

## CHAPTER 5 - IMPACT OVERVIEW

### 5-1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the proposed project's environmental impacts including unavoidable significant impacts, impacts considered to be less than significant, cumulative impacts, and growth-inducing impacts. Cross-references are made throughout this chapter to other sections in this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) where more detailed discussions of the proposed project's impacts can be found.

### 5-2 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS

Section 15126(b) of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires a description of any significant effects that cannot be avoided if the project is implemented. According to the environmental impacts analysis presented in Chapter 3 of this Draft EIR, the unavoidable significant adverse impacts that would occur due to implementation of the proposed project include: visual resources, air quality, historical resources, potential archaeological resources (if Native American remains are disturbed), and transportation/traffic (if the agencies with jurisdiction over the intersections determine upon further review proposed mitigation measures at affected intersections are not feasible).

### 5-3 IMPACTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

This Draft EIR found a number of potentially adverse impacts not to be significant prior to or after mitigation. These are discussed in Chapter 3 in each of the following categories: agricultural resources, biological resources, paleontological resources, geology/soils/seismicity, hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, population and housing, public services, and public utilities.

### 5-4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

According to Section 15355 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, cumulative impacts refer to:

Two or more individual effects which, when considered together are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental effects. The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects. The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment that results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.

Section 15130(a) of the *CEQA Guidelines* states that:

An EIR shall discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable....When the combined cumulative impact associated with the project's incremental effect and the effects of other projects is not significant, the EIR shall briefly indicate why the cumulative impact is not significant and is not discussed in further detail in the EIR....An EIR may determine that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable and thus is not significant. A project's contribution is less than cumulatively considerable if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact....

The provisions of the *CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15130(b), subdivisions (b)(1) through (b)(3) list the "necessary elements" that define "an adequate discussion of significant cumulative impacts."

According to Section 15130 (b)(1)(A) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, a list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts may be used as the basis of the cumulative impacts analysis.

In addition, an adequate discussion of significant cumulative impacts includes a summary of the expected environmental effects to be produced by those projects with specific reference to additional information stating where that information is available, and a reasonable analysis of the cumulative impacts of the relevant projects. Lastly, an EIR shall examine reasonable, feasible options for mitigating or avoiding the project's contribution to any significant cumulative effects.

Table 2-2 in Chapter 2 provides a list of related projects that was compiled in accordance with Section 15130 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. Figure 2-2 shows the locations of these projects with respect to the proposed project site. This list of related projects in conjunction with existing environmental conditions due to past or recently completed projects formed the basis for the cumulative impacts discussion that follows. Where appropriate, growth projections in adopted local and regional land use plans were also used as the basis for the cumulative impacts discussion.

The following sections describe in detail the cumulative impacts of the proposed Master Plan and other related projects and development. In summary, the proposed Master Plan could contribute to a significant cumulative impacts in the following areas: visual resources, agricultural resources, air quality, noise, public services, transportation/traffic, and public utilities.

## 5-4.1 Visual Resources

Potential cumulative visual impacts could occur if other projects in combination with the proposed Master Plan development cumulatively contribute to the degradation or deterioration of the visual setting or damage to scenic views or vistas. Thus, the study area for the cumulative visual impact analysis would consist of the general area in the immediate vicinity of the campus including those areas that can be viewed from or have views of the campus. This area would

encompass the neighborhoods surrounding the campus to the north, south, east, and west though some views of the campus are also available from taller mid-rise buildings in Warner Center farther to the west.

North of Pierce College, the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor Project would replace the existing vacant rail right-of-way on the north side of Victory Boulevard with an exclusive busway. Proposed stations would be located at Winnetka Avenue and De Soto Avenue. The proposed Winnetka Station would require the demolition and relocation of the existing Pierce College Child Development Center. New views of the Pierce College campus would be available from the stations and from people traveling on the buses. Although development and reuse of the right-of-way would visually decrease the amount of open space in the vicinity, it is expected that the busway (and adjacent landscaping) and Pierce College improvements (e.g., new perimeter fence) would cumulatively improve the appearance of the area. Furthermore, the north side of Victory Boulevard has not been identified by the Community Plan as an important source of open space in the area.

Immediately to the west of the campus and south of El Rancho Drive, there is a large luxury apartment complex currently under construction. Upon completion, the Bella Vista development would provide 315 residential units on a 21.5-acre parcel that abuts the campus. Although the Bella Vista development is geographically separated from the campus by a large hill, development of the site would further decrease the amount of perceived open space in the vicinity. Since the conversion of open space due to proposed Master Plan development is considered a significant visual impact, the visual effect of the Master Plan and Bella Vista development could be considered cumulatively considerable.

Other related projects would generally be located beyond sight of the campus and would not contribute to significant cumulative visual impacts.

## 5-4.2 Agricultural Resources

The proposed project would result in the conversion of approximately 12 to 13 acres (20 to 25 acres if the Life-Long Learning Residences Community is developed in the alternate location in the Chalk Hills) of land designated as Prime or Unique Farmland. Until 1850, cattle ranches, vineyards, and grain fields dominated the Los Angeles landscape. The availability of water and natural conditions constrained the types of agricultural crops that could be grown in the area. With the completion of the Los Angeles Aqueduct (LAA) in 1913, irrigation water was abundant and shifted the economy from ranching to farming and agricultural uses. The San Fernando Valley's hotter desert climate had been best suited for dry farming and ranching prior to the LAA, but with the flow of irrigation water became a prime location for establishment of new vineyards, citrus groves, and fruit orchards. The San Fernando Valley experienced a highly productive but short-term agricultural history that lasted approximately 47 years. Post World War II, the population in Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley grew rapidly. Much of the land in the Valley was re-zoned for urban development and by the late 1940s, farmers were selling their agricultural land to developers for construction of commercial and residential properties. By the 1960s the agricultural economy had been replaced largely by commercial,

industrial, and aerospace economies.<sup>1</sup> The aeronautics industry, which had its beginning in the San Fernando Valley, has been an important economic factor for 55 years.

According to the Los Angeles Almanac ([www.losangelesalmanac.com](http://www.losangelesalmanac.com), June 2002), in 1950, there were 11,973 farms in Los Angeles County occupying 855,563 acres. In 1997, there were 1,226 farms in Los Angeles County occupying an estimated 130,838 acres. By far the largest portion of farm revenues in the County is generated by the sale of ornamental trees and shrubs (\$123.6 million in the year 2000). For comparison, food crops such as root vegetables, for example, accounted for only \$28 million in revenues in the year 2000.

Although remaining agricultural lands are an important reminder of the area's agricultural past and history, the agriculture industry, and in particular food crop production, is no longer a major contributor to the project area's, the City's, or the County's economy. It is anticipated that conversion of remaining agricultural lands in the City and Valley will continue consistent with past trends due to development pressures and increasing urbanization. Although the cumulative conversion of farmland could be considered significant, the amount of underutilized farmland on the campus that would be converted to accommodate new Master Plan development is insignificant. In addition, proposed Master Plan projects, such as the Agricultural Partnerships, would return underutilized farmland on the campus to active and productive agricultural use.

### 5-4.3 Air Quality

Air pollutants generated by construction activities and by stationary or mobile sources during operation of the proposed project may adversely affect sensitive receptors in the immediate vicinity of the pollutant source. Pollutants may also be transported many miles and contribute to exceedances of state or national standards at monitoring locations in the air basin encompassing the project site. Consequently, the geographic scope of the area affected by potential cumulative air quality impacts would include the immediate project area and the much larger South Coast Air Basin (Basin). The Basin is designated a non-attainment area for carbon monoxide, PM<sub>10</sub> (particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter), and ozone. The Basin is the nation's only "extreme" ozone non-attainment area.

As indicated in Section 3-4, construction of projects proposed under the Master Plan would result in emissions of carbon monoxide, reactive organic compounds, nitrogen oxide, sulfur oxide, and PM<sub>10</sub>. After implementation of proposed mitigation measures, emissions of nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, and carbon monoxide generated during project construction (peak day and peak quarter) could exceed South Coast Air Quality Management District significance thresholds. If the proposed project is constructed simultaneously with other related projects, substantial amounts of pollutant emissions could be generated. These emissions could cumulatively affect sensitive receptors in the immediate project vicinity and also contribute to the Basin's poor air quality, a potentially significant impact. Related projects in the immediate vicinity of the campus include the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor Project, which proposes a busway along the MTA railroad right-of-way with proposed stations at Winnetka and De Soto Avenues, and the Bella Vista luxury apartment complex, which is

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<sup>1</sup> City of Los Angeles, *General Plan-Conservation Element*, 2001.

currently under construction immediately west of the campus along De Soto Avenue. The busway project would be completed by the year 2006. Other nearby related projects that could cumulatively contribute to localized construction air quality impacts include construction of a 16-unit apartment complex at 6150 Canoga Avenue, 112,500 square feet of new office space at 6020-40 Canoga Avenue, and a 11,325 square-foot mini-mall at 6750 De Soto Avenue. Although implementation of the mitigation measures identified in Section 3-4 of this EIR would reduce the project's contribution to cumulative air quality impacts, the impact after mitigation may still be cumulatively considerable and significant for several criteria pollutants.

Operation of the proposed project would not result in significant emissions of any of the five criteria pollutants. Nonetheless, because of the Basin's poor air quality, pollutants generated by the proposed project and cumulative development in the San Fernando Valley and elsewhere in the Basin could have a potentially significant cumulative adverse impact on Basin air quality. Measures such as promoting carpooling and use of transit to reduce automobile vehicle miles traveled would reduce operational emissions from mobile sources due to cumulative development. Additionally, the 1999 Air Quality Management Plan identifies strategies and specific measures to improve air quality in the Basin. The increase in emissions that arises from population growth and the services this added population requires are accounted for in the Air Quality Management Plan. Measures and programs are contained in the Management Plan to offset the adverse effects on air quality resulting from this growth.

#### 5-4.4 Biological Resources

The study area for cumulative biological impacts would depend upon the range and habitat of the species adversely affected by the proposed project. As discussed in Section 3-5 of this EIR, the proposed Master Plan development could result in the removal of roosting (resting) and foraging habitat for Canada geese, a significant impact. During the winter months, the agricultural fields on the campus support hundreds of Canada geese during the day wherever grass or other crops are present. They apparently roost at night at the Sepulveda Basin and the Encino Reservoir. The Pierce College campus and the Sepulveda Basin, are the only known areas in the San Fernando Valley where the geese can find sufficient feeding and roosting habitat prior to northern migration. Thus, in the event that other projects are proposed that would affect Canada geese habitat in the Sepulveda Basin, significant cumulative impacts could occur. However, measures have been identified to mitigate the impacts of the Master Plan on the Canada geese. Thus, after implementation of these mitigation measures, the proposed Master Plan would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact on this sensitive species. It is not expected that Master Plan development would adversely affect other species or habitat that could result in significant cumulative biological impacts.

#### 5-4.5 Historical Resources

The study area for the historical resources cumulative impacts analysis includes the campus of Los Angeles Pierce College and a 2-mile radius around the campus, encompassing the community of Woodland Hills and a small portion of Canoga Park on the north. The College contains a readily identifiable grouping of Spanish Colonial/Mission Revival buildings dating from the first 7 years of the College's existence. These buildings are found in several portions of

the campus and appear to be an integral part of the overall campus in design terms. These early buildings strongly convey both the original 1947-1954 Master Plan concept for the campus and/or its Spanish architectural theme. They include the Business Office/Student Store; three of the Horticulture Unit buildings; the 10 faculty office cottages (dormitories originally); the Modern Language Art Building (now demolished); and the quonset hut referred to as Exposition Hall that served as the student assembly/classroom space during the first year of the College's existence and was the location of the opening day ceremonies on September 15, 1947. Several subsequent buildings constructed between 1951 and 1954 continue the Spanish design theme, but due to their later construction date and lesser degree of architectural design quality bear a somewhat less compelling association with the early history of the College. These buildings include the Industrial Arts Building, Stadium/Field House, and the Agriculture Sciences Building (significantly altered). The campus contains one officially designated historic resource: Old Trapper's Lodge—a remarkable folk art environment. This outdoor installation adjoins the existing Agriculture Sciences Building on the northwest, and is proposed for retention at its current location.

Los Angeles Pierce College is adjoined on the east, south, and north by single-family residential development and a small number of dispersed institutional uses—including the West Valley Occupational Center. The overwhelming bulk of this development dates from the late 1950s and later. As previously noted in Chapter 3-6.1, and excluding the already-referenced Old Trapper's Lodge, only six buildings and one grouping of parkway trees have been identified as being significant architectural/historical resources within a 2-mile radius of the College. In a windshield survey of the neighborhood bordering Pierce College conducted during April 2002, no potential historic districts were noted, and with the exception of the seven previously documented architectural/historical resources, no additional architectural/ historical resources were identified.

Warner Center is located immediately west of the Los Angeles Pierce College campus. Dating from the mid-1980s, Warner Center includes light industrial, multiple-family housing as well as regional commercial development. Prior to this development, the property was used for agricultural purposes as part of Harry Warner Ranch. Conversion of the ranch from agricultural open space to commercial/industrial/residential use brought the demolition of the ranch buildings (1982) that had been associated with Warner—one of the founders of the Warner Brothers motion pictures studio. In a windshield survey conducted during April 2002, no architectural/historic resources were identified in the Warner Center development.

Chapter 2 of this Draft EIR includes a list of 33 related projects. None of these related projects poses an adverse effect to an architectural/historic resource—such projects including the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor Project, demolition of non-historic buildings from the recent past, remodeling of existing buildings, and construction of a “big box” retail store (Ikea) in Warner Center.

In the event that the Business Office/Student Store Building were demolished, a significant adverse impact to historic resources would occur. This action would compound the earlier loss of the Modern Language Art Building. The faculty office cottages—which served as dormitories originally; the Modern Language Art Building; the Business Office/Student Store—the school's Cafeteria originally—and the original Horticulture Unit buildings together formed the first

permanent buildings at Pierce College (during the 1948-1950 period). Each of these buildings strongly conveyed the original campus master plan concept and/or its Spanish architectural theme. Along with Exposition Hall, these buildings are closely associated with the early history of the College and together form a discontinuous grouping of thematically related resources. The Los Angeles Pierce College Facilities Master Plan does not call for the demolition of any additional historic buildings from this grouping of the campus' original permanent buildings. However, in the event that demolition of any additional buildings from the grouping is proposed, that action would constitute an individually significant impact to an historic resource as well as a cumulative impact to the grouping of historic resources.

#### 5-4.6 Archaeological Resources

The geographic scope of the area affected by potential cumulative archaeological impacts is defined by the cultural setting and ethnographic territory of the prehistoric and historic peoples that have occupied this area of southern California. As discussed in Section 3-7, the project study area is situated in a general region that was inhabited by the Uto-Aztecan Gabrielino cultural group. The total area of the Gabrielino mainland territory exceeded 1,500 square miles and included the San Fernando Valley, the San Gabriel Valley, the San Bernardino Valley, and the Los Angeles-Santa Ana River Plain. Inhabiting the watersheds of the Los Angeles, San Gabriel, and Santa Ana Rivers; several smaller intermittent streams in the Santa Monica and Santa Ana Mountains; all of the Los Angeles Basin; and the coastal strip from Aliso Creek in the south to Topanga Creek in the north; the Gabrielino also occupied the islands of Santa Catalina, San Clemente, and San Nicholas.

As discussed in Section 3-7 of this EIR, although the archaeological survey of portions of the campus failed to identify the presence of prehistoric or historic archaeological resources, the presence of water resources on the campus and the reputed discovery of prehistoric artifacts in the Chalk Hills area suggest that Native American cultural resources may be present in some campus locations. Related projects in the area, other development in the San Fernando Valley, and the proposed project could result in cumulative impacts to archaeological resources due to the progressive loss of as-yet-unrecorded archaeological resources. This loss, without proper mitigation, would be a significant cumulative impact. However, the proposed project includes mitigation (see Section 3-7.3) that would reduce potential impacts of the proposed project to a less than significant level. Related projects that are likely to affect archaeological resources may also implement similar mitigation in addition to data recovery excavations, monitoring, soils testing, photography, mapping, or drawing to adequately recover the scientifically consequential information from and about the archaeological resource. Consequently, after mitigation, the proposed project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact to archaeological resources.

#### 5-4.7 Paleontological Resources

The project site is situated upon Recent alluvium sediments that overlie older Pleistocene sediments. These older Pleistocene alluvial sediments have a high potential to contain nonrenewable paleontological resources. Fossiliferous older marine rocks, which are present at depths between 8 and 9 feet below the existing ground surface in the flat portions of the campus,

and closer to the surface in the hilly sections of the campus, also have high paleontologic sensitivity. Accordingly, the geographic scope of the area affected by potential cumulative paleontological impacts would consist of other areas in the region that are geologically similar to the project site and contain similar fossil resources.

The proposed project could disturb or destroy paleontological resources that may exist on the site, a potentially significant impact. Although many of the related projects and cumulative development would be located in areas that have been previously disturbed due to past development, construction activities associated with some related projects could, nonetheless, contribute to the progressive loss of paleontological resources. Thus, the combined effects of the proposed and related projects could result in potentially significant cumulative impacts to paleontological resources. However, mitigation measures have been identified (see Section 3-8.3 of this EIR) that would reduce potential project-related impacts to below a level of significance. These measures include monitoring, recovery, treatment, and deposit of fossil remains in a recognized repository. Similar measures may also be implemented for other related projects that have the potential to affect paleontological resources. Consequently, the incremental effects of the proposed project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact to paleontological resources. Significant cumulative impacts are not anticipated with implementation of the proposed project.

#### 5-4.8 Geology/Soils/Seismicity

The proposed project site is located at the southwestern edge of the San Fernando Valley. The San Fernando Valley is an east-west structural trough within the Transverse Ranges geologic province of southern California. Therefore the appropriate study area for potential cumulative geologic impacts would be the San Fernando Valley.

Potential cumulative geologic impacts are limited to disturbance of unique geological features, loss of known mineral/energy resources, and exposure of people or persons to seismic hazards.

There are no unique geological features or important mineral/energy resources that would be affected by the proposed project. Consequently, the proposed project would not contribute to significant cumulative impacts on these resources.

With regard to seismic hazards, the proposed Master Plan would provide new and renovated facilities capable of accommodating a total enrollment of 23,252 students in the 2010 Fall semester and 734 full-time-equivalent College employees. Development of the new facilities could expose students and employees to hazards from strong ground shaking triggered by seismic activity on any of the significant active faults in the region. However, the new facilities would be designed and constructed in compliance with all applicable building and seismic codes, which would reduce potential seismic hazards to building occupants to an acceptable level of risk. Other development in the project area and the San Fernando Valley would increase the population, thereby exposing more persons to seismic hazards. However, these related projects would also be required to comply with applicable building codes and seismic design criteria to minimize potential seismic hazards. Therefore, the proposed project and related development would not result in significant cumulative impacts.



### 5-4.9 Hazardous Materials

Cumulative hazardous materials impacts would occur when a population or resource is exposed to the cumulative adverse effects of hazardous materials released by the proposed project and one or more related projects. The geographic scope of the area affected by potential cumulative hazardous materials impacts would depend on the migration characteristics of the hazardous materials as they are released into the soil, air, or groundwater. Based on the characteristics of the proposed project and the types and quantities of hazardous materials that would be used on the campus, the study area for cumulative hazardous materials analysis would consist of the immediate project area.

It is unlikely that the proposed project would result in the disturbance or release of significant quantities of hazardous materials during construction that could contribute to adverse cumulative impacts. Operation of the proposed College facilities would involve routine maintenance and other activities, which would require storage and use of hazardous materials such as fuels, solvents, paints, and cleaners. Limited amounts of chemicals are stored in a storage bunker adjacent to the Chemistry Building and pesticides and herbicides are stored in a small storage locker behind the Agricultural Sciences Buildings. All hazardous materials would be properly stored, handled, and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations, laws, and permit requirements, and in accordance with College and District operating procedures. Safeguards implemented as part of standard practice and in accordance with applicable regulations would include proper labeling, controlled access, secondary containment, and spill prevention measures. It should also be noted that the majority of the related projects are office and residential development projects, which are unlikely to generate, individually or cumulatively, significant amounts of hazardous materials. The potential for significant cumulative impacts is further reduced if the related projects are constructed and operated in accordance with applicable hazardous materials laws, statutes, and regulations. Consequently, it is unlikely that the incremental effects of the proposed project would contribute to a significant cumulative hazardous materials impact. Significant cumulative hazardous materials impacts with implementation of the proposed project are not anticipated.

### 5-4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

The geographic scope of the cumulative hydrology and water quality impacts analysis would consist of the watershed (surface waters) and groundwater basin within which the project is located. The proposed project lies within the Upper Los Angeles River Area Groundwater Unit, which is comprised of four groundwater basins: the San Fernando, Sylmar, Verdugo, and Eagle Rock Basins. The proposed project is located over the San Fernando Basin, which is drained by the Los Angeles River and numerous tributaries including Bell Creek, Chatsworth Creek, Arroyo Calabasas, Browns Canyon Wash, and Aliso Canyon Wash.

#### **Surface Water Resources**

The San Fernando Valley is heavily urbanized, which leads to large amounts of polluted runoff that impairs the local surface waters to which the runoff drains. Water quality in the San Fernando Basin is of continuing concern and further urbanization of remaining open spaces

exacerbates these issues. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the water resources within the project area that are identified as impaired are the Los Angeles River, Bell Creek, and Aliso Canyon Wash.<sup>2</sup> Potential sources of impairment for all three resources were identified as non-point sources. Dry season flows (i.e., turf irrigation) and wet season flows that contribute polluted runoff from street surfaces are all non-point sources. Cumulatively, all related projects create an impact on surface water resources, and hence, contribute to the impairment of the water quality of these resources. However, the proposed project has identified mitigation that would reduce its polluted runoff contributions to local water resources. Thus, the proposed project would result in an incremental and insignificant contribution to cumulative impacts to surface water resources.

## **Groundwater**

The potential increases in water consumption due to irrigation of the proposed “greenbelt” and agricultural facilities (e.g., pizza farm) and development of new facilities and increasing enrollment could contribute to a cumulative adverse impact on local groundwater resources. Until recently, water resources delivered to the Los Angeles area by the Los Angeles Aqueducts and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) equaled 87 percent of all domestic water use. Beginning in 2003, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) will experience a substantial shortfall from water deliveries by way of the Los Angeles Aqueducts. The reason stems from the historic diversion of Owens River water to Los Angeles that resulted in the complete drainage of Owens Lake by 1929. Since then, the dry lakebed has been a significant source of dust that creates poor air quality in the Owens Valley. The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has required the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power to implement mitigation measures to bring the Owens Valley into compliance with federal air quality standards. These measures involve the transportation of 58,000 acre-feet per year of water from the Los Angeles Aqueducts to Owens Lake to reduce the production of dust. A shortfall of this quantity represents 24 percent of the 2000 to 2001 Los Angeles Aqueducts water resources used by Los Angeles. To offset this water loss and provide new allocations for the proposed project and cumulative development in the Los Angeles area could require the LADWP to rely heavily on groundwater resources. Increased extraction of groundwater to accommodate cumulative development could result in a significant lowering of groundwater levels, a potentially significant impact. The decision of how to offset the shortfall in available water resources from the Los Angeles Aqueducts would be the responsibility of the LADWP. Ultimately, LADWP would decide whether to increase water deliveries from MWD or increase extraction of groundwater. To reduce or minimize the College’s contribution to this cumulative impact to groundwater resources, measures will be implemented that include use of drip irrigation (which consumes significantly less water than flood or spray irrigation practices), planting crops that require low amounts of water for growth, and use of water conservation measures such as low-flush toilets in new and renovated buildings. Additionally, the College is considering use of reclaimed water either through development of an onsite Water Reclamation Facility or by contributing Proposition A funds towards construction of a pipeline that would bring reclaimed water from the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant. Implementation of

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<sup>2</sup> United States Environmental Protection Agency, [http://oaspub.epa.gov/pls/tmdl/waters\\_list.control](http://oaspub.epa.gov/pls/tmdl/waters_list.control), 2002.

these measures would mitigate the proposed Master Plan's cumulative impact on groundwater resources.

### **Floodplains and Drainage**

With channelization of the Los Angeles River, the cumulative effects of flooding in the Los Angeles Basin have been drastically reduced. Subsequent channelization of tributaries that drain into the Los Angeles River has further reduced the risk and damages of flooding that had occurred up to 1938. However, continuing urbanization of the Los Angeles region and resulting increases in impervious surfaces have increased the amount of stormwater runoff flowing into these drainage channels. As a consequence, there is an increased risk that the capacity of the system could be exceeded in a major storm event, a potentially significant cumulative impact. To minimize and mitigate Pierce College's contribution to this cumulative impact, improvements will be made to the campus storm drain system, including development of detention ponds to capture stormwater runoff from onsite facilities.

### **5-4.11 Land Use and Planning**

The study area for the land use cumulative impacts analysis consists of the land use planning areas in which the proposed project is located. The City of Los Angeles General Plan guides land use in Los Angeles. The General Plan Framework Element (Framework), which was adopted in 1996 and re-adopted in 2001, establishes the broad overall policy and direction for the entire General Plan and defines citywide policies that will be implemented through subsequent adoption of and revisions to the citywide elements, the 35 Community Plans, the zoning ordinances, and other pertinent planning programs.

Within each community plan area, the City has established specific goals and policies regarding the long-term intensity and mix of desired land uses. Pierce College is located in the Canoga Park–Winnetka–Woodland Hills–West Hills Community Plan area in the southwest San Fernando Valley.

Warner Center, located in the southwest corner of the San Fernando Valley and just west of the College, is one of four existing urban centers in the Valley with intense, regionally oriented office and commercial development.

Cumulative land use impacts from the proposed project and related development in the area could occur when: substantial short-term incompatibility between new development projects and existing sensitive land uses occurs, substantial unplanned changes in the long-term pattern of land use occur, or substantial unplanned changes in the rate or amount of development occur.

The first type of cumulative land use impact would potentially arise as construction activities associated with the proposed project and other related projects create temporary nuisance-like indirect effects such as noise, vibration, air pollutant emissions, traffic congestion, and access disruptions. While these types of effects are generally not considered to be significantly adverse when limited in scope and duration, the additive disruption to sensitive land uses could be considered cumulatively considerable if multiple construction activities coincide within similar geographic areas and/or periods of time. The proposed project would possibly contribute to such a scenario because it would be constructed in an urban area where a fairly robust level of

development has previously occurred and is planned to continue over time. These developments carry with them some amount of temporary annoyance. Nonetheless, certain other factors would largely offset the short-term inconvenience of constructing the proposed project and other related projects. Mitigation measures have been included in the proposed project to minimize or eliminate construction-related effects. Also, development of the Master Plan would occur within the campus boundaries. Existing buildings and the distance separating the core campus, where most new construction would occur, from nearby residential neighborhoods would help buffer or reduce nuisance impacts on these sensitive uses.

It is expected that most related projects would be required to comply with adopted land use plans and zoning requirements. It is also anticipated that the related projects would generally be consistent with the overall land use policies and goals of the General Plan Framework. The proposed Master Plan consists of the development of academic and educational related facilities. As such, development of these facilities would be consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of local land use plans. Consequently, the proposed project and related development are not expected to result in substantial unplanned changes in the long-term pattern of land use, or substantial unplanned changes in the rate or amount of development. No significant cumulative land use impacts are anticipated with implementation of the Master Plan.

## 5-4.12 Noise

### **Construction**

In general, demolition and construction activities associated with the Master Plan would result in increases in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the construction site. Other projects in the immediate vicinity of the campus (such as the San Fernando Valley East–West Transit Corridor Project) that are constructed concurrently with the projects proposed under the Master Plan could cumulatively increase community noise levels. Noise from construction activities could adversely affect noise-sensitive receptors in the area. However, since construction noise would be temporary, intermittent, and generally limited to daytime hours, and most new construction on the campus would occur in the campus core at some distance from off-campus noise-sensitive land uses, significant cumulative construction noise impacts are not anticipated.

### **Operation**

Similar to the Pierce College Master Plan, implementation of the San Fernando Valley East–West Transit Corridor Project and other development projects could result in new activities and increased traffic on local streets. The cumulative increases in traffic and activity levels would increase community noise levels in the vicinity of the related projects. Given that the campus is located in an urban area with relatively high volumes of vehicles travelling along major arterials, existing noise levels are high. Consequently, potential cumulative increases in noise levels at noise-sensitive receptors due to traffic generated by the proposed Master Plan and other related development are potentially significant. However, it should be noted that the proposed project's contribution to future noise level increases due to project-generated traffic would be minimal.

### 5-4.13 Population and Housing

The proposed project and cumulative development within the project area could increase the population, number of employees, and the demand for housing within the Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan area as well as the City of Los Angeles. Although these increases could be substantial, future growth in the area is anticipated and planned for in various land use plans applicable to the project area including the Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan, the Warner Center Specific Plan, the City's General Plan and the Framework Element of the General Plan, and the Southern California Association of Governments' Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide. The environmental documents prepared for the Warner Center Specific Plan, the Framework Element, and the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide address the significant cumulative effects of future development that could occur under those plans and identify ways to mitigate those effects. According to the *CEQA Guidelines* (Section 15130[d]), previously certified EIRs for approved land use plans may be incorporated by reference. Additionally, no further cumulative impact analysis is required if the project is consistent with those land use plans and cumulative effects have been adequately addressed in the previous EIRs. The proposed Master Plan is consistent with local and regional land use plans.

### 5-4.14 Public Services

The study area for the public services cumulative impacts analysis consists of the service areas for the police and fire stations that serve the College. The study area also includes those schools that serve the communities in the vicinity of the College that could experience increases in population due to implementation of the Master Plan and cumulative development (please see Section 3-15 of this Draft EIR for a description of the public facilities that serve the project area).

#### **Police Protection**

Pierce College is located in the City of Los Angeles; however the College is under the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD). The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) provides services when needed and requested by the LASD. A significant amount of development is proposed for the surrounding area, including the Warner Center area. Proposed development includes residential, retail, commercial, and transit improvements in the vicinity of the College. Although some of these projects include demolition of existing buildings or adaptive reuse, a significant amount of new construction is proposed that could substantially increase the residential and employee population in the area. This increase would place additional demand on local police stations. However, since the proposed development areas would mainly be served by the LAPD, not the LASD, implementation of the Pierce College Facilities Master Plan is not expected to have a significant cumulative impact on police protection services.

#### **Fire Protection**

Potential cumulative impacts to fire protection services could include the need for additional officers and new facilities in order to maintain acceptable response times. Fire protection services for Pierce College and the surrounding area are provided by the Los Angeles Fire

Department. As discussed above, substantial increases in the residential and employee population in the area could occur as a result of the proposed cumulative development. As a consequence, demand for fire protection services in the area could significantly increase. The potential increase in demand for services may require additional personnel, equipment, and/or new fire stations to maintain existing levels of service and response times. If new facilities are required, the construction of these facilities could result in adverse impacts on the environment. The significance of potential impacts would depend upon the facilities' physical and operational characteristics and the sensitivity of the environment in the vicinity of these facilities. Although such information is currently not known and is somewhat speculative, fire protection services cumulative impacts are nonetheless considered to be potentially significant.

### **Schools**

Related projects in the area include 451 residential units plus any additional proposed residential development in Warner Center. These 451 residential units could generate approximately 221 new students. The proposed Master Plan could generate a maximum of 90 new students by 2010. As discussed in Section 3-15 of this Draft EIR, local schools are currently not overcrowded. Fullbright Elementary School is the only school in the vicinity of the College that is near full capacity, at 98 percent. Thus, most local schools are expected to have adequate capacity to accommodate increases in enrollment generated by the proposed project and related residential development. Student enrollment, however, could also be indirectly affected by increases in employment. Since a significant amount of new commercial development is planned in the area, a substantial increase in the employee population is likely. The number of students indirectly generated by the nonresidential development could be substantial and may result in overcrowding of local schools. If increased demand requires altering or building new schools, adverse effects on the environment could occur. The impacts could be significant depending on size and location of proposed school facilities and the sensitivity of the environment in the vicinity of these facilities. Although such information is currently not known and is somewhat speculative, cumulative impacts on schools are nonetheless considered to be potentially significant. However, as noted above, the proposed Master Plan's contribution to local school enrollment over the next 8 years would be relatively minor, approximately 90 students.

### **Recreation Facilities and Parks**

Increases in residential and employee populations due to the proposed project and related projects could place additional demands on park services in the area. If additional park facilities were required to maintain existing service levels, significant cumulative impacts could occur. However, the proposed project would redevelop and expand portions of the campus such as the Horticulture area, Botanical Garden, Equestrian Center, including existing trails, and Canyon de Lana. As such, these newly renovated and expanded areas may help alleviate some of the additional demand that may be placed on existing parks due to cumulative development in the area. Given this fact and because the increased demand for local park and recreational facilities due to the Master Plan would be minimal, the Master Plan would not result in or substantially contribute to a significant cumulative impact on recreational facilities and parks.

### 5-4.15 Transportation/Traffic and Parking

The geographic scope of the cumulative traffic impact analysis generally consists of the major streets and highways in the vicinity of the project site. In consultation with the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation, a scope was developed for the traffic study for this EIR that identified 30 study intersections as worthy of analysis (see Section 3-16).

The traffic impact analysis in Section 3-16 addresses the effects of the project-related traffic when added to future year 2010 base traffic volumes at the 30 study intersections. To account for background growth, a growth rate was applied to existing traffic volumes. Traffic expected to be generated by specific development projects within, or with the potential to affect, the study area was also considered. Consequently, the traffic analysis in Section 3-16 represents a cumulative impacts analysis since it takes into account the combined effect of traffic generated by the proposed project and cumulative development and growth. As shown in Section 3-16, 13 of the 30 study intersections currently operate at Level of Service (LOS) E or F in the AM or PM peak hours. In the year 2010, cumulative development without the proposed Master Plan would result in 23 of the 30 intersections operating at LOS E or F in the AM or PM peak hours. Cumulative development plus the proposed Master Plan would result in 25 of 30 intersections operating at LOS E or F in the year 2010. With implementation of proposed mitigation measures, 21 of the 30 study intersections would operate at LOS E or F. Thus, the proposed mitigation measures would mitigate the Master Plan's contribution to significant cumulative impacts.

### 5-4.16 Public Utilities

The study area for the public utilities cumulative impacts analysis consists of the area served by regional utility facilities and providers and the immediate project area, which would include local water, sewer, gas, and power conveyance and distribution lines that serve the project site.

#### **Water Supply**

Given the amount of proposed development in the surrounding area, significant cumulative impacts could occur. Implementation of the Master Plan may require expanded water service connections from the local water lines. Although local water lines have adequate capacity to serve the proposed project development and the College would install water efficient devices, cumulative development could consume water in quantities that exceed the capacity of the local conveyance and distribution system. Should that occur, construction of new water lines could be required, which could have adverse impacts on the environment depending on the location and extent of construction.

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power has the capacity to deliver water to its customers in excess of 1.117 billion gallons per day and has estimated that the long-term safe yield of its water supplies is approximately 1.098 billion gallons per day. According to the LADWP, the City's water demand is expected to grow to 756,000 acre-feet per year (674 million

gallons per day) by the year 2015.<sup>3</sup> Since LADWP appears to have adequate supplies and capacity to meet the demand generated by planned growth within their service areas, significant regional cumulative impacts are not anticipated (note: please see Section 5-4.10 above for a discussion of cumulative impacts to groundwater resources).

### **Wastewater**

Wastewater flows from the campus enter a 15-inch line on Mason Street. This 15-inch line also collects wastewater from offsite subdivision lots sewered via Kelvin Street, offsite subdivision lots sewered via Kittridge Street, offsite subdivision lots on Orey Place, offsite subdivision lots on Moberly Place, and offsite subdivision lots sewered via Archwood Street. This 15-inch line leads into a 27-inch interceptor line on Vanowen Street. Increases in wastewater flows to the 15-inch line from the offsite subdivision lots are not anticipated as the areas serviced by this line are fully developed. Given the location of related development in the area, the proposed project is not expected to contribute to significant cumulative impacts on local sewer lines that convey wastewater from the campus.

The City of Los Angeles operates the Hyperion Treatment Plant (HTP), which treats an average flow of 362 million gallons per day (mgd) with a capacity of 450 mgd for both primary and secondary treatment. Based on City projections of the capacity or service life of HTP, it is expected that treatment capacity will not be exceeded before the year 2010. Also, in order to ease demand at HTP, the City operates both the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant and the Glendale Water Reclamation Plant with capacities of 80 mgd and 20 mgd, respectively. Future proposed increases in treatment capacities at these two plants would reduce wastewater flows at HTP. Since capacity is adequate to serve wastewater flows generated by planned growth, no significant regional cumulative impacts would occur.

### **Solid Waste**

Cumulative impacts to local landfills could occur from implementation of the Master Plan and from increased residential and employee populations as a result of the related projects and regional growth. Development of the Master Plan would implement waste diversion methods; however, due to diminishing landfill capacity in the region, the proposed project and other cumulative development could have a potentially significant cumulative impact on solid waste facilities.

### **Energy**

Cumulative impacts to energy sources such as electricity and natural gas could occur from implementation of the Master Plan, development of the related projects, and cumulative development that could occur in the area served by the energy providers. However, it should be noted that the College is currently installing energy saving devices and implementing policies throughout the campus in accordance with the sustainable design guidelines set forth in the Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design Guidelines (LEED) program. Implementation of the Master Plan would continue to incorporate energy saving measures throughout the proposed

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<sup>3</sup> [www.ladwp.com/water/supply/facts/index.htm](http://www.ladwp.com/water/supply/facts/index.htm); July 2002.



development. Energy suppliers to the campus have and are expected to have adequate supplies to meet demand in the near future. Additionally, installation of microturbines and photovoltaics on the campus would reduce the demand for energy from offsite service providers. Cumulative development in the area may require some local site-specific line improvements; however, due to the College's energy saving measures that would help to make the campus partially self sufficient through renewable energy resources, implementation of the Master Plan is not expected to contribute to a significant local or regional cumulative energy impact.

### **Storm Drains**

During large runoff events, portions of the campus near Victory Boulevard and Mason Street experience flooding due to inadequate local storm drains. Improvements will be implemented as part of the Master Plan to address deficiencies in the on-campus drainage system. However, increases in impervious surfaces on the campus could also contribute additional stormwater runoff to offsite drainage facilities. Increased runoff from the campus combined with runoff from cumulative development in the area could have a potentially significant impact if stormwater flows exceed the capacity of the existing drainage system. To minimize Pierce College's contribution to this cumulative impact, improvements would be made to the campus storm drain system including development of detention ponds to capture stormwater runoff from onsite facilities.

## **5-5 IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES**

Development of under the Master Plan could require the demolition of the existing Business Office/Student Store Building and the quonset huts that served as the original Exposition Hall on the campus. The loss of these buildings, which appear eligible for inclusion on the California Register of Historical Resources, would be a significant irreversible environmental impact.

Construction and operation of individual buildings and facilities proposed under the Master Plan would result in an irreversible commitment of nonrenewable resources, including fossil fuels, water, natural gas, and building materials such as lumber, concrete, and steel (see Section 3-17 for a discussion of public utilities). Use of these resources, however, would not substantially deplete existing supplies. Additionally, such consumption is justified given the anticipated educational, social, and aesthetic benefits of the proposed Master Plan projects. It should also be recognized that the use of any site on the campus would not be irreversible. Buildings and other improvements constructed on the campus could at some time in the future be demolished, altered, or converted to make way for other uses as future generations see fit.

## **5-6 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS**

According to Section 2100(b) 5 of CEQA, "the growth-inducing impact of the proposed project" shall be discussed in the EIR. The *State CEQA Guidelines* (§15126) further state that the EIR shall "discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment."

It is anticipated that the proposed Master Plan would induce some growth in the project area. In the Fall of 2001, there were 18,118 students enrolled at the College and 556 full-time-equivalent (FTE) College employees. In the Fall 2010 semester, with implementation of the projects proposed under the Master Plan, it is anticipated that College enrollment would increase to 23,252 students and there would be 734 FTE College employees. In addition, currently all students enrolled at the College are commuters. Under the Master Plan, 200 units of housing would be provided for students and another 200 to 250 units of housing would be provided on the campus for active adults above 55 years of age. The increases in the number of students commuting to school and the development of a residential community on the campus would increase the demand for goods and services in the area. Since the campus is located in a developed urban area, it is expected that existing businesses in the area could accommodate a good percentage of this demand; however, the increases in the student and residential populations could induce some new development. This new development could result in impacts to the environment. However, it should also be noted that it is unlikely that the proposed project would induce development beyond that anticipated in local land use plans. Additionally, the proposed project does not include substantial increases in infrastructure capacity (e.g., new roadways, pipelines, etc.) on- or off-campus that could accommodate or induce additional development. Also, the project is consistent and in conformance with the growth-related policies, goals, or objectives of local and regional plans.