable in achieving economic and sustainability goals. The City Council finds that, as recommended by the City Planning Commission, the Recommended Plan best meets the social, economic, and planning goals and objectives of the City.

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### **SECTION 7 - STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS**

The Final EIR for the Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan Update identifies unavoidable significant impacts that would result from implementation of the Recommended Plan (project). Section 21081 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposal project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered “acceptable.”

The Final EIR concluded that, despite the adoption of all feasible mitigation measures, the Recommended Plan would result in the following potential unavoidable significant adverse impacts that are not mitigated to a less-than-significant level: Aesthetics, Air Quality (Construction and Operational), Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Noise (Construction), Transportation/Traffic (Emergency Access and Level of Service), and Utilities/Services Systems (Water Resources).

Accordingly, the City Council adopts the following Statement of Overriding Considerations. The City recognizes that significant and unavoidable impacts would result from implementation of the Recommended Plan. Having (i) adopted all feasible mitigation measures, (ii) rejected alternatives to the Plan for the reasons discussed above, (iii) recognized all significant, unavoidable impacts, and (iv) balanced the benefits of the Plan, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, against the Plan’s potential significant and unavoidable impacts, the City Council hereby finds that the benefits of the Recommended Plan outweigh and override the potential significant unavoidable impacts for the reasons stated below.

After balancing the specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed project, the City of Los Angeles has determined that the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts identified above may be considered “acceptable” due to the following specific considerations, which outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts of the proposed project. The City Council finds that each one of the following overriding considerations independently would have been sufficient to outweigh the significant and unavoidable impacts of the Recommended Plan:

The Recommended Plan promotes development that would accommodate anticipated population growth as projected by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the region’s agency responsible for growth projections used by other cities and agencies in planning for growth and infrastructure. The Recommended Plan directs anticipated growth to commercial districts and multiple-family residential neighborhoods and guides physical development towards a desired image that is consistent with the social, economic and aesthetic values of the City. Where new growth is anticipated and planned, project features (Granada Hills Specific Plan’s Design Guidelines) have been incorporated to help minimize impacts of new development. The Old Granada Residential Floor Area (RFA) District, would also reduce the allowed Floor Area Ratio

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(FAR) to address massing and neighborhood character in a designated single-family neighborhood, and the amendment to the existing “K” Equinekeeping District includes a minimum lot size for future subdivisions in order to preserve equine uses.

The Recommended Plan supports the policies and goals of the General Plan Framework Element by allowing the City to grow strategically and allows for the conservation of existing low-scale rural and suburban residential neighborhoods. The benefits conferred by orderly, well-designed development served by existing infrastructure and services and connected by transit, bicycle and equestrian networks outweigh the mostly short term construction-related impacts anticipated with development allowed by the Plan. These benefits are not only consistent with the long term vision of sustainable growth stipulated in the Framework, they help ensure the continued economic viability of the Plan Area’s commercial and industrial districts.

The Recommended Plan would protect the quality of life for existing and future residents and confer citywide benefits through goals and policies designed to incorporate smart growth principles, including preserving open space and hillside areas, and promoting pedestrian-oriented commercial districts that encourage walkability and non-motorized transportation, thereby reducing new vehicle trip generation and emissions regionally, as well as vehicle miles traveled relating to new development, and promoting sustainable development in support of Assembly Bill 32 and Senate Bill 375. The overall reduction in regional vehicle miles traveled and trip generation would contribute to lowered greenhouse emissions in the region.

The Recommended Plan is consistent with Senate Bill 375. While potentially increasing vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gases in the immediate area where new infill development will be focused, the Recommended Plan implements a condensed development pattern along major corridors such as Chatsworth Street, Devonshire Street, and Balboa Boulevard and away from open space and hillside areas, consistent with SB 375 and the Sustainable Communities Strategy, adopted by SCAG in April 2012, and therefore would be expected to contribute to decreasing regional vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions in the region.

The Recommended Plan retains industrial and commercial land to support diverse land uses and offer opportunities for employment generation and business development and services. The Plan encourages investment and redevelopment of existing under-utilized corridors reinforcing citywide economic development goals. The Plan supports and benefits the region by protecting and preserving commercial, industrial, and equinekeeping districts that sustain jobs in related industries, and that reinforce tourism as a source of revenue and employment and bolster the local and regional economy.

The Recommended Plan supports the policies and goals of the most recent Housing Element adopted by the City in 2013 - to provide housing production and preservation, safe, livable, and sustainable neighborhoods, and housing opportunities for all and all income levels - and allows the City to meet future housing needs for the growth in population projected for the year 2030 by the Southern California Association of Governments.

The Recommended Plan includes the Old Granada Hill Residential Floor Area (RFA) District, which creates new residential floor area maximums to maintain existing neighborhood character

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through proportionately-sized dwellings in relation to lot size, thus supporting the City's efforts to preserve its stable residential neighborhoods.

The Recommended Plan furthers the Open Space and Conservation goals of the General Plan and guides the preservation and protection of natural resources, habitat areas and wildlife corridors in the foothills of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains. Implementation of the Recommended Plan would also continue to expand and maintain trail linkages which reinforce the viability of wildlife corridors and equine uses.

The Recommended Plan would maintain equestrian-oriented neighborhoods and neighborhoods of cultural and/or historic importance by focusing development pressures away from those and toward corridors in need of economic reinvestment. This would further the preservation of unique and distinct neighborhoods of the city, contributing toward a diverse, culturally rich image of the city and enhanced quality of life for residents.

The Recommended Plan, through its zone changes, Equinekeeping District, Granada Hills Specific Plan, Old Granada Hills Residential Floor Area (RFA) District, and EIR provides mitigations and/or project features that regulate development projects in order to reduce environmental impacts of future plans and projects. New development standards are added to properties within the revised equinekeeping district, in tandem with standards applied to commercial and multiple-family residential properties within the Granada Hills Specific Plan ensuring more compatible new development that complements the scale and character of existing neighborhoods.

The Recommended Plan improves local mobility through development of a balanced, multi-modal transportation network, focusing new development near to existing services and infrastructure. It emphasizes a multi-modal approach to mobility that recognizes the benefits (including healthful and traffic-alleviating benefits) of providing options that encourage walking, cycling and transit use, as well as horseback riding. All together these enhanced mobility options provide a better connected, user-friendly network representing a more diverse, sustainable transportation network.

The Recommended Plan furthers the goals and objectives of the City, while remaining consistent with regional and state policies.