DRAFT

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

LOS ALTOS COMMUNITY CENTER MASTER PLAN

City of Los Altos

November 2009

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PREFACE

This document has been prepared by the City of Los Altos as the Lead Agency in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines. Per CEQA, the purpose of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to provide objective information to both the decision makers who will be considering and reviewing the proposed project and to the general public regarding the environmental consequences of the proposed project.

This document provides environmental review for the proposed Los Altos Community Center Master Plan, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15121, 15146, and 15151, which are described in further detail below.

> **§15121(a). Informational Document.** An EIR is an informational document, which will inform public agency decision makers, and the public of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project. The public agency shall consider the information in the EIR, along with other information which may be presented to the agency.
>
> **§15146. Degree of Specificity.** The degree of specificity required in an EIR will correspond to the degree of specificity involved in the underlying activity which is described in the EIR.
>
> (a) An EIR on a construction project will necessarily be more detailed in the specific effects of a project than will an EIR on the adoption of a local general plan or comprehensive zoning ordinance because the effects of the construction can be predicted with greater accuracy.
>
> (b) An EIR on a project such as the adoption or amendment of a comprehensive zoning ordinance or local general plan should focus on the secondary effects that can be expected to follow from the adoption or amendment, but the EIR need not be as detailed as an EIR on the specific construction project that might follow.
>
> **§15151. Standards for Adequacy of an EIR.** An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently considers environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of the proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection, but for adequacy, completeness, and a good-faith effort at full disclosure.
>
> Copies of all documents referred to in this EIR are available for public review at the Planning Division of the City of Los Altos, located at One North San Antonio Road, CA 94022.

SUMMARY

Summary Description of the Proposed Project

Existing development on the project site includes the Los Altos City Hall, Los Altos Police Station, Hillview Community Center, Los Altos Library, Los Altos Youth Center (LAYC), History House and Museum, Neutra House, and Bus Barn Theater. Other existing uses include an apricot orchard, a soccer field, a baseball field, two bocce ball courts, and two children's play areas.

The project proposes to reconstruct on-site the City Hall, Police Station, community center, library, theater, soccer field, baseball field, bocce ball courts, and children's outdoor play areas. The proposed project would also construct a new community swim center on the site.

Except for the History House and Museum and Neutra House, all of the existing buildings on the project site (a total of 13 buildings) would be demolished and removed during the proposed redevelopment of the site. The existing apricot orchard would also be removed from the site.

Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The following table summarizes the ***significant*** environmental impacts identified and discussed within the text of this EIR, and identifies the mitigation and avoidance measures included in the project to reduce these impacts. Those impacts for which no feasible mitigation could be identified to reduce the impact to a less than significant level are characterized as Significant Unavoidable Impacts.

SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS	MITIGATION AND AVOIDANCE MEASURES
Noise	
Impact NOI-1: Construction activities would substantially increase noise levels at sensitive receptors in the project area and on the project site. Noise from construction activities would exceed 60 dBA L_{eq} and the ambient noise environment by at least five dBA L_{eq} for a period of one year or more and maximum noise levels would exceed 75 dBA L_{max} at exterior areas of the surrounding residences.	**MM NOI-1.1:** Pursuant to the Municipal Code, noise-generating activities at the construction site or in areas adjacent to the construction site shall be restricted to the hours between 7:00 AM and 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday and 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM on Saturday. Construction shall be prohibited on Sundays and city observed holidays. **MM NOI-1.2:** A construction mitigation plan shall be developed in close coordination with adjacent noise-sensitive land uses so that construction activities can be scheduled to minimize noise disturbance. The construction mitigation plan shall consider the following noise control measures to reduce construction noise levels to the extent possible: • Construct solid plywood fences (minimum eight feet in height) around the construction site;

- Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with mufflers, which are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment;
- Prohibit all unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines;
- Route construction related traffic to and from the site via designated truck routes and avoid residential streets where possible;
- Utilize "quiet" models of air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists;
- Locate all stationary noise-generating equipment, such as air compressors and portable power generators, as far away as possible from adjacent land uses;
- Shield adjacent sensitive uses from stationary equipment with individual noise barriers or partial acoustical enclosures; and
- Locate staging areas and construction material storage areas as far away as possible from adjacent land uses.

MM NOI-1.3: All adjacent property owners shall be notified of the construction schedule in writing;

MM NOI-1.4: A "disturbance coordinator" shall be designated who will be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator will determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and will require that reasonable measures warranted to correct the problem be implemented. A telephone number for the disturbance coordinator will be conspicuously posted at the construction site and included in the notice sent to neighbors regarding the construction schedule.

[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]

SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS	MITIGATION AND AVOIDANCE MEASURES
Air Quality	
Impact AIR-1: The proposed project would result in short-term demolition and construction-related air quality impacts from dust PM10 and diesel exhaust. **[Significant Impact]**	**MM AQ-1.1:** Prior to the onset of demolition/construction activities, chain-link construction fencing with a wind screen (e.g., PVC slats) shall be installed around the construction site. **MM AQ-1.2:** The following measures shall be implemented to reduce dust generation to a less than significant level during demolition of existing structures. These measures shall be printed on all construction documents, contracts, and project plans: • Watering will be used to control dust generation during demolition of structures and break-up of pavement. • All trucks hauling demolition debris from the site will be covered. • Dust-proof chutes to load debris into trucks will be used whenever feasible. **MM AQ-1.3:** The following measures shall be implemented to reduce dust generation during construction to a less than significant level. These measures shall be printed on all construction documents, contracts, and project plans: • Water all active construction areas at least twice daily and more often during windy periods; active areas adjacent to existing land uses shall be kept damp at all times, or shall be treated with non-toxic stabilizers or dust palliatives. • Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard. • Pave, apply water three times daily, or apply (non toxic) soil stabilizers on all unpaved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas at construction sites. • Sweep daily (preferably with water sweepers) all paved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas at construction sites; water sweepers shall

vacuum up excess water to avoid runoff related impacts to water quality.

- Sweep streets daily (preferably with water sweepers) if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent public streets.
- Hydroseed or apply non toxic soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas.
- Enclose, cover, water twice daily, or apply non-toxic soil binders to exposed stockpiles (dirt, sand, etc.).
- Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 mph.
- Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways.
- Replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.
- Suspend construction activities that cause visible dust plumes to extend beyond the project site.
- Install wheel washers for all existing trucks, or wash off the tires or tracks of all trucks and equipment leaving the site.
- Install wind breaks, or plant trees/vegetative wind breaks at windward side(s) of construction areas.
- Suspend excavation and grading activities when instantaneous wind gusts exceed 25 mph; and
- Limit the area subject to excavation grading, and other construction activity at any one time.

MM AQ-1.4: Implementation of the following standard control measures required by BAAQMD will reduce construction-related diesel exhaust impacts to a less than significant level:

- Prohibit use of "dirty" equipment. Opacity is an indicator of exhaust particulate emissions from off-road diesel-powered equipment. The project shall ensure that emissions from all construction diesel powered equipment used on the project site

	do not exceed 40 percent opacity for more than three minutes in any one hour. Any equipment found to exceed 40 percent opacity (or Ringelmann 2.0) shall be repaired immediately. • The contractor shall install temporary electrical service whenever possible to avoid the need for independently powered equipment (e.g. compressors). • Diesel equipment standing idle for more than two minutes shall be turned off. This would include trucks waiting to deliver or receive soil, aggregate or other bulk materials. Rotating drum concrete trucks could keep their engines running continuously as long as they were on-site and staged away from residential areas. • Properly tune and maintain equipment for low emissions. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**
Cultural Resources Impacts	
Impact CUL-1: Although not anticipated, archaeological resources could be discovered during construction of the proposed project.	**MM CUL-1.1:** In the event of the discovery of unanticipated buried prehistoric or historic era cultural materials during project construction, work will halt within 30 feet of the discovery until it has been inspected by a qualified archaeologist. If it appears that additional construction related earthmoving will affect a potentially significant resource, the archaeologist shall submit a plan for the evaluation of the resource to the Los Altos Planning Department for approval. Evaluation normally takes the form of limited hand excavation of the suspected cultural deposit to determine if it contains information and/or materials that make it eligible for placement on the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR). If it is determined that construction activity will impact an eligible resource, the City of Los Altos shall prepare a plan for mitigation of impacts to the resource before work is allowed to recommence in the zone designated as archaeologically sensitive. Mitigation can take the form of additional hand excavation coupled with limited hand excavation to ensure that significant

SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS	MITIGATION AND AVOIDANCE MEASURES
	archaeological materials and information are retrieved for analysis and report preparation as required by CEQA. **MM CUL-1.2:** If human remains are discovered during construction, construction activities that could disturb the remains and any associated artifacts would halt and the project sponsor will contact the local Coroner's Office and the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC would then name a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) to advise the project sponsor on the manner of exposure and removal of burials and associated grave goods, and to help designate a place for the reburial of these materials. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**
Impact CUL-2: The proposed project would remove the existing historic orchard on the site. Because there are few remaining active orchards in Los Altos and the proposed project would remove one of the last remaining, the proposed project would make a cumulatively considerable contribution to a loss of historic orchards.	**MM CUL-2.1:** Existing younger apricot trees on the site may be transplanted to the new landscape areas on the site. The project would also plant new apricot trees throughout the site. The existing apricot trees located in the upper northeast corner of the site will be preserved. **[Significant Unavoidable Impact]** **[Significant Unavoidable <u>Cumulative</u> Impact]**
Biological Resources	
Impact BIO-1: Construction of the proposed project could disturb or destroy active raptor nests.	**MM BIO-1.1:** In compliance with the MBTA and the California Fish and Game Code, the proposed project shall implement the following measures to reduce and avoid construction-related impacts to nesting raptors and their nests: • Pre-construction surveys shall be completed by a qualified ornithologist to identify active nests that may be disturbed during project implementation. All potential nesting areas (trees, tall shrubs) shall be surveyed no more than 30 days prior to tree removal or pruning, if the activity will occur within the breeding season (February – August). If more than 30 days pass between the completion of the preconstruction survey and the initiation of construction activities, the preconstruction survey

	shall be completed again and repeated at 30-day intervals until construction activities are initiated. • If an active nest is observed, tree removal and pruning shall be postponed until all the young have fledged. An exclusion zone shall be established around the nest site, in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Exclusion zones for active passerine (songbirds) nests shall have a 50-foot radius centered on the nest tree or shrub. • Active nests shall be monitored weekly until the young fledge. No construction activities, parking, staging, material storage, or other disturbance shall be allowed within the exclusion zones until the young have fledged from the nest. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**
Impact BIO-2: Demolition of the existing structures on the site could result in the loss of a bat colony.	**MM BIO-2.1:** The proposed project shall implement the following measures to reduce and avoid construction-related impacts to bats: • Pre-demolition bat surveys shall be completed by a qualified bat biologist to determine if bats are present on the site. If no bats are observed to be roosting in the building(s) or trees to be removed, then no further action would be required and demolition/tree removal could proceed. • If a maternity colony is present, demolition cannot occur until it has been confirmed by a qualified bat biologist that all young are volant (flying) and independent of their mothers. Typically, demolition/tree removal should occur after August 31st and before March 1st to avoid interfering with a maternity colony. • If a non-breeding bat colony is found in the structures/trees to be removed, then the bats should be safely evicted, under the direction of a qualified bat biologist, through a "partial dismantle" process, whereby the roosting area is opened to allow airflow through and sunlight into the roosting area, making it unsuitable habitat and undesirable for the bats to return to the roosting area. Demolition

	should then follow no earlier than the following day (i.e., there should be no less than one night between initial disturbance for airflow and the demolition). This action should allow bats to leave during the night, thus increasing their chances of finding new roosts and avoid predation during daylight hours. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**
Impact BIO-3: Construction of the proposed project would result in the removal of approximately 192 trees, 30 of which are protected trees, and could damage the existing trees to be retained.	**MM BIO-3.1:** The project shall implement the following measures to reduce impacts associated with tree removal: • All healthy, mature trees will be incorporated into the proposed project to the greatest extent feasible. • Each tree removed by the proposed project on the project site will be replaced by one 24- or 36-inch box specimen, incorporated into the site landscaping. **MM BIO-3.2:** In accordance with Chapter 11.08 of the Los Altos Municipal Code, the project will implement standard measures during construction to protect the trees to be retained on the project site. Protected trees designated for preservation shall be protected during development of the project site by compliance with the following: • Protective fencing shall be installed no closer to the trunk than the dripline, and far enough from the trunk to protect the integrity of the tree. The fence shall be a minimum of four feet in height and shall be set securely in place. The fence shall be of a sturdy but open material (i.e., chainlink), to allow visibility to the trunk for inspections and safety. There shall be no storage of any kind within the protective fencing. • The existing grade level around a tree shall normally be maintained out to the dripline of the tree. Alternate grade levels may be determined during final project design. • Drain wells shall be installed whenever impervious surfaces will be placed over the root system of a

	tree (the root system generally extends to the outermost edges of the branches). • Trees that have been damaged by construction shall be repaired in accordance with accepted arboriculture methods. • No signs, wires, or any other object shall be attached to the tree. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**
Hydrology and Drainage	
Impact HYD-1: The proposed project would increase the rate and amount of stormwater runoff from the site. Depending on the implementation of stormwater treatment controls and best management practices, the project could degrade water quality downstream of the project site.	**MM HYD-1.1:** The proposed project shall comply with the requirements of the SCVURPPP, as well as other local, state, and federal requirements. Specifically, the project shall comply with provision C.3 of the NPDES permit, which provides enhanced performance standards for the management of stormwater for new development. **MM HYD-1.2:** The project will implement BMPs for reducing the volume of runoff and pollution in runoff to the maximum extent practicable. These BMPs may include source control measures, site design elements, and post-construction treatment measures such as the following: • Vegetated swales and flow-through areas; • Bioretention areas or basins; • Disconnected downspouts that are directed into landscape areas; • Minimization of impervious surfaces and increased use of permeable pavement; • Location of all storm drain inlets to be stenciled with, "No Dumping! Flows to Bay" to discourage illegal dumping; • Location and design of trash enclosures (all shall be covered) and materials handling areas; • Use effective, site-specific erosion and sediment control methods during post-construction periods. **MM HYD-1.3:** The proposed project shall comply with all City of Los Altos' ordinances, policies, and processes regarding the post-construction treatment of stormwater runoff. Specifically, SWMPs will be

SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS	MITIGATION AND AVOIDANCE MEASURES
	developed prior to issuance of building permits for each phase of project construction, to ensure compliance with City of Los Altos and NPDES permit requirements. The SWMPs will meet the criteria for stormwater protection outlined in Chapters 10.16 of the Los Altos Municipal Code. The purpose of the SWMPs is to: • Identify the pollutants of concern • Identify the site constraints that could limit the types of BMPs and site design measures that can be implemented • Incorporate site design measures to minimize imperviousness and redirect runoff from impervious surfaces to less pervious surfaces. • Select BMPs (both source and treatment control measures) for those impervious areas that cannot be served by site design measures. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**
Impact HYD-2: Construction activities could degrade water quality downstream of the site.	**MM HYD-2.1:** The proposed project will file a Notice of Intent (NOI) with the State of SWRCB and prepare a SWPPP prior to commencement of construction. The project's SWPPP shall include measures for: • Soil stabilization, • Sediment control, • Sediment tracking control, • Wind erosion control, and • Non-storm water management and waste management and disposal control. **MM HYD-2.2:** BMPs shall be implemented for reducing the volume of runoff and pollution in runoff to the maximum extent practicable during demolitions, site excavation, grading, and construction. All measures shall be included in the project's SWPPP and printed on all construction documents, contracts, and project plans. • Restrict grading to the dry season or meet City requirements for grading during the rainy season. • Use effective, site-specific erosion and sediment

	control methods during the construction periods. Provide temporary cover of all disturbed surfaces to help control erosion during construction. Provide permanent cover as soon as is practical to stabilize the disturbed surfaces after construction has been completed. • Cover soil, equipment, and supplies that could contribute non-visible pollution prior to rainfall events or perform monitoring of runoff. Cover stockpiles with secure plastic sheeting or tarp. • Implement regular maintenance activities such as sweeping driveways between the construction area and public streets. Clean sediments from streets, driveways, and paved areas on-site using dry sweeping methods. Designate a concrete truck washdown area. • Dispose of all wastes properly and keep site clear of trash and litter. Clean up leaks, drips, and other spills immediately so that they do not contact stormwater. • Place fiber rolls or silt fences around the perimeter of the site. Protect existing storm and sewer inlets in the project area from sedimentation with filter fabric and sand or gravel bags. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**
Hazardous Materials	
Impact HAZ-1: Construction of the proposed project may expose people and/or the environment chemicals associated with the historic operation of the school bus maintenance yard.	**MM HAZ-1.1:** A Soil Management Plan (SMP) shall be prepared for the proposed project, prior to the start of any ground disturbance activities on the site. The SMP shall be implemented during construction of the project. The SMP shall establish management practices for handling contaminated soil, if contaminated soil is encountered during development of the project. The SMP shall include a discussion of the on-site contaminants of concern and the steps to be taken if suspect soil is encountered, procedures for removing and/or isolating contaminated soil, a list of parties to be notified if contaminated soil is encountered, and a sampling plan for excess soil planned for off-site disposal. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS	MITIGATION AND AVOIDANCE MEASURES
Impact HAZ-2: Demolition of the existing on-site structures could expose construction workers, surrounding residences, and/or the environment to asbestos, lead-based paint and/or polychlorinated biphenyls.	**MM HAZ-2.1:** In conformance with local, state, and federal laws, an asbestos building survey and a lead-based paint survey shall be completed by a qualified professional to determine the presence of ACMs and/or lead-based paint on the structures proposed for demolition. The surveys shall be completed prior to demolition of these structures. **MM HAZ-2.2:** A registered asbestos abatement contractor shall be retained to remove and dispose of all potentially friable asbestos-containing materials, in accordance with the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) guidelines, prior to building demolition or renovation that may disturb the materials. All demolition activities shall be undertaken in accordance with Cal/OSHA standards, contained in Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 1529, to protect workers from exposure to asbestos. Materials containing more than one percent asbestos are also subject to Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) regulations. **MM HAZ-2.3:** During demolition activities, all building materials containing lead-based paint shall be removed in accordance with Cal/OSHA Lead in Construction Standard, Title 8, CCR 1532.1, including employee training, employee air monitoring and dust control. Any debris or soil containing lead-based paint or coatings shall be disposed of at landfills that meet acceptance criteria for the waste being disposed. **MM HAZ-2.4:** Hazardous waste shall be appropriately managed, labeled, transported, and disposed of in accordance with local, state, and/or federal requirements by trained workers. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

Summary of Alternatives

CEQA requires that an EIR identify alternatives to the project as proposed. The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6(a)) specify that an EIR identify alternatives which "would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project." Section 6, *Alternatives*, of this EIR analyzes several alternatives to the proposed project. A brief summary of these alternatives and their impacts is provided below.

No Project Alternative

No Development

Under the No Project alternative, no development would occur on the project site and the existing community facilities on the site would remain (i.e., City Hall, Police Station, library, Los Altos Youth Center, History House and Museum, Neutra House, Bus Barn Theater, Hillview Community Center, baseball field, soccer field, and apricot orchard).

As stated in Section 1.2, *Background*, many of the structures are in need of repair, upgrade, and/or replacement, and there is public demand for additional recreational facilities on the site. Other issues include poor site access and traffic flow, and a functional parking shortfall during peak usage times. The proposed project would address all of the issues described above; but would result in the loss of the historic orchard.

Because development would not occur under the No Project alternative, the significant unavoidable impact to the historic apricot orchard (and the significant unavoidable cumulative impact related to the loss of historic orchards) would be avoided. This alternative would not meet any of the project objectives.

Redevelopment

Consistent with the project site's *Public and Institutional* General Plan Land Use Designation and *Public and Community Facilities (PCF)* zoning, the site is developed with public, governmental, and recreational uses. Given these existing conditions, it is reasonable to assume that the uses on the site would be redeveloped in the future in a manner that is consistent with the site's existing General Plan Use Designation and zoning. The objectives of this future redevelopment would be similar to the proposed project and, for this reason, would likely result in the same significant unavoidable cultural resource impact as the proposed project (i.e., removal of the historic apricot orchard). Therefore, under this scenario of the No Project alternative, the project objectives would be met, but none of the project's significant impacts would be avoided.

Conclusion

Both of the No Project scenarios discussed above are feasible. The No Project alternative (no development) would avoid the significant impacts of the proposed project and, therefore, is environmentally superior to the proposed project. Future redevelopment of the site, however, would result in the same significant impacts that would result from the proposed project, because the objectives of the proposed project would inevitably guide future redevelopment of the site. For this reason, this scenario (redevelopment) of the No Project alternative is not environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Reduced Footprint Alternative

Under the Reduced Footprint alternative, the existing uses on the site would be reconstructed within their existing footprints (except for the soccer field). The soccer field would be relocated east of its existing location, onto the adjacent parking lot. The swim center would be constructed in the general location of the existing soccer field. The parking for this alternative would be located below-grade, beneath the swim center, library, and theater.

The Reduced Footprint alternative would avoid removing the historic apricot orchard, and would not result in any additional impacts not currently anticipated to occur under the proposed project. However, many of the project objectives would not be met under this alternative.

Conclusion

Although feasible, the Reduced Footprint alternative would not meet many of the project objectives. However, the Reduced Footprint alternative would avoid the significant unavoidable (and significant unavoidable cumulative impact) cultural resource impact related to the loss of historic orchards, and would not result in any new environmental impacts. For this reason, the Reduced Footprint alternative is environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Construct Orchard Alternative

Under the Construct Orchard alternative, the project site would be redeveloped exactly as described under the proposed project, except an apricot orchard would be constructed on the site. The apricot orchard would be constructed in the area that currently contains the baseball field, which is approximately 0.7 acres in size. Under the proposed project, this area would be converted to an open space area that could contain trees, grass turf, and picnic tables, or something similar.

The 0.7-acre orchard constructed under this alternative would be significantly smaller than the existing five-acre historic orchard that currently exists on the project site. While the smaller orchard would be contiguous and rectangular and located adjacent to the History House and Museum, and could generally represent the City's agricultural heritage, this alternative would not reduce the significant unavoidable or significant unavoidable cumulative cultural resource impact to a less than significant level.

Conclusion

The Construct Orchard alternative is feasible and would not result in any impacts in addition to those identified to occur under the proposed project. It would meet all of the project objectives. While it may slightly reduce the project's significant unavoidable and significant unavoidable cumulative cultural resources impacts, it would not reduce the impacts to a less than significant level. For this reason, the Construct Orchard alternative is not environmentally superior to the proposed project.

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND, AND PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared for the proposed Los Altos Community Center Master Plan in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the City of Los Altos. The purpose of the EIR is to provide objective information regarding the environmental consequences of the project to both the decision makers who will be considering and reviewing the proposed project and to the general public.

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The approximately 18-acre project site is located east of North San Antonio Road generally between Angela Drive and Hillview Avenue in the City of Los Altos, and includes Assessor Parcel Numbers 170-42-029 and 170-43-001. Regional and vicinity maps of the project site are shown on Figures 1-1 and 1-2, respectively. An aerial of the project site and surrounding land uses is shown on Figure 1-3.

1.3 BACKGROUND

1.3.1 Existing Development

The project site is owned by the City of Los Altos, and is currently developed with various public, governmental, and recreational uses. The northern portion of the project site is commonly referred to as the Civic Center Complex, which includes the existing Los Altos City Hall, Los Altos Police Station, Los Altos Youth Center (LAYC), Los Altos Library, and an apricot orchard. The History House and Museum and surrounding gardens are centrally located on the project site; this area is commonly referred to as the Museum Complex. Hillview Park is located in the southern portion of the site, and generally consists of the existing Hillview Community Center, Bus Barn Theater, Neutra House, a soccer field, and a baseball field. The existing community center includes a senior center and a privately-operated preschool (Children's Corner). Two children's play areas, two bocce ball courts, a fitness par course, and other park amenities are also provided on the site.

1.3.2 Site History

Prior to development of the site, much of the property was an apricot orchard owned and operated by J. Gilbert Smith. In 1954, the City of Los Altos purchased approximately 10.4 acres from Smith and developed the Civic Center Complex in the 1960s. The City preserved Smith's house and an approximately five-acre portion of the original apricot orchard (refer to Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources* of this EIR). The existing Hillview Community Center and Bus Barn Theater were constructed in the 1940s and 1950s as part of an elementary school. The Los Altos History Museum was constructed on the site in 2001. The Neutra House was originally built off-site in 1939, but was relocated to the site in 2005.

Since construction of the existing buildings on the site, the population of Los Altos, and thus the demand for public services has grown. The use of these buildings has resulted in physical deterioration overtime, and they no longer provide enough capacity to meet the current needs of employees and the community. In many cases, building mechanical systems have exceeded or are reaching the end of their anticipated life span. Some of the existing facilities are over-capacity, particularly City Hall and Police Station, and additional meeting, office, classroom, and community

gathering space is needed. Many of the structures are in need of repair, upgrade, and/or replacement in order to meet current energy efficiency, code, and accessibility requirements and to allow for technology upgrades.[1] For example, the existing Police Station does not meet the structural requirements for an Essential Services Facility as required by the current building code. Some of the existing recreational and park facilities are also in degraded condition.

In addition to these issues, the *Library Services and Space Needs Assessment*, prepared for the Los Altos Library in May 2008, recommends a large expansion of the library building, requiring significant reconstruction or replacement of the existing building.[2] There is also public demand for a community pool, more indoor exercise areas, improved multi-generational recreational facilities, particularly for seniors and youth, and more green spaces on the site.

Other issues include poor site access and traffic flow. For example, the location of the City Hall building on the site conflicts with the goal for aligning the site entry with the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection. All of the on-site facilities suffer from a functional parking shortfall during peak usage times.

1.3.3 Master Plan Process

The Los Altos City Council determined that the Civic Center site is in need of redevelopment for the reasons described above. The Council adopted a Vision Statement calling to rebuild the Civic Center Complex and other public facilities "to provide adequate space and useful modern facilities to serve the Los Altos public for the next 50 years." As a first step to achieving this vision, the Council established a Task Force to begin public engagement. Based on visits to other community centers, the Task Force defined what could be in the new community center, and developed the following list of goals for the redeveloped site:

- Incorporate of the expansion of the library into the Master Plan
- Develop new, green facilities
- Expand recreational programs and provide new recreational uses
- Expand and improve community programs and specifically enhance programs for seniors and youth
- Promote Los Altos history through showcasing of the History House and Museum
- Create visual, pedestrian and parking connectivity to Los Altos downtown village

In January 2008, the Task Force selected Anderson Brulé Architects (ABA) to develop the Los Altos Community Center Master Plan, and an Advisory Committee was formed to complete public outreach and support the ongoing preparation of the Master Plan. Public outreach during the process included monthly meetings, multiple community forums, focus groups, key informant interviews, and a community survey (available online and in paper format). Based on the information gathered a Community Needs Assessment was completed.

The current Los Altos Community Center Master Plan is the result of the process described above, and it is intended to serve the existing population, as well as meet future needs associated with changing demographics and anticipated growth, as envisioned in the Los Altos General Plan.[3]

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[1] Anderson Brulé Architects, Inc., *City Los Altos Community Center Master Plan, Existing Facilities Assessment*, June 2008.

[2] Page + Moris LLC, *Los Altos Library, Library Services and Space Needs Assessment*, May 2008.

[3] According to *ABAG Projections 2009*, the population in the Los Altos jurisdictional boundary will increase from 27,693 in 2000 to 28,400 in 2010 and to 30,200 in 2030. It is anticipated that the average age of Los Altos residents will increase and the youth population will stabilize.

1.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The City's stated objectives for the proposed project are as follows:

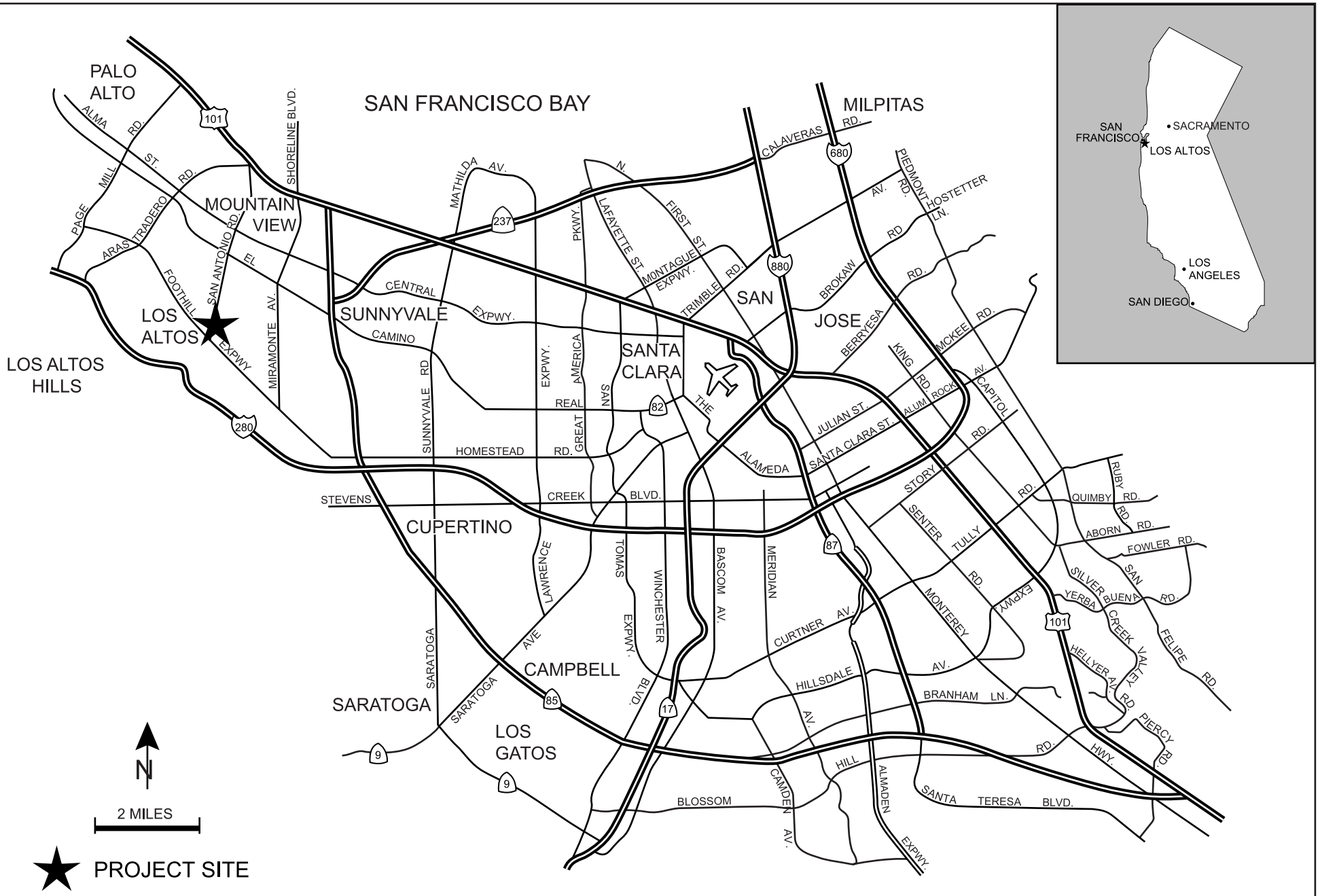
1. Consistency and compliance with the Los Altos General Plan.
2. Meet the current and future needs of the on-site employees.
3. Meet the current and future needs of the community.
4. Preserve the History House and Museum in the central portion of the site.
5. Align the site entry with the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection.
6. Meet current energy efficiency, code, and accessibility requirements.
7. Provide additional meeting, office, classroom, and community gathering space
8. Construct a police station that meets the structural requirements for an Essential Services Facility as required by the current building code.
9. Expand the library building.
10. Construct a community pool.
11. Provide more indoor exercise areas and more green spaces on the site.
12. Improve multi-generational recreational facilities on the site.
13. Improve site access and traffic flow.
14. Correct the functional parking shortfall during peak usage times.

1.5 USES OF THE EIR

This EIR provides project-level environmental review for the proposed Los Altos Community Center Master Plan.

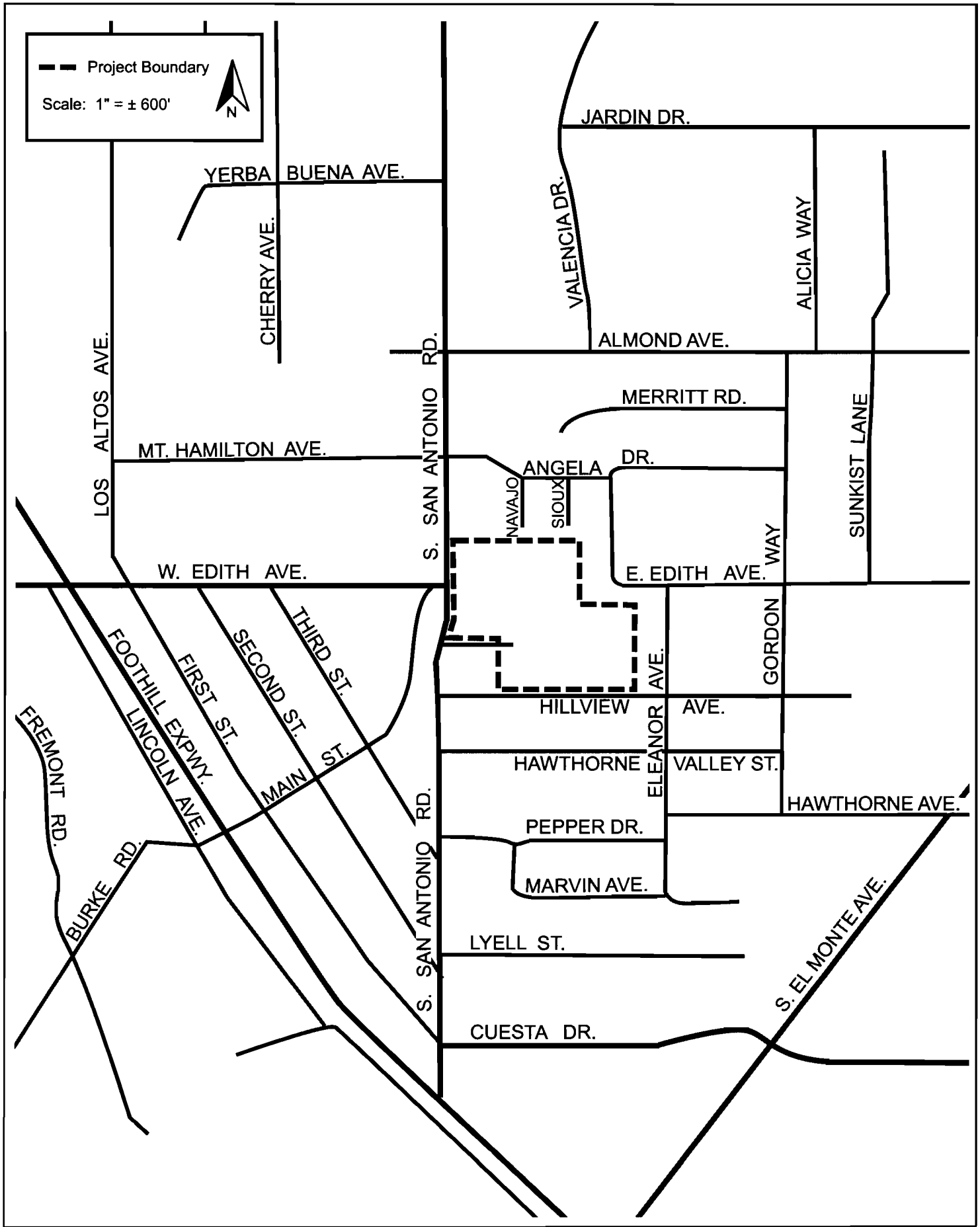
The information contained in this EIR will be used by the City of Los Altos (the CEQA Lead Agency) as it considers whether or not to approve the Los Altos Community Center Master Plan. If the project is approved, this EIR would be used by the City in conjunction with the following approvals and permits:

- Design Review
- Building Permit
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Permits
- Grading Permits
- Tree Removal Permits

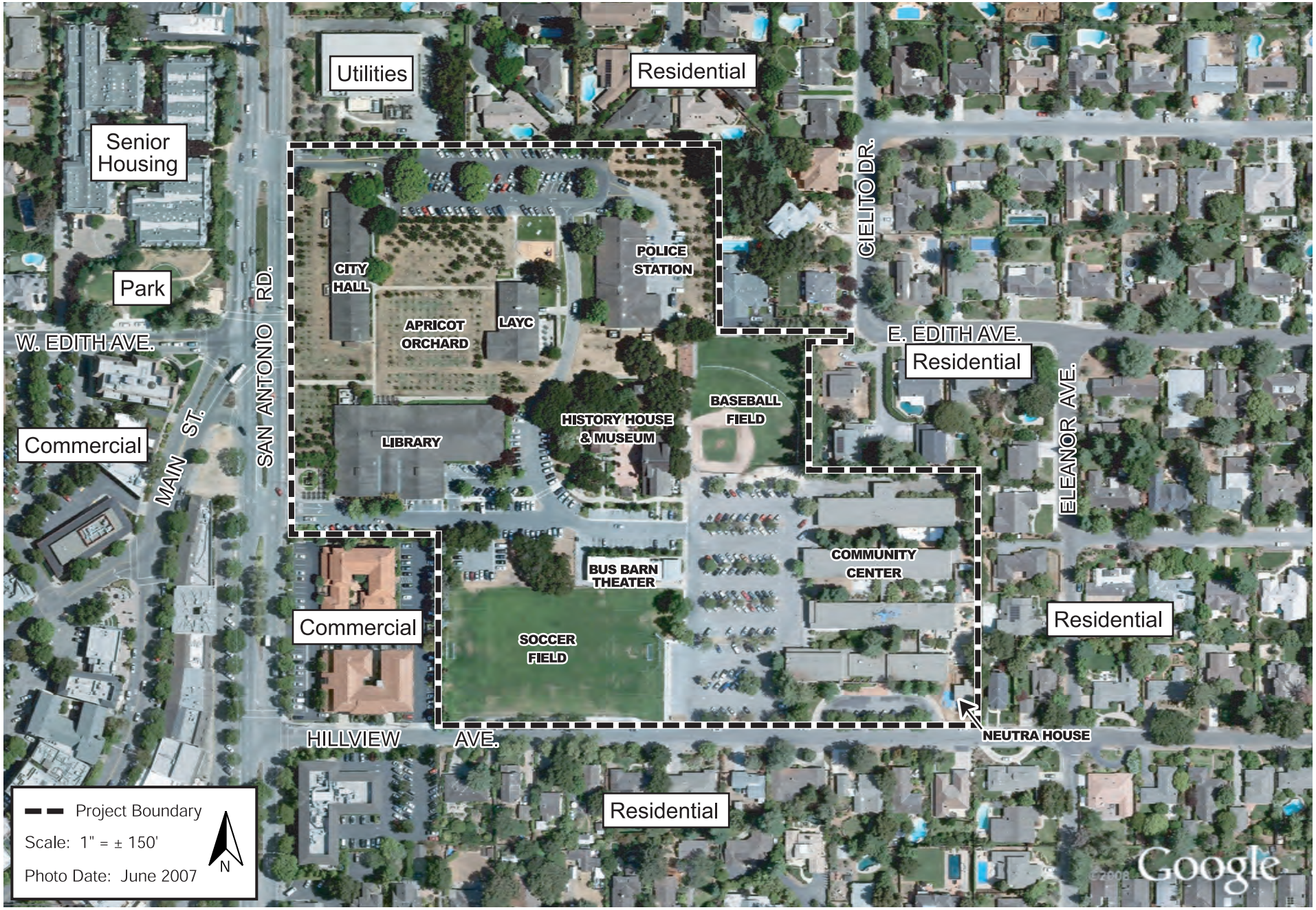


REGIONAL MAP

FIGURE 1-1



VICINITY MAP FIGURE 1-2



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH AND SURROUNDING LAND USES FIGURE 1-3

SECTION 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

2.1 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Existing development on the project site includes the Los Altos City Hall, Los Altos Police Station, Hillview Community Center, Los Altos Library, Los Altos Youth Center (LAYC), History House and Museum, Neutra House, and Bus Barn Theater. As shown in Table 2-1 below, the total area of these facilities is 111,043 square feet. Other existing uses include an apricot orchard, a soccer field, a baseball field, two bocce ball courts, and two children's play areas. Existing uses within the community center include classrooms, meeting space, a senior center, and a private preschool (Children's Corner) with an outdoor play area.

The existing community, civic, and recreational facility buildings currently cover approximately 16 percent of the total project site, open space (i.e., landscaping, orchard and playfields) covers approximately 46 percent of the site, and the remainder of the site (approximately 38 percent) is developed with surface parking, driveways, and pathways.

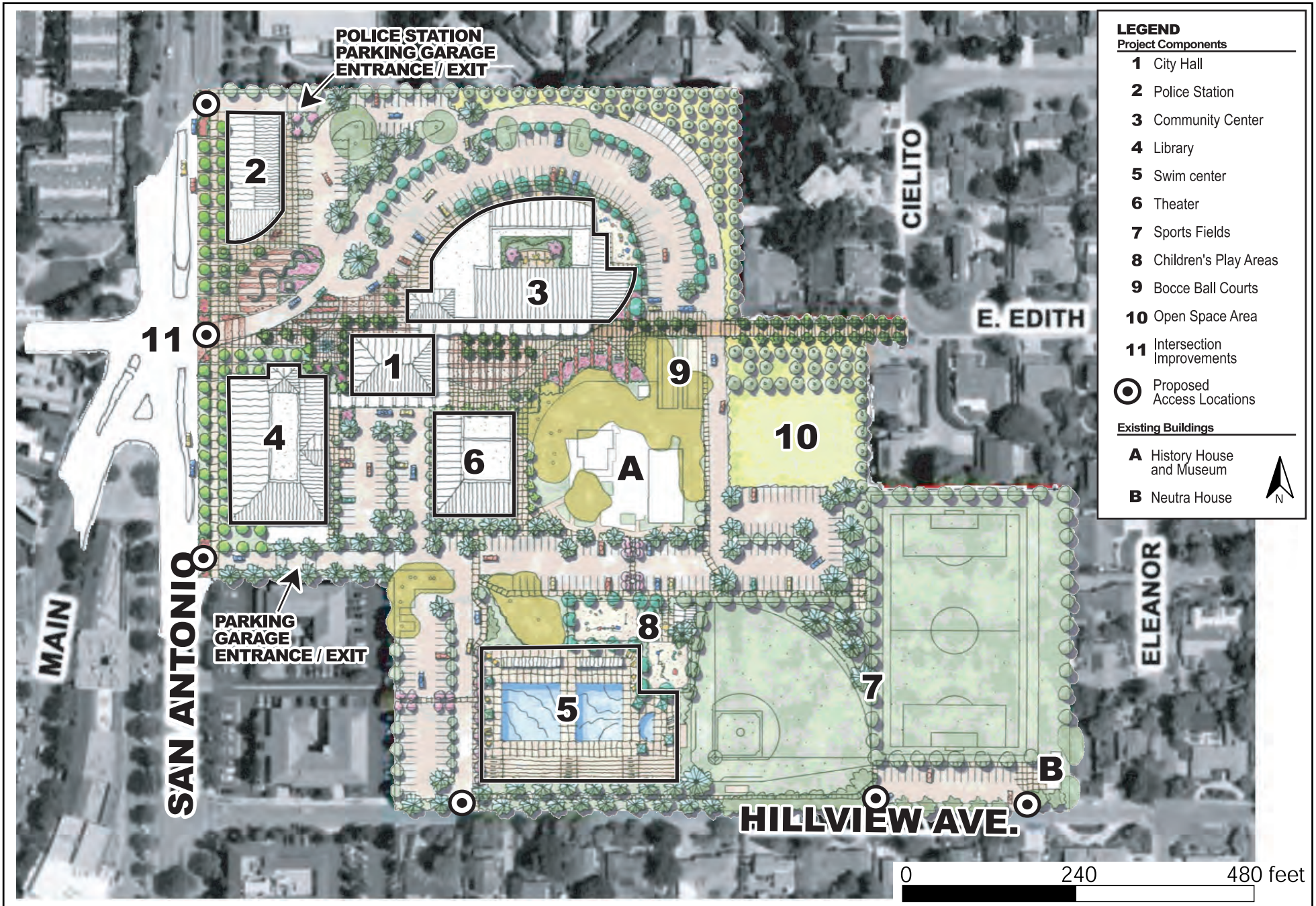
Except for the History House and Museum and Neutra House, all of the existing buildings on the project site (a total of 13 buildings) would be demolished and removed during the proposed redevelopment of the site. The proposed project would reconstruct and relocate on-site the City Hall, Police Station, community center, library, theater, soccer field, baseball field, bocce ball courts, and children's outdoor play areas. The proposed project would also construct one new community use on the site, a swim center. As shown in Table 2-1, new facilities on the site would have a total square footage of approximately 205,171, an increase of approximately 94,128 square feet.

Table 2-1
Existing and Proposed Square Footages

Facilities	Existing Square Footage	Proposed Square Footage
City Hall	9,882	19,880
Police Station	11,641	18,815
Hillview Community Center	40,320*	55,600
Library	28,050	47,866
Bus Barn Theater	4,570	12,500
Swim Center	Not an existing use.	39,860
Los Altos Youth Center	5,930	Part of the proposed CC.
History House and Museum	1,700 + 8,200 = 9,900	Remains on-site unchanged.
Neutra House	750	Remains on-site unchanged.
Total	**111,043**	**205,171**

* The square footage of the existing community center, excluding the external circulation areas, is 33,970. The senior center and Children's Corner Preschool are currently part of the existing community center.

The project proposes to obtain Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification, which requires projects to select a sustainable project site, be innovative in design, and include features that promote water and energy efficiency, reducing waste, improving indoor environmental quality. The features included in the project to meet LEED certification requirements are discussed in Section 4.11, *Energy* of this EIR.



CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

FIGURE 2-1

In addition to the redevelopment of the site, the project also includes improvements to the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection, which is located on the western boundary of the project site. The conceptual site plan is shown on Figure 2-1. Each component of the project is discussed in further detail below.

2.1.1 Project Components

2.1.1.1 *City Hall*

Under the proposed Master Plan, a new 19,880-square foot City Hall would replace the existing 9,882-square foot City Hall. As shown on Figure 2.1, the proposed City Hall complex would be centrally located on the northern portion of the site, adjacent to the proposed community center. The proposed City Hall would be a two-story building with a maximum height of thirty feet. Similar to the existing City Hall, the proposed City Hall would contain file rooms, offices, meeting rooms, City Council chambers, and other ancillary uses such as bathrooms and mechanical rooms.

The proposed City Hall facility is designed to provide for the existing needs of the City and its employees. Although the new City Hall would be larger than the existing City Hall, it would not provide capacity for additional employees or services. The number of City Hall employees would not increase as a result of the proposed Master Plan; however, the number of City employees may ultimately grow in future years to meet the needs of a growing community.

2.1.1.2 *Police Station*

Under the proposed Master Plan, a new 18,815-square foot Police Station would replace the existing 11,641-square foot Police Station on the site. As shown on Figure 2.1, the proposed Police Station would be located in the northwest corner of the site, adjacent to San Antonio Road. The proposed Police Station would be a two-story building with a maximum height of thirty feet. Similar to the existing Police Station, the proposed station would contain offices, meeting rooms, holding cells, locker rooms, a new Emergency Operations Center space, and other ancillary uses such as bathrooms and mechanical rooms. The existing communications tower would be relocated adjacent to the new Police Station. As discussed below in Section 2.1.1.11, a below-grade garage would be constructed beneath the station to provide secured parking for the Police Department staff and patrol cars, as well as a Sally Port for the transfer of detainees into the facility.

Although the proposed Police Station would be larger in size than the existing station, the new Police Station would not provide capacity for additional employees (police officers, clerks, etc.). The larger Police Station would provide for the existing needs of the Police Department and its officers/employees. The number of police officers and employees in the Los Altos Police Department would not increase as a result of the proposed Master Plan, however, additional officers and staff may be needed as the community grows in the future.

2.1.1.3 *Community Center*

Under the proposed Master Plan, a 55,600-square foot community center would replace the existing 40,320-square foot community center and the 5,930-square foot Los Altos Community Youth Center (LAYC) on the site. As shown on Figure 2.1, the proposed community center would be centrally located in the northern portion of the site, adjacent to the proposed City Hall. The proposed community center would be a two-story building with a maximum height of thirty feet. A courtyard is included in the design of the community center.

The proposed community center would provide the same general services and classes as the existing community center, including the senior center. However, the private preschool (Children's Corner) that currently operates out of the existing community center would not operate on the site. The new community center would be used for private rentals on the weekends (e.g., weddings). The additional square footage (approximately 15,700 square feet) would provide internal circulation areas, office space for the existing staff, and slightly larger classrooms that would be used for community and recreational programs and events. The number of full-time community center employees would not increase as a result of the proposed Master Plan.

2.1.1.4 *Library*

Under the proposed Master Plan, the existing 28,050-square foot library would be replaced with a 47,866-square foot library. As shown on Figure 2.1, the proposed library would be centrally located in the west side of the site, along San Antonio Road, in the same general location as the existing library. The proposed library would be a two story building with a maximum height of thirty feet. As with the existing on-site library, the proposed building will be owned by the City of Los Altos, but the library will be operated by the County of Santa Clara. It is anticipated that the new library will have the same or similar hours of operation as the existing library (10:00 AM to 9:00 PM, Monday through Thursday, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Friday and Saturday, and 12:00 PM to 6:00 PM on Sunday).

The proposed library is designed to accommodate for the existing and future needs of the residents of Los Altos. The new library would provide the same general services as the existing library; however, the new facility would provide increased capacity for group gathering space, processing/staff space, shelving and displays (for books, media, and other resources), seating, storage space, public access computers, space dedicated to a new Children's Program, and/or space for support activities, such as book sales and a café. The proposed library may result in a minor increase in the total number of employees on the site.

2.1.1.5 *Swim Center*

Under the proposed Master Plan, a 39,860-square foot swim center would be constructed in the southern portion of the site, east of the proposed baseball field (refer to Figure 2.1). The swim center would be a new use on the project site, and would include one competitive pool, one recreational pool, a water feature, and up to two buildings containing ancillary uses, such as offices, locker rooms, and a mechanical room. An approximately 100-foot wide terraced area would provide seating for the swim center patrons and for event spectators. This seating area would be located along the south side of the swim center between the pools and Hillview Avenue.

General uses of the swim center will include adult lap swim, recreational/lap swim, swimming lessons, community youth programs (e.g., junior lifeguarding), and water exercise. Organized swim teams will use the pools, including the Covington Youth and Los Altos Masters teams. The pools will also be available for activities such as kayaking and SCUBA diving lessons, synchronized swimming, Special Olympics, and private rental use. The water feature would be a supervised water play area for younger children and would only be open for use during scheduled recreational swim hours. The proposed swim center would require new employees, and would result in a minor increase in the total number of employees on the site.

Based on the proposed schedule, the swim center will be open for use year-round, seven days a week. During the summer, the swim center would be open from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM on weekdays and from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday and Sunday. During the non-summer months, the swim center would be open from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM on the weekdays and from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM on

Saturday and Sunday. Maximum usage of the pools would occur during the summer months, with up to 1,000 people using the swim center each day from June to September. Up to six competition events per year would be held at the swim center. The currently proposed schedule (which should be considered a draft at this early stage) is included as Appendix A of this Draft EIR.

Outdoor lighting would be located throughout the swim center for the purpose of allowing the use of the swim center during the evening, and for the security and safety of the community swim center users. Low-pressure sodium lighting would be used. The lights will be fully shielded to prevent light spill over onto adjacent properties.

A public announcement (PA) system would be used within the swim center. The PA system would mainly be used during competition events, but may also be used for other necessary announcements during general operation of the community swim center (e.g., lost children).

2.1.1.6 *Theatre*

Under the proposed Master Plan, a new 12,500-square foot, 200-seat theater would be constructed near the center of the site, west of the History House and Museum (refer to Figure 2-1). The proposed theater would replace the existing 4,570-square foot, 100-seat Bus Barn Theater. The new theater would be one-story with a maximum height of 30 feet above grade. In addition to more audience seating, the new facility would provide additional space for storage, changing rooms, and other theater uses.

Similar to the existing theater, the proposed theater would be utilized by public and private groups for cultural events and performances, most of which would be held in the evenings. Currently, the Bus Barn Theater hosts approximately 10 shows per year, with each show running for about one month.[4] A show typically runs five days per week with performances in the evening (Wednesday through Saturday at 8:00 PM, and Sunday at 2:00 PM and 7:00 PM). The Bus Barn Theater is used for rehearsals and set-up during daytime hours, beginning about 8:00 AM. It is anticipated that construction of a new theater would not increase the number of events and performances hosted at the site each year. While the new theater would have increased attendance given the higher seating capacity, the proposed theater is not expected to increase the number of full-time employees on the site.

2.1.1.7 *Sport Fields*

Under the proposed Master Plan, new soccer and baseball fields would be constructed in the southeastern portion of the project site. These natural turf fields would replace the existing soccer and baseball fields on the site. The use of the proposed sports fields would be similar to use of the existing fields, such as soccer games, practice, instruction, summer camps, and other outdoor uses such as the annual Los Altos community picnic. The baseball field would be used for baseball games and other summer camp and community events (e.g., dog obedience classes). Use of the fields would not increase as a result of the proposed project, as they are currently used at their maximum capacity. The proposed fields would not have lights for nighttime use or public address systems.

2.1.1.8 *Children's Play Areas*

Under the proposed Master Plan, two children's play areas would be constructed, replacing the two existing outdoor play areas on the site (totaling 4,200 square feet). As shown on Figure 2.1, two play areas would be located north of the proposed swim center. These play areas would be approximately

[4] Zachary Dahl, Associate Planner, City of Los Altos, email dated August 27, 2009.

4,000 square feet and 3,000 square feet in size (totaling 7,000 square feet). Additional outdoor play areas could be included as part of the proposed community center. Similar to the existing play areas, the proposed children's play areas would include play structures and other features for use by young children.

2.1.1.9 *Bocce Ball Courts*

As shown on Figure 2.1, two new bocce ball courts are proposed north of the History House and Museum. The new courts would replace the two existing bocce ball courts, which are currently part of the community center. As with the existing courts, the new courts would be available for public use during normal Hillview Park hours.

2.1.1.10 *Apricot Orchard, Landscaping, and Open Space*

Under the proposed Master Plan, the existing apricot orchard would not remain on the site. In addition, up to 192 existing non-orchard trees would be removed from the site; however, the project proposes to retain approximately 175 trees, including the mature oak trees surrounding the History House and Museum and in the southwestern portion of the site (refer to Section 4.6, *Biological Resources*, of this EIR). Many of the trees located along the perimeter of the site would also be preserved.

New landscaping is proposed throughout the project site to augment the existing landscaping to remain and replace the existing landscaping that is removed during project construction. To maintain the orchard-like nature of the project site, the proposed landscaping will include apricot trees located around the new Community Center. Some of the younger apricot trees located in the existing orchard area may be transplanted in the new landscape areas, and the existing apricot trees located in the upper northeast corner of the site will be preserved. The project also proposes to increase the landscape buffer along Hillview Avenue.

Under the proposed Master Plan, the existing on-site baseball field would be converted to open space. This area may consist of turf grass, landscaping, and/or other park amenities, such as picnic benches. This open space is noted as a potential area for future development of additional recreational or community uses.

2.1.1.11 *Intersection and Streetscape Improvements*

The proposed Master Plan includes improvements to the existing Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection, located adjacent to the western boundary of the project site. This four-way signalized intersection would be modified to a five-way intersection, in order to align with the new full access driveway on the project site, described further in Section 2.1.1.13 below. Streetscape improvements to this intersection may include the provision of additional landscaping in the medians and along the streets, and the installation of concrete pavers in the crosswalks to increase visibility to drivers. Signage, public art, benches, and other pedestrian amenities may be installed at this intersection and/or along the San Antonio Road site frontage. The project may also include the replacement of street lighting adjacent to San Antonio Road. The intent of the proposed improvements is to create a stronger visual and pedestrian connection between the project site and downtown Los Altos, while improving safety and traffic flow.

2.1.1.12 *Parking*

The existing project site currently provides 343 surface parking spaces. There are currently enough parking spaces on the site to accommodate demand generated by the existing uses; however, some of

the facilities experience functional parking shortfalls, because sufficient parking is not provided in the parking lots serving these facilities to accommodate peak demand. There are no above- or below-grade parking garages on the site.

Under the proposed Master Plan, a total of 609 parking spaces would be provided on the project site, of which 373 would be surface parking spaces. The remaining 236 spaces would be located in two below-grade garages, including a 66-space garage beneath the proposed Police Station and a 170-space garage beneath the proposed library and theater. The 66-space garage beneath the Police Station would be for police use only. The 170-space garage would be accessible to all site employees and visitors. It is anticipated that the parking garages would be one level. The location of the surface parking lots and below-grade parking garages is shown on Figure 2.1.

2.1.1.13 *Site Access and Circulation*

Access to the project site is currently provided by four non-signalized full-access driveways, including two off San Antonio Road and two off Hillview Avenue. In addition, a one-way turnaround driveway is also located off Hillview Avenue, south of the existing community center. A north-south internal driveway links the parking areas on the site.

Under the proposed Master Plan, three full access driveways would provide vehicular ingress/egress to most of the site. The main driveway to the site would be off San Antonio Road and would align with the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection, as previously described. This driveway would provide direct access to the surface lot north of the new community center. A second full access driveway off San Antonio Road would be constructed in the general location of the existing driveway south of the library. This driveway would provide direct access to the below-grade parking garage beneath the proposed library and theater. The third full access driveway would be located off Hillview Avenue, and would provide direct access to the parking lot west of the swim center. In addition, the isolated parking area in the southeast corner of the site would be reconfigured and served by two full access driveways. The proposed site access and circulation is shown on Figure 2.1.

The project also includes a private driveway off San Antonio Road that would provide direct access to the secured below-grade parking garage serving the Police Station. This full access driveway and garage ramp would be located in the same general location as the existing driveway located in the northwest corner of the site.

2.1.1.14 *Pedestrian Facilities and Park Amenities*

A network of concrete pedestrian pathways currently connects the existing buildings, particularly in the northern and central portions of the site, although there are some areas where no sidewalks or paths exist.

Under the proposed Master Plan, pedestrian pathways would be provided throughout the site to connect the proposed parking lots and existing sidewalks to the new buildings, recreational facilities, and existing buildings to remain on the site. The project includes the construction of a new sidewalk and landscape strip along the San Antonio Road project frontage. Pedestrian crosswalks may also be installed across the entrance/exit driveways serving the project site to enhance pedestrian safety at these locations. Pedestrian plazas would be installed adjacent to the proposed City Hall, community center, and Police Station to provide open space for public gathering.

The existing public restroom and snack bar facility, located adjacent to the Bus Barn Theater, could be renovated and upgraded to continue to serve the play fields. The proposed project may also

include other park amenities throughout the site, such as picnic tables, public art, community gardens, fountains, signage, and/or a fitness par course to replace features currently located in Hillview Park. Nighttime lighting would be included in parking lots, along pathways, and adjacent to buildings. Bicycle parking would be provided on the site.

2.1.2 Construction Phasing

Implementation of the proposed Los Altos Community Center Master Plan would occur as funding becomes available, and is anticipated to be completed by the year 2028. As shown in Table 2-2 below, the project would be constructed in four phases. Each phase would include demolition of existing structures, site preparation (grading and excavation), construction of new facilities, and finishing work (painting, landscaping, etc.). It is anticipated that each phase would be scheduled to occur one to three years after the previous phase is completed. Although full implementation of the proposed Master Plan could require up to 19 years, construction activities would occur on the site for a cumulative total of 50-64 months (about 5-6 years) over this time period.[5]

Table 2-2
Construction Phasing

Phase	Proposed Demolition	Proposed Construction	Duration
Phase 1	City Hall, LAYC, Police Station, Community Center	City Hall, Police Station, Community Center, Intersection Improvements	Approximately 18-24 Months
Phase 2	Bus Barn Theater, Baseball Field, Soccer Field	Baseball Field, Soccer Field, Swim Center, Children's Play Areas, Open Space	Approximately 10-12 Months
Phase 3	Library	Library and Underground Parking Garage	Approximately 10-12 Months
Phase 4	-	Theater and Underground Parking Garage	Approximately 12-16 Months

During each construction phase, the demolition of existing buildings and construction of new buildings and parking areas would be sequenced to ensure continuous and adequate provision of essential public services, and minimize disruptions to City government functions, Police Department operations, and community center programs. This could be accomplished in several ways.

It is assumed that Phase I would begin with demolition of the LAYC and the existing Police Station, and continue with construction of the new City Hall, community center, and associated parking area. Once the City has relocated its employees and services into the new City Hall, the existing City Hall building could be demolished and construction of the new Police Station and below-grade parking garage could begin. The Police Station would be temporarily relocated on the site, possibly in trailers off Hillview Avenue and/or in the community center, until completion of the new Police Station. The proposed improvements to the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection could also be constructed after demolition of the existing City Hall. It is anticipated that

[5] Although it is anticipated that the four phases of project construction would be spread out, there is a possibility that the 50-64 months of construction activities could occur all at once, either at the beginning, middle, or end of the 19-year construction period.

demolition of the existing community center would require approximately two to four weeks, and could occur after completion of the new structures and prior to Phase 2.

Phase 2 may begin with removal of the existing baseball field and the completion of the new soccer field and baseball field in the location of the existing community center and adjacent parking lot, which would have been removed from the site in Phase I. The project could then proceed with demolition of the existing Bus Barn Theater and construction of the proposed swim center, children's play areas, and associated parking in the general location of the existing soccer field. It is conceivable that the Bus Barn Theater could remain in use as long as the new children's playgrounds are not constructed. This would require that an interim location for the playgrounds be identified on the site.

During Phase 2, the proposed open space area could be used for temporary on-site parking. Street parking on Hillview Avenue may also be required to accommodate the parking demand by on-site uses during this Phase. Phase 3 includes demolition of the existing library and construction of the new library and the second below-grade parking garage. Construction of the proposed theater during Phase 4 could occur in parallel with Phase 3.

SECTION 3 CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PLANS

This section complies with CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(d), which requires that an EIR discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans and regional plans.

3.1 LOS ALTOS GENERAL PLAN 2002-2020

The City of Los Altos' General Plan is an adopted statement of goals and policies for the future character and quality of development of the community. The relevant General Plan goals and policies are shown in italics, and each is followed by a discussion of the project's consistency with that goal or policy.

3.1.1 Community Design & Historic Resources Element

Goal 1: *Preserve and enhance the identity and unique character of Los Altos.*

Consistency: The architecture of the new buildings included in the Master Plan is intended to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The project proposes to preserve the History House and Museum. Although apricot trees would be planted throughout the site and younger trees within the orchard could be transplanted on-site, the project would remove the historic apricot orchard from the project site (refer to Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources* of this EIR). For this reason, the project is not consistent with the overall purpose of this goal.

Policy 1.1: *Preserve trees, especially heritage and landmark trees, and trees that protect privacy in residential neighborhoods.*

Consistency: The proposed project would preserve the existing trees on the project site to the greatest extent feasible, including numerous large oak trees, as described in Section 4.6, *Biological Resources* of this EIR. However, the project would require the removal of the historic apricot orchard, which is designated a Historical Landmark by City Council resolution. While the project would retain most of the trees along the perimeter of the site that protect the privacy of the adjacent residences, because the historic orchard will be removed, the project is not consistent with this policy.

Policy 1.2: *Encourage the addition of a variety of trees and landscaping to enhance streetscape and slow traffic.*

Consistency: The project proposes to plant street trees and landscaping along San Antonio Road. New and existing street trees would be located along the Hillview Avenue site frontage. Landscaping may also be included in the improvements to the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection, located on the western boundary of the project site. For these reasons, the project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 1.4: *Promote pride in community and excellence in design in conjunction with attention to and compatibility with existing residential and commercial environments.*

Consistency: The project has been designed to promote Los Altos history by preserving the History House and Museum and including apricot trees throughout the site. The architecture of the new two-story buildings is intended to be compatible with the adjacent commercial uses and to blend with the Downtown core, which has a pedestrian-

oriented village setting (refer to Section 4.1, *Land Use* of this EIR). The new buildings would be located along San Antonio Road or in the north-central portion of the site, away from adjacent residential uses. In addition, the project will provide parking that can be used for community events in the downtown area. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 1.6: *Continue to provide for site planning and architectural design review within the City, with a focus on mass, scale, character, and materials.*

Consistency: The proposed project would be subject to the City's site planning and architectural design review process and would conform to current architectural and landscaping standards. The maximum height of the proposed buildings would be similar in height to the existing buildings that would remain on-site, the adjacent commercial uses, and the two-story residences in the surrounding neighborhood. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 1.9: *Promote diverse opportunities for public gathering and celebrations that foster a feeling of community.*

Consistency Under the proposed Master Plan, a 55,600-square foot community center would replace the existing 40,320-square foot community center and the 5,930-square foot Los Altos Community Youth Center (LAYC) on the site. The new community center includes more rooms for recreational programs, additional space for community programs and events, and upgraded food services and catering areas. The project also includes a proposed 39,860-square foot swim center, a new 47,866-square foot library to replace the existing library, and a new 12,500-square foot, 200-seat theater that would replace the existing Bus Barn Theater. The enhanced community and recreational facilities would promote diverse opportunities for public gathering and celebrations that foster a feeling of community. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 2.1: *Continue to encourage streetlights at all major intersections and around public places, such as schools and parks.*

Consistency: The proposed project includes nighttime lighting within the parking lots on the project site, similar to existing conditions. Outdoor lighting would also be located throughout the swim center for the purpose of allowing use during the evening. Additional streetlights may be provided as part of the improvements to the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection and the existing streetlights on San Antonio Road adjacent to the site would be maintained or replaced. For these reasons, the project would generally be consistent with this policy.

Policy 3.2: *Encourage the maintenance, upgrading, and new design of building exteriors, signs, passageways, and streetscape elements that enhance the pedestrian experience, reflect quality design, present a diversity of appearances, and contribute to the architectural and historical interest of the village.*

Consistency: The project proposes to replace most of the buildings on the site with new, upgraded facilities. The proposed project would be subject to the City's design review process and would conform to current architectural standards, ensuring quality design of the proposed facilities. The architecture is intended to be compatible with the historic character of the Downtown core. The project further promotes the historic interest of

Los Altos by preserving the History House and Museum on the site. The project would improve the pedestrian environment by including a network of pathways throughout the site. The proposed improvements to the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection would further enhance the pedestrian experience. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 3.5: *Continue to encourage the creative and safe incorporation of street furniture and hardscape into the design of public rights-of-way.*

Consistency: The project proposes to improve the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection by installing concrete pavers in the crosswalks, which would improve visibility to drivers and pedestrian safety. The project would incorporate other streetscape improvements at this intersection and along the San Antonio Road site frontage. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 6: *Preserve and enhance selected historic and cultural structures and resources within the community.*

Consistency: The project proposes to preserve the History House and Museum, including the surrounding garden area. The new community center and theater would provide enhanced cultural resources within Los Altos. Although apricot trees would be planted throughout the site, the project would remove the historic apricot orchard from the project site (refer to Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources* of this EIR). For this reason, the project is not consistent with the overall purpose of this goal.

Policy 6.1: *Ensure that the integrity of historic structures and the parcels on which they are located are preserved through the implementation of applicable design, building, and fire codes.*

Consistency: The project proposes to preserve the History House, which is designated as a City of Los Altos Historical Landmark and listed as a California Point of Historical Interest (refer to Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources* of this EIR). The History Museum and the surrounding garden area will also be maintained, which will ensure the integrity of the historic structure. The project is subject to the City's design review process, which will ensure compliance with applicable design, building, and fire codes. For these reasons, the project is consistent with this goal.

Policy 6.2: *The City shall regard demolition of Landmark structures, and historically significant resources, which have HRI rankings of 60 to 100 as a last resort. Demolition would be permitted only after the City determines that the resource retains no reasonable economic use, that demolition is necessary to protect health, safety and welfare or that demolition is necessary to proceed with a new project where the benefits of the new project outweigh the loss of the historic resource.*

Consistency: The historic apricot orchard was designated a historic landmark by City Council resolution, and does not have an HRI ranking. The removal of the historic apricot orchard from the site would be necessary to implement the proposed Master Plan. The project would provide enhanced public and community facilities that would benefit existing and future residents of Los Altos. For this reason, the benefits of the project outweigh the loss of the historic resource and the project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 6.3: *Work with property owners to preserve historic resources within the community, including the orchard, or representative portion thereof, on the civic center site.*

Consistency: The project would remove the historic apricot orchard from the project site. Apricot trees would be planted throughout the site, which would continue to support the historic rural character of the project area. However, due to the loss of the historic apricot orchard, the project is not consistent with this policy.

Policy 6.4: *Preserve archaeological artifacts and sites found in Los Altos or mitigate disturbances to them, consistent with their intrinsic value.*

Consistency: The project area has a low potential for containing buried or obscured cultural resources; therefore, development of the project site is not anticipated to impact cultural resources. However, in the event of the discovery of unanticipated prehistoric or historic era cultural materials, operations would stop within 30 feet of the find and the Public Works Director would be notified. The find would be evaluated by a professional archaeologist, and if the find is significant, treatment recommendations would be developed (refer to Section 4.6, *Cultural Resources*). For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

3.1.2 Land Use Element

The Land Use Element includes a Land Use Plan that identifies the distribution and location of planned uses, and establishes development standards for the land use designations shown on the City of Los Altos Land Use Policy Map. In compliance with State General Plan law, the Land Use Element specifies the maximum densities and intensities permitted within the Land Use Plan. Maximum allowable development on individual parcels of land is governed by measures of density or intensity. In the City's Land Use Plan, floor area square footage and floor area ratio (FAR) are used as measures of non-residential development *intensity*, while the term *density* is used for residential uses and refers to the population and development capacity of residential land. Anticipated intensity is for planning purposes only and exceeding them on individual parcels of land does not require a General Plan Amendment. Development can occur up to the maximum allowed intensity with required site and/or design review.

General Plan Land Use Designation: The project site consists of two parcels that are both designated as *Public and Institutional* on the Los Altos Land Use Policy Map. This land use designation allows the development of governmental, institutional, academic, group residence, church, and community service uses, as well as easements, rights-of-way, facilities of public and private utilities, and City-owned parking facilities. *Public and Institutional* facilities are intended to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Where applicable, the maximum intensity of development is a FAR of 0.6:1, although the anticipated development intensity for this land use designation is a FAR of 0.35:1.

Consistency: The proposed Master Plan includes the redevelopment of the site with governmental and community uses. The project is designed to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The FAR of the proposed project is 0.26, which complies with the maximum intensity of development for the *Public and Institutional* land use designation. For these reasons, the project is consistent with the site's General Plan land use designation.

Goal 1: *Balance the desirability of public/quasi-public and commercial uses with their impacts upon adjoining residential land uses.*

Consistency: The proposed project is the redevelopment of the civic center/Hillview Park site with existing public and institutional uses. Although the project may include small commercial uses such as a snack shack, and theater ticket and library book sales, these uses are incidental to the overall Master Plan development. The project is designed to be compatible with the adjacent residences to the extent feasible. With the implementation of the mitigation measures included in this EIR, the project would not result in significant long-term impacts to surrounding residential land uses (refer to Section 4.1, *Land Use*, Section 4.3, *Noise*, and Section 4.4, *Air Quality* of this EIR). For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

Goal 2: *Plan for a compatible and harmonious arrangement of land uses by providing a mix of uses consistent with projected future social and economic conditions in Los Altos.*

Consistency: The project proposes to redevelop the site with a mix of recreational, civic, and community uses. By grouping these uses together, the project maximizes the shared use of parking and other project elements. The enhanced facilities would accommodate existing and future demand for public services for Los Altos residents of all ages (refer to Section 5, *Availability of Public Services* of this EIR). The project is designed to be compatible with adjacent residential uses and nearby commercial uses in the Downtown core. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

Policy 3.5: *Continue to review development plans to ensure compliance with the Downtown Urban Design Plan.*

Consistency: In 1992, the City adopted the Downtown Urban Design Plan to reinforce the identity of Downtown Los Altos as a retail center, to improve the visual quality of the area, and to create an attractive pedestrian environment. The Downtown area includes the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection. The project intends to enhance the pedestrian environment at this intersection by installing pedestrian-scale improvements such as concrete pavers in the crosswalks and new landscaping. As part of the City's design review process, the proposed streetscape improvements would be evaluated for compliance with the Downtown Urban Design Plan, and the proposed project would serve to enhance the entry to downtown. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

3.1.4 Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element

Open space resources in Los Altos include public parks, publicly- or privately-owned open space and recreation facilities, conservation easements along portions of creeks, and off-road bicycle paths/trails. Other open space land, which is not publicly-owned or officially designated open space includes school yards, vacant land, and the front and street side yard areas within the City's low density residential neighborhoods.

Hillview Park, a six-acre public park located on the project site, includes the existing community center, soccer field, baseball field, two bocce ball courts, outdoor children's play areas (tot lots), a fitness par course, and picnic tables. The project site also includes an approximately five-acre apricot orchard.

Goal 1: *Preserve and expand the amount of open space in and around Los Altos.*

Consistency: The project proposes to replace the existing on-site recreational facilities, including the soccer and baseball fields, children's play areas, and bocce ball courts, with new facilities. The proposed addition of a swim center would expand outdoor recreational opportunities in Los Altos (refer to Section 5.5, *Parks and Recreational Facilities* of this EIR). Although the site is not designated as open space in the General Plan, the project would add passive recreational uses to the site, and the area of the site covered by landscaping, fields, and other green space would only decrease by two percent, thus preserving the open space nature of portions of the site. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 1.1: *Preserve existing parks and establish new neighborhood parks to enhance neighborhood identity within Los Altos.*

Consistency: The project proposes to redevelop Hillview Park with recreational and community uses and a proposed Swim Center. The project would preserve existing parkland and provide a variety of enhanced recreational facilities, which would address the open space needs of the community and enhance neighborhood identity. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 1.3: *Maintain dedicated parkland in public ownership.*

Consistency: As described above, the project proposes to redevelop Hillview Park with new recreational uses. The City of Los Altos would maintain ownership over the park. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 2: *Preserve and protect and provide for public enjoyment of natural areas (natural creek channels, topography and vegetation), which are valuable natural resources.*

Consistency: The project proposes to preserve and protect for public enjoyment the existing trees on the project site to the greatest extent feasible. Although several large trees in good condition would be removed from the site, numerous large oak trees on the site would be preserved, including those surrounding the History House and Museum (refer to Section 4.6, *Biological Resources* of this EIR). The project would also plant landscaping throughout the site. For these reasons, the project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 2.2: *Identify and encourage preservation of existing orchard remnants as a reminder of its agricultural heritage.*

Consistency: The City preserved an approximately five-acre portion of the apricot orchard originally planted on the site in the early 1900's (refer to Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources* of this EIR). The historic apricot orchard remains one of the last intact, active orchards in Los Altos and Santa Clara County. Although apricot trees would be planted throughout the site to reflect the agricultural heritage of Los Altos, the project would result in the removal of the historic orchard from the project site. For this reason, the project is not consistent with this goal.

Policy 2.5: *Enforce local, state, and federal regulations addressing water quality and stormwater quality management.*

Consistency: The proposed project would meet local, state, and federal standards for water quality and stormwater quality regulations (refer to Section 4.8, *Hydrology and Water*

Quality of this EIR). For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 3: *Expand recreation programs and facilities for all ages using City and non-City sites.*

Consistency: The project proposes to redevelop the City-owned project site with recreational uses (soccer and baseball fields, bocce ball courts, and children's play areas) that currently exist on the site and a new Swim Center. The project also includes replacement of the existing community center and Los Altos Community Youth Center (LAYC) with a new community center, which would provide similar services and classes, including the senior center. The proposed Master Plan intends to expand recreational opportunities for Los Altos residents of all ages by providing enhanced, multi-generational facilities on the Civic Center/Hillview Park portions of the site. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

Policy 3.3: *Provide and expand continuing support for children and teen facilities and programs.*

Consistency: The new community center and recreational uses on the site would continue to provide serve children and teens. The proposed Swim Center would provide additional youth-serving facilities and programs, including swimming lessons, community youth programs (e.g., junior lifeguarding), and use by the Covington Youth team. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

Policy 3.4: *Promote and provide programs and recreation facilities for seniors.*

Consistency: The proposed community center would provide similar services and classes as the existing community center, including the senior center. However, the new community center would provide larger classrooms and enhanced recreational facilities that are intended to better serve the senior population and other residents of Los Altos. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 3.5: *Ensure the availability of community pool facilities.*

Consistency: The proposed project includes the construction of a Swim Center that includes two swimming pools, a water feature, and buildings with ancillary uses. The proposed Swim Center would be available for public and private use, and is intended to meet demand for a community pool. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

Goal 4: *Ensure proper maintenance of parks, open space, and public facilities.*

Consistency: The proposed project includes the construction of recreational facilities and public uses. The new facilities are designed to be easily maintained. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 4.1: *Provide adequate level of maintenance for City parks, open space, and public property to ensure safety, aesthetics, and recreational enjoyment for Los Altos residents.*

Consistency: As described above, the project is designed to be easily maintained. Nighttime lighting will be provided and maintained throughout the site to ensure the safety of visitors and employees. The redevelopment of the site with new park facilities,

including sports fields, a Swim Center, children's play areas, and open space, would enhance the aesthetic character and recreational enjoyment for Los Altos residents. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

Policy 5.1: *Keep all pathways visible, safe, and appropriately maintained.*

Consistency: As described above, the project will provide and maintain nighttime lighting along pathways and throughout the site to ensure the safety of visitors and employees. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 6: *Ensure an adequate level of fire protection and police protection within Los Altos.*

Consistency: The proposed project includes the replacement of the existing Los Altos Police Station with a new, larger Police Station that would provide for the existing needs of the Police Department and its officers/employees. The new facility will be designed to meet the structural requirements for an Essential Services Facility as required by the current building code. The project is intended to ensure that the Police Department will continue to provide an adequate level of police protection within Los Altos. Construction of the project would not substantially impact the service ratios, response times, or performance of the Police Department or Fire Department (refer to Section 5.5, *Parks and Recreational Facilities* of this EIR). For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 6.1: *Promote community order by preventing criminal activity, enforcing laws, and meeting community service demands.*

Consistency: The proposed Police Station is designed to meet existing and future community demands for police services. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 8: *Ensure a high level of library service.*

Consistency: Under the proposed Master Plan, the existing 28,050-square foot library would be replaced with a 47,866-square foot library. The new library is designed to accommodate for the existing and future needs of the residents of Los Altos. The proposed library would provide the same general services as the existing library; however, the new facility would increase the capacity of processing/staff space, shelving, displays, seating, and space for storage and sales. The new library may also increase the number of public access computers, and create a space dedicated to a new Children's Program. The project would improve long-term library services in Los Altos. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 8.1: *Continue to support the cultural enrichment provided by the Los Altos libraries through access to informational, educational, and recreational materials and services.*

Consistency: As described above, the proposed library would continue to provide access to informational, educational, and recreational materials and services; however, the new library would provide additional capacity for the provision of these materials and services. The new library would support and enhance opportunities for cultural enrichment in Los Altos. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 8.2: *Promote local libraries, through planning and programming, as an integral part of the community, and in particular, the main library as an element of the Civic Center complex.*

Consistency: The project proposes to replace the existing library with a larger library in the same general location on the site. Locating the two-story library building adjacent to San Antonio Road allows convenient access to and from Downtown Los Altos, as well as the other civic and community uses on the site. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 9: *Encourage the provision of cultural facilities and activities within the City.*

Consistency: The proposed replacement of the existing library, community center, and theater with new, larger facilities that would provide increased capacity and space for the provision of cultural activities, services, and events within the City of Los Altos. The project also maintains the Los Altos History House and Museum. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 9.1: *Continue to support the activities of the Los Altos History Museum, the Hillview Community Center, and the Redwood Grove Nature Preserve.*

Consistency: The Hillview Community Center and Los Altos History House and Museum are located on the project site. The project proposes to preserve the History House and Museum. The History House and Museum would continue to operate during project construction, unless temporary closures are determined necessary to ensure the safety of visitors to the site. The project proposes to replace and reconstruct the Hillview Community Center. The new community center would provide updated facilities for the provision of the same general programs, services, and activities as the existing community center. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 10: *Ensure that resources are available to serve the City's dependent residents, including but not limited to children, disabled, seniors, homeless, victims of crime/abuse, and drug/alcohol abusers.*

Consistency: The proposed community center would continue to provide services, programs, and activities to children and seniors. The proposed Swim Center, library, and recreational facilities will also provide community youth programs. All new buildings proposed under the Master Plan are designed to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure that disabled residents will have access to the public and community resources provided on the site. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 11: *Maximize opportunities for joint public and private utilization of City, private sector, private school land and facilities and public school district land, facilities, programs and resources to provide the most cost efficient and effective services for present and future Los Altos residents.*

Consistency: The proposed project is the redevelopment of City-owned land with a variety of civic, community and recreational facilities that will be utilized by various public and private organizations. The construction of the new theater and library will be

privately funded, and the new community center and Swim Center will be available for private rentals. Private organizations, such as the Los Altos Community Foundation (which maintains the Neutra House) and Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum, will continue to operate on the site. Because the project would maximize opportunities for joint public and private utilization of resources to meet the present and future demand for public services in Los Altos, it is consistent with this policy.

Policy 11.1: *Cooperate with other governments, districts, and the private sector through: (1) joint agreements between the City and public school districts and private schools to share facilities, personnel, programs, and future land purchase opportunities; (2) continued exchange, sharing, and evaluation of joint services with school districts; (3) working with public and private schools to provide recreation facilities and programs on school land; and (4) optimizing leisure activities related to recreation, culture, and arts.*

Consistency: As described above, the City would cooperate with the private sector to optimize leisure activities related to recreation, culture, and arts by utilizing private funding for the construction of the new theater and library on the site. Through agreements with the City, private organizations will utilize the new community facilities for recreational and cultural programs and events. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 11.6: *Plan for the integration of current and future Civic Center functions and facilities with pathways, traffic patterns, roads, landscaping, lighting, parking, and design.*

Consistency: The project is intended to meet existing and future demand for public services. The site plan has been designed to improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns, and maximize shared use of parking areas. Landscaping and nighttime lighting will be provided throughout the site. The proposed project would be subject to the City's site planning and architectural design review process. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

3.1.5 Circulation Element

Roadway Plan: *If proposed development projects cause traffic to exceed Level of Service standards, appropriate mitigation would be considered.*

Consistency: The proposed project does not cause traffic to exceed Level of Service standards, as described in Section 4.2, *Transportation and Traffic*. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 2: *Provide for convenient and safe vehicular travel throughout Los Altos.*

Consistency: The proposed project is designed to provide convenient and safe vehicular travel to, from, and on the site. The reconfigured site layout would minimize exiting to and from Hillview Avenue (a neighborhood street) and encourage the use of San Antonio Road driveways for site access. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 2.5: *Ensure that new development or redevelopment projects provide adequate property dedication to accommodate future roadway improvements at key intersections and other problem areas.*

Consistency: The project proposes to improve the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection by installing concrete pavers and additional landscaping. The proposed project would provide adequate property dedication to accommodate the proposed improvements. There are no other planned roadway improvements in the area for which the project would need to provide right-of-way dedication. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 2.11: *Achieve traffic volumes and speeds on collector and local streets that are compatible with the character of the adjacent land uses, the function of the street, and bicycle and pedestrian traffic.*

Consistency: As described in Section 4.2, *Transportation and Traffic*, the proposed project would generate an additional 2,160 daily vehicle trips, which would not substantially increase the traffic volumes on collector or local streets. The project is designed to encourage motorists to enter and exit the site using San Antonio Road (an arterial roadway), rather than Hillview Avenue (a local roadway). For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 2.17: *Maintain adequate emergency access for all land uses.*

Consistency: The proposed project would not interfere with emergency access to the project area. During Phase 1 of project construction, the Police Station would be temporarily relocated on the site prior to completion of the new Police Station, but would continue to provide adequate police and emergency services to the Los Altos community (refer to Section 5, *Availability of Public Services* of this EIR). For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 3: *Promote local and regional transit as a viable alternative to automobile travel for all residents and especially for transit-dependent individuals.*

Consistency: The existing transit (bus) stops on San Antonio Road would continue to serve the project site. These bus routes connect to regional transit at El Camino Real north of the site. The project further promotes transit as an alternative to automobile travel by providing safe, convenient pedestrian access between the existing bus stops and the facilities on the project site. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

Goal 4: *Provide for the convenient and safe movement of bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the City to meet the commuter and recreation needs of the community.*

Consistency: The proposed improvements to the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection would improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists by making the crosswalks more visible to motorists. The project will provide bicycle parking and a network of pathways to encourage employees and visitors to bike or walk to the site, as well as promote the convenient and safe movement of bicyclists and pedestrians on the site. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

Policy 4.2: *Provide for safe and convenient pedestrian connections to and between Downtown, other commercial districts, neighborhoods and major activity centers within the City, as well as with surrounding jurisdictions.*

Consistency: As described above, the proposed improvements to the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection would enhance the pedestrian connection between Downtown and the project site – a major activity center. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 4.5: *Consider separated bicycle and pedestrian pathways along arterial and collector roadways.*

Consistency: In the vicinity of the project site, there are existing bike lanes on San Antonio Road and sidewalks located on San Antonio Road and Hillview Avenue. The project proposes to maintain the existing sidewalks and bike lanes, and install a network of paths on the site connecting to the existing sidewalks. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 4.9: *Work with residents to identify appropriate locations, especially adjacent to school sites, for the installation of pedestrian walkways that blend into the existing character of the community.*

Consistency: As discussed above, improving the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection to include concrete pavers within the crosswalk would enhance pedestrian safety in the neighborhood, particularly the connection between the facilities on the project site and Downtown to the west. The proposed improvements, including installation of additional landscaping, are designed to complement the existing character of the area and provide a more attractive gateway to Downtown. The existing sidewalk and enhanced landscape buffer along the Hillview Avenue site frontage would blend with the residential neighborhood to the south. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 5: *Provide the appropriate amount of parking in residential neighborhoods and commercial areas to accommodate needs but not to encourage the use of automobile travel.*

Consistency: To accommodate employees and visitors to the project site, the proposed project would provide approximately 609 parking spaces. The project is designed to maximize shared use of parking among the various on-site uses, and activities and uses will be scheduled to avoid parking shortages. It is not expected that employees and visitors to the site will park in the adjacent residential neighborhoods and commercial areas, except on rare occasions (refer to Section 4.2, *Transportation and Traffic* of this EIR). The amount of on-site parking provided is appropriate for the proposed uses and is not anticipated to encourage excessive automobile trips to the site. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

3.1.6 Natural Environment & Hazards Element

Goal 1: *Minimize risks of personal injury and property damage associated with seismic activity, landslides, and other geologic hazards.*

Consistency: The proposed project would adhere to the State of California Uniform Building Code and implement standard engineering measures, which would reduce risks of personal injury and property damage associated with potential seismic and other geologic hazards. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 1.1: *Update acceptable levels of risk/life safety standards when necessary, and see that buildings are brought up to those standards, consistent with state law.*

Consistency: The project proposes to construct new facilities in accordance with current standards and consistent with state law. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 1.2: *Avoid placement of critical facilities and high occupancy structures in areas known to be prone to ground failure during an earthquake.*

Consistency: The project site is not located within a fault rupture zone or seismically-induced liquefaction hazard zone, as identified by the County of Santa Clara and State of California; therefore, the potential for soil liquefaction is expected to be low at the project site. The proposed buildings, including critical facilities such as the Police Station, would be built in conformance with the State of California Uniform Building Code. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 3: *Protect the community's health, safety, welfare, natural resources, and property through regulation of use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials.*

Consistency: Similar to existing conditions, small quantities of hazardous materials typically associated with public and institutional uses (e.g., pesticides, herbicides, lubricants, and household cleaning products) would be used and stored on-site by the proposed project. The operation of the proposed swim center would require the use and transportation of chemicals to maintain water balance and chemical control of the swimming pools. These materials would be kept in double containment tanks inside one or more of the ancillary the ancillary buildings. The proposed project would comply with state and local laws regarding the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials, as described in Section 4.9, *Hazardous Materials* of this EIR. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 3.2: *Support the management of hazardous materials contamination and abatement by public and private agencies.*

Consistency: The proposed project includes the demolition of 13 structures that may contain lead-based paint and/or asbestos-containing materials. Contaminated soil, resulting from operation of the historic school bus maintenance yard may be present in the location of the Bus Barn Theater. In conformance with state and local laws, additional surveys and the abatement of hazardous materials would be completed by qualified environmental specialists, prior to project construction (refer to Section 4.10, *Hazardous Materials* of this EIR For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 5: *Minimize risks of personal injury and property damage associated with human activities, such as criminal activity and air and ground transportation.*

Consistency: The risk of personal injury would be minimized as the existing older buildings would be replaced with modern buildings that meet today's standards. Nighttime lighting

and pedestrian pathways would be provided throughout the site to improve the security and safety of employees and visitors. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 5.2: *Apply design techniques and standards that are aimed at avoiding criminal activity in new development and reuse/revitalization projects.*

Consistency: As described above, the proposed project includes outdoor lighting that would be located throughout the site for the security and safety of employees and visitors. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 6: *Plan for City and citizen actions in the event of a disaster.*

Consistency: The project proposes to replace the existing Police Station with a new 18,815-square foot station. The new Police Station will meet the structural requirements for an Essential Services Facility as required by the current building code, and will provide enhanced resources for City action in the event of a disaster. During project construction, the Police Department would continue to provide adequate police and emergency services (refer to Section 5, *Availability of Public Services* of this EIR). For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 7: *Minimize the amount of noise to which the community is exposed and the amount of noise created by future development and urban activities.*

Consistency: The project proposes to implement mitigation measures to reduce operational noise impacts to adjacent uses (refer to Section 4.4, *Noise* of this EIR). Project-generated traffic would not substantially increase noise levels along Hillview Avenue or other roadways in the area. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 7.1: *Ensure that new development can be made compatible with the noise environment by utilizing noise/land use compatibility standards and the Noise Contours Map as a guide for future planning and development decisions.*

Consistency: Based on the future noise contours in the City's General Plan, exterior noise levels at a distance of 50 feet from the center of the nearest travel lane on San Antonio Road will be approximately 71 dBA CNEL. The proposed library would be exposed to exterior noise levels one dBA CNEL above the maximum acceptable outdoor noise exposure level of 70 dBA, according to the Land Use Compatibility Standards table in the General Plan. Based on the standards for the "office buildings, business commercial, and professional," the Police Station would be exposed to exterior noise levels four dBA CNEL below the "conditionally acceptable" noise level of 75 dBA CNEL. The project could reduce interior noise levels to an acceptable level by including appropriate noise control measures in the building design (refer to Section 4.4, *Noise* of this EIR).

The proposed project would result in operational noise levels at adjacent residential uses that could exceed General Plan standards. Mitigation measures are included in the project to reduce long-term noise impacts to a less than significant level. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 7.6: Consider noise attenuation measures to reduce noise levels to City-adopted acceptable levels for any development along roadways.

Consistency: As discussed above, future noise levels at the new Police Station and library located adjacent to San Antonio Road could exceed the City's noise standards for those land uses; however, including appropriate noise control measures in the building design would reduce interior noise levels to an acceptable level. Development of recreational uses along Hillview Avenue would not require noise attenuation measures, given that noise levels would meet City-adopted acceptable levels for park uses. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 7.7: Require the inclusion of design features in development and reuse/revitalization projects to reduce the impact of noise on residential development.

Consistency: As discussed in Section 4.4, *Noise* of this EIR, the project includes mitigation measures to reduce long-term noise impacts to adjacent residential uses. Measures include locating HVAC and mechanical equipment away from adjacent residences, shielding rooftop mechanical equipment, employing other noise controls where required, constructing noise barriers along the site's eastern property boundaries, using noise barriers to attenuate swim center noise, limiting the use and maximum noise levels of the public address system in the swim center, and posting reminders in the parking lots to minimize noise. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 7.8: Require an acoustical analysis for new construction and in areas with a higher than established noise levels.

Consistency: A Noise Impact Assessment was prepared for the project by *Illingworth & Rodkin* in September 2009, and is included as Appendix D of this EIR. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 7.9: Minimize stationary noise sources and noise emanating from construction activities.

Consistency: The project proposes mitigation measures to minimize equipment and construction-related noise impacts to the greatest extent possible. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 8: Maintain or improve air quality in Los Altos.

Consistency: The project would not have significant air quality impacts (refer to Section 4.4, *Air Quality* of this EIR). The proposed project would include mitigation measures to minimize air quality impacts during construction. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 8.1: Support the principles of reducing air pollutants through land use, transportation, and energy use planning.

Consistency: The proposed project is the redevelopment of the Civic Center site, adjacent to the Downtown core area. Overall, the location, design, and nature of the proposed project support the goals of reducing vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which would reduce emissions of air pollutants from automobiles. The project would

be designed to maximize energy efficiency. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 8.2: *Encourage transportation modes that minimize contaminant emissions from motor vehicle use.*

Consistency: As described in Section 4.2, *Transportation*, the surrounding area is pedestrian and bike friendly, and a VTA bus route between Downtown and El Camino Real is provided on San Antonio Road, which allows residents to walk, bike, or take transit to and from the site. These services would minimize contaminant emissions from motor vehicle use by decreasing the total number of motor vehicle trips. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 8.4: *Ensure location and design of development projects so as to conserve air quality and minimize direct and indirect emissions of air contaminants.*

Consistency: The site is located in a central location in proximity to residential neighborhoods and commercial uses in the Downtown core, which minimizes the distance that employees and residents need to travel to access the site. The project proposes a variety of civic, community, and recreational uses on the same site, which provides opportunities for residents to access multiple facilities with one trip. The intensification of development on an infill site could reduce vehicle trips and VMT within the project area. The proposed project would not generate a substantial amount of additional vehicle trips that would contribute to air pollution. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

3.1.7 Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element

Goal 1: *Support the provision of clean, healthful water in quantities sufficient to satisfy the current and projected domestic and commercial needs in Los Altos.*

Consistency: The proposed project would not substantially increase water demand (refer to Section 4.10, *Utilities and Service Systems*). For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

Policy 1.3: *Review development proposals to determine whether adequate water pressure exists for existing and new development.*

Consistency: Prior to issuance of a building permit, the project will be reviewed to ensure that adequate water pressure would be available for the proposed uses. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 1.4: *Continue to promote water conservation.*

Consistency: In accordance with City policies and LEED certification requirements, the project will be designed to conserve water to the greatest extent feasible. The proposed swim center would include pool covers, and other measures to reduce the amount of water evaporated and, thus, the water demand of the facility. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 2.1: *Continue to work with the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant to ensure that adequate sewage treatment capacity is available to meet the needs of development in Los Altos.*

Consistency: Wastewater generated on the site would not exceed the capacity of the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant (refer to Section 4.10, *Utilities and Service Systems*). For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 2.2: *Review development proposals to ensure that if a project is approved, adequate sewage collection and treatment capacity is available to support such proposals.*

Consistency: The proposed project would connect to the existing sewer system in the project area. The existing sewer connections do not have capacity to serve the proposed project; therefore, the project includes upgrading the connections to eight-inch diameter pipes (refer to Section 4.10, *Utilities and Service Systems*). As described above, the proposed project would not result in a substantial impact on wastewater treatment facilities. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

Goal 3: *Abate non-point source water pollution.*

Consistency: To reduce non-point source water pollution to the extent feasible, the proposed project would incorporate pre- and post-construction Best Management Practices (BMPs), consistent with the City of Los Altos, County of Santa Clara, and state regulations. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 3.1: *Control surface runoff water discharges into the storm water system to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit and the receiving water limitations assigned by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board.*

Consistency: The proposed project would comply with the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES), which is administered by the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 3.2: *Establish non-point source pollution control measures and programs to attempt to reduce and control the discharge of pollutants into the City's storm drains and local creeks.*

Consistency: The proposed project would incorporate pre- and post-construction BMPs to reduce non-point source water pollution that would enter the City's storm drains and eventually Hale, Permanente, and Adobe Creeks. In conformance with City requirements, the proposed project would develop Stormwater Management Plans (SWMPs) for each phase of project construction to ensure compliance with City of Los Altos and NPDES permit requirements. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 3.3: *Minimize the amount of impervious surfaces and directly connected impervious surfaces in areas of new development and redevelopment and where feasible maximize on-site infiltration of storm water runoff.*

Consistency: The proposed project would increase the amount of impervious surfaces on the site by approximately two percent of the total area of the project site. Although the

project does not include specific treatment control measures at this conceptual stage, the proposed site plan includes many landscaped areas throughout the site that provide opportunities for the installation of grass swales or bioretention areas. During the final design stages of each phase of project construction, the project will be designed to maximize on-site infiltration and to minimize directly connected impervious surfaces, to the extent feasible. For these reasons, the proposed project would be consistent with this policy.

Policy 3.4: *Implement pollution prevention methods supplemented by pollutant source controls and treatment. Use small collection strategies located at, or as close as possible to the source (i.e., the point where water initially meets the ground) to minimize the transport or urban runoff and pollutants offsite.*

Consistency: As described above, the proposed project incorporates pre- and post-construction BMPs, and will include measures to treat runoff on-site prior to outfall into the City's storm drain system. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 4: *Maintain adequate sewer, gas, water, electric power, and communications systems and facilities in Los Altos.*

Consistency: The proposed project would have adequate gas, water, electric power, and communications systems and facilities. The project includes upgrades to the sewer system to ensure there will be adequate capacity to serve the proposed facilities. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 4.3: *Continue to require utilities in new developments to be placed underground.*

Consistency: The proposed project would place utilities underground. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Goal 5: *Ensure long-term solid waste disposal capacity for Los Altos.*

Consistency: Construction and operation of the proposed project would not generate substantial quantities of additional solid waste that would interfere with the long-term disposal capacity for Los Altos. For this reason, the proposed project is consistent with this policy.

Policy 5.2: *Reduce the total volume of the solid waste stream.*

Consistency: As required for LEED certification, the project includes storage and collection of recyclables, which would help reduce the volume of solid waste generated by the on-site uses. Other waste reduction measures that would help the project obtain LEED certification include: recycling construction debris, reusing building materials in the construction of the proposed facilities, and using materials with recycled content during project construction. With implementation of these waste reduction measures, the proposed project would be consistent with this policy.

3.2 BAY AREA 2005 OZONE STRATEGY

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), in cooperation with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), prepared the Bay Area 2005 Ozone Strategy (Ozone Strategy). The Ozone Strategy shows how the San Francisco Bay Area will achieve compliance with the state one-hour air quality standard for ozone as expeditiously as practicable and how the region will reduce transport of ozone and ozone precursors to neighboring air basins. The Ozone Strategy updates Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and other assumptions in the 2000 Clean Air Plan (CAP) related to the reduction of ozone in the atmosphere and serves as the current CAP for the Bay Area. The consistency of the proposed project with this regional plan is primarily a question of consistency with population/employment assumptions utilized in developing the Ozone Strategy, which were based on ABAG *Projections 2002*.

Consistency: The proposed project does not include the construction of or demolition of residential uses. The proposed Los Altos Community Center Master Plan is intended to serve the existing population, as well as meet future needs associated with changing demographics and anticipated growth, as envisioned in the Los Altos General Plan. The increase in on-site employees resulting from the project is expected to be minor. The project would be consistent with the Ozone Strategy, given that it would not result in a population increase over what is currently planned for the City of Los Altos. In addition, the project may actually reduce VMT in the area by reducing the distance Los Altos residents need to travel to access a swim center and other community facilities. Overall, the location, design, and nature of the proposed project support the goals of reducing vehicle trips and VMT, which would reduce emissions of ozone precursors from automobiles.

3.3 STATE WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT

The Federal Clean Water Act requires local municipalities to implement measures to control construction and post-construction pollution entering local storm drainage systems to the maximum extent practicable. In compliance with the Federal Clean Water Act, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) manages the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Construction Activities and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) manages the Municipal Storm Water NPDES Permit. Two programs, the Nonpoint Source Pollution Program and the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP), have been implemented under the NPDES permit to regulate construction and post-construction runoff.

3.3.1 *Nonpoint Source Pollution Program*

In 1988, the SWRCB adopted the Nonpoint Source Management Program in an effort to control nonpoint source pollution in California. In December 1999, the Plan was updated to comply with the requirements of Section 319 of the Clean Water Act and Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendment of 1990. The Nonpoint Source Management Program requires individual permits to control discharge associated with construction activities. The Nonpoint Source Program is managed by the SWRCB under the NPDES General Permit for Construction Activities. Projects must comply with the requirements of the Nonpoint Source Program if:

- they disturb one or more acres of soil; or

- if they disturb less than one acre of soil but are part of a larger development that, in total, disturbs one acre or more of soil.

The NPDES General Permit for Construction Activities requires the developer to submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to the SWRCB and to prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to control discharge associated with construction activities.

Consistency: Development on the site will conform to the requirements of the countywide NPDES permit regarding erosion and sedimentation control during construction (refer to Section 4.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*). Therefore, the project is consistent with the NPDES General Permit for Construction Activities.

3.3.2 *Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program*

The Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP), previously called the Santa Clara Valley Non-point Source Program, was developed in response to the Federal Clean Water Act, in accordance with the requirements of the 1986 San Francisco Bay Basin Water Quality Control Plan. The purpose of the program is to reduce water pollution associated with urban stormwater runoff.

In 1990, the RWQCB issued (and reissued in 2001) an area-wide NPDES municipal stormwater permit to the SCVURPPP. This common permit allows each of the SCVURPPP's 15 co-permittees, including the City of Los Altos, to discharge stormwater from their storm drain systems to the San Francisco Bay. Under the provisions of the NPDES Permit, the City is required to take steps within its area of authority to reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater to the maximum extent practical. An amendment to Provision C.3 of the SCVURPPP NPDES permit requires new and redevelopment projects that result in the addition or replacement of impervious surfaces totaling 10,000 square feet or more to include specific construction and post-construction stormwater treatment measures. According to Provision C.3, applicable projects must implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) for reducing the volume of runoff to the maximum extent practicable and treat all runoff on-site prior to outfall into the drainage system.

Consistency: The proposed project is subject to the requirements of the SCVURPPP. As discussed in Section 4.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, the proposed project will include applicable BMPs during and after construction. These BMPs will ensure that contaminants do not enter the stormwater system, erosion or sedimentation does not impact local waterways, and the rate of stormwater runoff from the existing project site is minimized to the maximum extent practicable. Stormwater Management Plans (SWMPs) will be developed prior to issuance of building permits for each phase of project construction, to ensure compliance with City of Los Altos and NPDES permit requirements. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with the SCVURPPP.

3.4 SANTA CLARA COUNTY CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is the Congestion Management Agency (CMA) for Santa Clara County and oversees the Santa Clara County Congestion Management Program (CMP), last updated in July 1995. Relevant State legislation requires that all urbanized counties in California prepare a CMP in order to obtain each county's share of increased gas tax revenues. The CMP legislation requires that each CMP contain five mandatory elements: 1) a system definition and traffic level of service (LOS) standard element; 2) a transit service and

standards element; 3) a transportation demand management and trip reduction element; 4) a land use impact analysis element; and 5) a capital improvement element. Santa Clara County's CMP includes the five mandated elements and three additional elements, including a county-wide transportation model and database element, an annual monitoring and conformance element, and a deficiency plan element.

Consistency: The Transportation Impact Analysis prepared for the proposed project (refer to Appendix C) meets the requirements of the City of Los Altos and the Congestion Management Agency. As discussed in Section 4.3, *Transportation and Traffic*, project-generated traffic would not impact CMP facilities. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with the CMP.

SECTION 4 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

4.1 LAND USE

4.1.1 Regulatory Setting

4.1.1.1 *City of Los Altos General Plan and Zoning Ordinance*

The City of Los Altos General Plan is an adopted statement of goals and policies for the future character and quality of development of the community. The Zoning Ordinance establishes various districts within the City and specifies the lawful and unlawful uses within the districts to encourage the most appropriate use of land within the City. The Zoning Ordinance also contains design standards that apply to development within each district.

The 18-acre project site is designated *Public and Institutional* on the General Plan. This land use designation allows for governmental, institutional, academic, group residence, church, community service uses and lands, utilities, easements, rights-of-way, and City-owned parking facilities. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.6:1, although the anticipated development intensity for the *Public and Institutional* land use designation is a FAR of 0.35:1.

The project site is zoned *Public and Community Facilities* (PCF). The purpose of the PCF District is to provide for the use and occupancy of governmental, public utility, educational buildings and facilities and other uses.

The project site is not the subject of any other land use plans, policies, or regulations, including a habitat conservation plan (HCP) or natural community conservation plan (NCCP).

4.1.2 Existing Conditions

The following discussion identifies the existing conditions on and surrounding the project site in terms of land uses. An aerial photograph of the project site and surrounding land uses is shown on Figure 1-3. Photos of the project site and surrounding area are shown on the following pages.

4.1.2.1 *Land Uses on the Project Site*

The 18-acre project site is developed with the Civic Center Complex, Hillview Community Center, library, Los Altos Youth Center (LAYC), History House and Museum, Neutra House, Bus Barn Theater, an orchard, a soccer field, and a baseball field.

The existing City Hall is a one-story, approximately 9,882-square foot building, located in the northwestern corner of the site. The existing 11,641-square foot Los Altos Police Station is located in the northeastern portion. Along the northern site boundary is a parking lot serving the City Hall and Police Station. The existing apricot orchard, an outdoor children's play area, and the one-story, 5,930-square foot LAYC building are located between the City Hall and Police Station. Approximately five acres of the site is covered by the orchard, including several rows in the northeastern corner near the Police Station and adjacent to San Antonio Road near the City Hall. South of the orchard is the existing 47,866-square foot, one-story library. A courtyard with a fountain and benches is located near to the southwest corner of the library along San Antonio Road.

Photo 1 - View of the existing soccer field on the southwestern corner of the site. The buildings on the adjacent commercial property can be seen in the background, and the sidewalk along Hillview Avenue can be seen on the left side of the photo. A parking lot would be constructed at this location under the proposed Master Plan.

Photo 2 - View of the existing Bus Barn Theater, looking north from Hillview Avenue across the existing soccer field. A Swim Center would be constructed at this location under the proposed Master Plan. The large oak tree, shown on the left side of the photo, would be preserved.

PHOTOS 1 AND 2

Photo 3 - View of the existing Hillview Community Center, looking northeast from Hillview Avenue. The Community Center would be demolished and a soccer field would be constructed at this location under the proposed Master Plan.

Photo 4 - View of the Neutra House, looking northeast from Hillview Avenue. The Neutra House and surrounding landscaping would remain unchanged under the proposed Master Plan.

PHOTOS 3 AND 4

Photo 5 - View of the existing children's play area that is located on the south side of the existing baseball field. A landscaped parking lot would be constructed at this location under the proposed Master Plan. The trees lining the eastern site boundary, shown on the right side of this photo, would be retained.

Photo 6 - View of the Museum, looking north from the parking lot. The History House can be seen in the background on the left side of the photo. The History House and Museum would remain unchanged under the proposed Master Plan.

PHOTOS 5 AND 6

Photo 7 - View of the communications tower that is located adjacent to the south side of the existing Police Station. This tower would be relocated adjacent to the new Police Station under the proposed Master Plan.

Photo 8 - View of the existing Police Station. This building would be demolished and a parking lot serving the new Community Center would be constructed at this location under the proposed Master Plan. The magnolia tree shown on the right side of the photo would be removed.

PHOTOS 7 AND 8

Photo 9 - View of a children's play area with the Los Altos Youth Center (LACY) building with in the background. The LACY building and children's play area would be demolished, and the new Community Center and City Hall would be constructed at this location under the proposed Master Plan.

Photo 10 - View of the existing City Hall building and surrounding orchard trees, looking north from San Antonio Road. Under the proposed Master Plan, the existing City Hall building would be demolished and the new Police Station and main entrance would be constructed at this location. Two rows of apricot trees would be retained or replaced along San Antonio Road.

PHOTOS 9 AND 10

Photo 11 - View of the existing San Antonio Road, Main Street, and West Edith Avenue intersection, looking northwest from San Antonio Road. Connor Park and the senior housing facility are in the background of the photo. The main entrance to the site would at this intersection and the pedestrian facilities at this intersection would be improved, under the proposed Master Plan.

PHOTO 11

The Los Altos History House and Museum and associated gardens (collectively referred to as the History House and Museum) are located in the center of the site, just east of the library. The History House is a three-story, 1,700-square foot farmhouse built by J. Gilbert Smith, the former property owner that planted the original apricot orchard. As described in Section 4.6, *Cultural Resources*, the house and orchard are designated as historic landmarks by the City. The museum building is a three-story, 8,200-square foot building.

An existing soccer field is located in the southwestern corner of the site, adjacent to Hillview Avenue. On the north side of the soccer field is a small parking lot, several picnic tables beneath two large oak trees, the 4,570-square foot Bus Barn Theater, and a small building containing public restrooms. A large parking lot is located east of the soccer field. North of this parking lot and east of the History House and Museum is an existing baseball field. An outdoor children's play area is provided on the south side of the baseball field, and bleachers and a fitness par course are located to the west. An existing pathway connecting to East Edith Avenue/Cielito Drive is located along the north edge of the baseball field.

The existing community center, located in the southeastern portion of the site, consists of eight one-story buildings totaling 33,970 square feet. The individual buildings are connected by canopy-covered paved walkways. The total area of these external circulation areas is approximately 6,350 square feet. Landscaped courtyards with a community garden and two bocce ball courts are also provided between the buildings. A senior center and a private preschool operate within the community center. An outdoor play area associated with the preschool is adjacent to the eastern site boundary. In the southeastern corner of the project site is the 750-square foot, one-story Neutra House. As described in Section 4.6, *Cultural Resources*, the Neutra House was moved onto the site in 2005, and was adapted for reuse as a small conference center.

Two driveways off San Antonio Road provide access to the parking areas in the central portion of the site and the lot along the northern boundary. Two additional driveways off Hillview Avenue provide direct access to the large parking lot located west of the community center, which connects to the other parking areas on the site. A one-way turnaround driveway is also located off Hillview Avenue, just south of the community center. A north-south access road links the northern lot to the other on-site parking areas.

A network of concrete pedestrian pathways connects the on-site buildings, particularly in the area between City Hall and the History House and Museum. An existing pathway connecting to East Edith Avenue is located north of the baseball field. Landscaping is provided within the parking lots, along the pathways, and adjacent to the existing buildings. Various statues and pieces of art are found adjacent to the City Hall and library.

Existing Setbacks

The existing library is located approximately 80 feet from San Antonio Road and 70 feet from the property line with the adjacent commercial buildings. The existing City Hall is set back about 75 feet from the San Antonio Road and 75 feet from the northern property line. The Police Station is currently set back approximately 120 feet from the northern property line and approximately 85 feet from the eastern property line. The nearest residences on Cielito Drive to the east and on Sioux Lane to the north are approximately 100 feet and 140 feet from the Police Station. The edge of the existing baseball field is about 15 feet from the nearest residence on Cielito Drive. The existing community center is currently set back approximately 40 feet from the adjacent residential property lines. The soccer field extends to the sidewalk on Hillview Avenue and edge of the western property line.

4.1.2.2 *Land Uses Surrounding the Project Site*

The project site is located in a developed commercial and residential neighborhood, adjacent to the Downtown Core area. San Antonio Road and a commercial property with two buildings form the western site boundary, while Hillview Avenue forms the southern boundary. One- and two-story single-family residences are located immediately north and west of the site, and south of the site across Hillview Avenue. An AT&T-owned utilities/communications facility located on San Antonio Road also abuts the northern site boundary. Across San Antonio Road to the west are various commercial uses, a senior housing facility, and public park.

Hillview Avenue is a residential street with relatively low traffic volumes. San Antonio Road is a four-lane arterial street that connects downtown Los Altos to El Camino Real, and as a result, has relatively high traffic volumes. San Antonio Road intersects with Edith Avenue and Main Street just west of the existing City Hall. Both San Antonio Road and Hillview Avenue have sidewalks on each side of the street in the project area. Several rows of orchard trees are located on the site adjacent to San Antonio Road, and about 17 street trees are located along Hillview Avenue.

The surrounding residential uses are designated on the General Plan as *Single Family (3.0-4.0 du/net acre)*, also referred to as *Single Family Medium Lot*. Land use designations on the west side of San Antonio Road in the project area include *Planned Community*, *Park*, *Public and Institutional*, and *Downtown Commercial*.

4.1.2.3 *Visual Character*

The visual character of the site and surrounding area is one of a mature mixed-use community with a small-town atmosphere. The Downtown core, located southwest of the site, has a pedestrian-oriented village setting. The surrounding low-density residential neighborhood and commercial uses are predominantly one- and two-story structures. San Antonio Road and Hillview Avenue opposite the site are lined with mature trees and landscaping. San Antonio Road also has a landscaped median in the project vicinity.

Due to the flat topography and existing surrounding development, visibility of the project site is limited. Views of the site are generally limited to the adjacent development and roadways, including San Antonio Road and Hillview Avenue. The most prominent visual feature on the site is the Police Station communication tower, which is located at the south end of the Police Station (refer to Photo 7). The tower is approximately 140 feet tall. The site is not located within a designated scenic viewshed or along a scenic highway.

The existing community, civic, and recreational facility buildings currently cover approximately 16 percent of the total project site, open space (i.e., landscaping, orchard and playfields) covers approximately 46 percent of the site, and the remainder of the site (approximately 38 percent) is developed with surface parking, driveways, and pathways.

The existing City Hall, Police Station, LAYC, and library are steel-frame buildings with wood roofs. The Hillview Community Center, History House and Museum are wood-frame construction, and the Bus Barn Theater is a pre-fabricated metal structure. The on-site buildings have a maximum height of 30 feet. The tallest buildings are the History House and Museum, which are two- and three-stories, respectively, and are located among large oak trees in the center of the site. The rest of the buildings are one-story tall. The buildings on the site are relatively spread out and separated by surface parking and open space areas.

The on-site landscaping is well-maintained and generally includes a variety of trees and shrubs. Mature trees are scattered throughout the property, and several large, mature oak trees are within the History House and Museum. The orchard in the vicinity of City Hall consists of a few hundred apricot trees with a wide range of age and condition. The soccer and baseball fields separate the on-site buildings from adjacent development and further contribute to the openness of the site.

Nighttime lighting is provided within the parking lots on the project site. There are streetlights on San Antonio Road in the project vicinity, but none on Hillview Avenue. Nighttime lighting in the surrounding neighborhood is limited.

4.1.2.4 *Agricultural Resources*

The existing apricot orchard on the site is actively used for agricultural production, and represents one of the last remnants of orchards that were found throughout the Los Altos area prior to development of the City. The orchard is designated as a historic resource by the City of Los Altos.

The project site is not designated as farmland by the California State Department of Agriculture and neither parcel is under a Williamson Act contract. The surrounding area is primarily residential and commercial, and the properties adjacent to the project site are not used for agricultural purposes.

4.1.2.5 *Population and Housing*

According to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the population of the City of Los Altos in 2000 was 27,693 with 10,462 households and an average of 2.65 persons per household. The population of Los Altos is expected to increase to approximately 28,400 in 2010 and to 30,200 in 2030.[6] There are no dwelling units located on the site.

4.1.3 Land Use Impacts

4.1.3.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, a land use impact is considered significant if the project would:

- Physically divide an established community; or
- 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; or
- Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan (HCP) or natural community conservation plan (NCCP); or
- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway; or
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site or surroundings; or

[6] According to the Association of Bay Area Governments, *Projections 2009*.

- Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

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

- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract; or

- Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use; or

- Induce substantial population growth, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure); or

- Displace substantial numbers of existing housing or people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The Los Altos Community Center Master Plan proposes to reconstruct and relocate on-site the City Hall, Police Station, Hillview Community Center, Los Altos Library, Bus Barn Theater, soccer field, baseball field, children's play areas, and bocce ball courts. The History House and Museum and the Neutra House would remain in place and unchanged, but the LAYC building would be demolished. The project also proposes construction of a swim center, which represents the only new use on the site. The project would increase the square footage of public and institutional uses on the site by approximately 94,128 square feet. In addition, the project includes improvements to the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection.

4.1.3.2 *City of Los Altos General Plan and Zoning Ordinance*

The proposed redevelopment project, including the swim center, is allowed under the existing *Public and Institutional* General Plan land use designation and the *Public and Community Facilities* zoning. The FAR of the proposed project is 0.26, which complies with the maximum intensity of development for the *Public and Institutional* land use designation.

As discussed in Section 3.1 of this EIR, the proposed project is consistent with the plans and policies in the City of Los Altos General Plan. The proposed project would comply with the City's Tree Ordinance (see Section 4.6, *Biological Resources* of this EIR), the City's Green Building Regulations (see Section 4.11, *Energy*), and other City of Los Altos regulations. For these reasons, the project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.1.3.3 *Land Use Compatibility*

Land use conflicts can arise from two basic causes: 1) a new development or land use may cause impacts to persons or the physical environment in the vicinity of the project site or elsewhere; or 2) conditions on or near the project site may have impacts on the persons or development introduced onto the site by the proposed project. Both of these circumstances are aspects of land use compatibility. Incompatibility may arise from placing a particular development or land use at an inappropriate location, or from some aspect of the project's design or scope. Depending on the nature of the impact and its severity, land use compatibility conflicts can range from minor irritations to potentially significant effects on human health and safety. The discussion below distinguishes

between potential impacts from the project upon persons and the physical environment, and potential impacts from the project's surroundings upon the project itself.

Land Use Impacts from the Project

The project site is developed with public, institutional, and community facilities, and is surrounded by commercial and residential uses. The project is the redevelopment of an existing use, which is generally compatible with the surrounding uses. The project does not introduce a new land use to the project area. Although the site does not currently have a swim center, this facility is included in the general category of public, institutional, and community uses. As discussed in the respective sections of this EIR, the proposed project would not result in long-term traffic, noise, or air quality impacts that could affect the surrounding neighborhood. During project construction, however, significant temporary noise and air quality impacts may occur (refer to Section 4.3, *Noise* and Section 4.4, *Air Quality*). Mitigation measures are included in the proposed project to reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

The proposed buildings would be up to two stories tall and would have a maximum height of 30 feet above existing grade. The building setbacks would meet or exceed setbacks required by the zoning code. The proposed setbacks and design features proposed by the project to promote compatibility with surrounding land uses at each of the project site interfaces (i.e., north, south, east, and west) are described below (refer to Figure 2.1, Proposed Site Plan).

North

The new City Hall and Police Station would remain in the northern portion of the site. The Police Station would be relocated from the northeastern corner to the northwestern corner, in the general location of the existing City Hall. The Police Station would be setback approximately 40 feet from San Antonio Road and approximately 35 feet from the northern property line. The proposed community center would be relocated to the general location of the existing Police Station and LAYC. The community center would be setback approximately 140 feet from the northern property line and approximately 125 feet from the eastern property line. The new City Hall would be located near the southwest corner of the community center, approximately 200 feet from San Antonio Road.

The existing surface parking lot in the northern portion of the site would be modified to serve the new community center, City Hall, and Police Station. This reconfigured lot would include existing and new landscaping. Some of the existing trees lining the northern property line north of City Hall would be removed; however, the on-site trees and the chain-link fence lined with landscaping along the remainder of the northern boundary would be preserved. Under the proposed Master Plan, the secondary access to the adjacent AT&T facility via the site would no longer be provided. The existing driveway off San Antonio Road would provide access to the AT&T facility. This existing driveway is sufficient to serve the AT&T facility. The existing wood fence east of the existing Police Station would remain, and the existing apricot trees located in the upper northeast corner of the site will be preserved.

Compared to the existing Police Station, the proposed community center would be set back farther from the adjacent residential uses on Cielito Drive to the east and Sioux Lane to the north. In combination with the proposed setback, the landscaped parking lot would screen the existing residences to the north and east, and substantially reduce potential noise and other land use impacts from the community center at this interface. Since the new Police Station would be in the approximate location of the existing City Hall, the interface with the communications facility to the north would not change substantially.

West

The new library would be constructed in the general location of the existing library, approximately 40 feet from San Antonio Road. The driveway, located south of the library and immediately north of the commercial buildings adjacent to the site, would continue to provide access to the site. The angled parking on this driveway would be removed. Landscaping would be planted along San Antonio Road, replacing the existing rows of the remnant orchard. Although the two-story library building would be slightly closer to San Antonio Road, it would be compatible with the commercial uses across San Antonio Road. Given that the new Police Station would essentially replace the existing City Hall, the interface with the senior housing development and the public park across San Antonio would not change substantially.

A new public access driveway off San Antonio Road would be constructed between the proposed Police Station and library. The driveway would connect to the intersection of San Antonio Road, West Edith Avenue, and Main Street. Although the project would result in a busier intersection with greater traffic volumes, the proposed improvements to this intersection (i.e., installation of concrete pavers and additional landscaping) are intended to create a stronger connection between Downtown and the site, improve traffic circulation and pedestrian accessibility, and enhance the aesthetic quality of the area.

The construction of the proposed swim center, associated parking lot, and children's play areas in the general location of the existing soccer field and Bus Barn Theater would not substantially change the interface with the commercial buildings to the west. While the types of noises experienced at the adjacent commercial uses may change as a result of the project, the swim center would be located approximately 130 feet from the western property line and most of the existing trees along the western property line would be retained. The existing and proposed landscaping along the property line and within the parking lot would also provide a visual and noise buffer between the on-site recreational facilities and the neighboring commercial use. For these reasons, no new land use compatibility impacts at this interface would result.

South

The existing community center and the large parking lot in the southeastern portion of the site would be replaced by a new soccer field and a new baseball field, respectively. As described above, the proposed swim center and a surface parking lot would replace the existing soccer field adjacent to Hillview Avenue. The project includes maintaining the existing street trees and enhancing the approximately 20- to 50-foot buffer along the Hillview Avenue with additional landscaping.

The interface between the new recreational facilities and the residences to the south would not change substantially, given that a recreational use (soccer field) and parking lot currently exists in this general location. Although average noise levels could increase, mitigation measures are included in the project to reduce noise levels from the swim center to a less than significant level (refer to Section 4.3, *Noise*). As discussed in Section 4.2, *Traffic*, traffic on Hillview Avenue would decrease with implementation of the proposed Master Plan.

East

As described above, the new soccer field would replace the existing community center in the southeastern portion of the site. The project proposes to modify the existing parking lot adjacent to Hillview Avenue and retain the Neutra House in the southeastern corner of the site. The existing baseball field would be replaced by an open space area consisting of turf grass, landscaping, and/or park amenities. This area would temporarily be used for parking during Phase 2 of project

construction, and could be developed with community uses in the future. The project proposes to retain the existing trees and wood and chain-link fencing along the eastern site boundary. The existing pathway connecting the site to East Edith Avenue/Cielito Drive would be maintained and enhanced with landscaping.

The edge of the soccer field would be approximately 100 feet from the nearest residence to the east. Existing ambient noise levels in this area are low. The noise from the use of the soccer field would be different than the noise types and levels associated with the community center, preschool, outdoor play areas, and bocce ball courts. Noise levels would increase, however; mitigation measures would reduce the increase to a less than significant level (refer to Section 4.3, *Noise*).

The replacement of the baseball field with an open space area used for passive recreational purposes and temporary parking would reduce the level of use and noise levels experienced at the existing residences to the north. The addition of landscaping along the existing pathway connection would provide screening to further reduce potential land use impacts to the adjacent residential uses. No new land use impacts are anticipated to occur along this interface.

As discussed above, setbacks, landscaping, and design features and mitigation are proposed by the project to promote compatibility with surrounding land uses at each of the project site interfaces. The proposed project does not include any features that would physically divide an established community (such as a new major roadway or railroad line). Rather, the proposed improvements to the San Antonio Road/West Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection would provide a safer, more convenient pedestrian connection between Downtown and the project site. For these reasons and those discussed above, the redevelopment of the site is not expected to result in land use impacts upon the surrounding land uses when compared to the existing conditions. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Land Use Impacts to the Project

As discussed above, the proposed project is the redevelopment of an existing use that is compatible with surrounding land uses and vice-versa. Existing ambient noise levels along San Antonio Road exceed those recommended for the proposed library, however, mitigation measures are included in the proposed project to reduce interior noise levels within the library to a less than significant level (refer to Section 4.3, *Noise*). There are no known conditions within the vicinity of the project site that would have an adverse impact on persons or activities on the site. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.1.3.4 *Change in Visual Character*

Aesthetic values are largely subjective. Particular viewpoints as to what constitutes an adverse visual impact will differ among individuals. The discussion below, therefore, focuses on change in visual character and views, without placing value on the aesthetic quality of a particular condition.

The project proposes to redevelop the site, which includes replacing a total of 13 older one-story tall buildings with six new buildings (including the new swim center facility) up to two stories tall with a maximum height of 30 feet above existing grade. The History House and Museum and the Neutra House would remain nearly unchanged under the proposed Master Plan. The proposed project would decrease the building coverage on the entire site by approximately 30,000 square feet (from about 16 percent to 13 percent of the total site area). The proposed building setbacks would meet or exceed setbacks required by the zoning code.

The proposed site layout groups together the recreational uses (baseball field, soccer field, swim center, bocce ball courts, children's play areas, and open space) in the south-east portion of the site. The civic and community uses (City Hall, Police Station, community center, library, and theater) are grouped together in the north-west portion. The History House and Museum would remain unchanged in the central portion of the site. The proposed project creates a stronger presence of the civic center complex on the site, while increasing the open space character and park setting of the remainder of the site.

Although the proposed buildings would be up to one story taller than most of the existing buildings on the project site that they would replace, the maximum height of the proposed buildings would be similar in height to the existing commercial uses and the two-story residences in the surrounding neighborhood, which are allowed to be up to 27 feet in height. In addition, the new two-story buildings would be located along San Antonio Road or in the north-central portion of the site, away from surrounding residential uses.

It is anticipated that the proposed Master Plan would require the removal of approximately 192 trees on the project site; however, existing landscaping would be retained to the greatest extent feasible. Almost half of the existing trees, including 67 of the largest 97 trees, would be retained. The trees to be preserved are mostly located along the perimeter of the site and surrounding the History House and Museum. Of the 52 existing coast live oak trees, 47 would remain on the site.

New landscaping is proposed throughout the project site to replace and augment the existing landscaping that is removed during construction of the project. To maintain the orchard-like nature of the project site, the proposed landscaping will include apricot trees located around the new Community Center. Some of the younger apricot trees located in the existing orchard area may be transplanted in the new landscape areas, and the existing apricot trees located in the upper northeast corner of the site will be preserved.

Until the replanted trees reach maturity, they would not provide the same aesthetic value as some of the existing trees to be removed by the project. Most of the trees to be removed, however, are located on the interior of the site and, therefore, their removal would not substantially change existing views of the project site. The existing and proposed landscaping around the perimeter of the site would serve as a visual buffer between the new on-site buildings and the surrounding neighborhood.

The proposed improvements to the San Antonio Road/West Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection would enhance the streetscape by installing additional landscaping, more visible crosswalks, and/or other pedestrian-scale amenities. The intent of the improvements is to provide a more attractive pedestrian environment and vehicular gateway to Downtown, and create a stronger visual connection between the site and nearby uses.

The communications tower would be relocated adjacent to the new Police Station. The tower would be located closer to San Antonio Road and may be more visible to the surrounding area, particularly to the adjacent uses to the west. The relocation of the tower approximately 400 feet to the west would not result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, given that the tower currently exists on the site.

The visual change that would result from the project is not substantial. The project would be subject to the City's design review process, which will ensure the proposed redevelopment project conforms to all City design review and zoning regulations, including the City of Los Altos Design Guidelines. For these reasons and those stated above, the proposed project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character of the site or its surroundings. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Light and Glare

Nighttime lighting would continue to be provided within the parking lots, along pathways, and adjacent to buildings on the project site. The project may include the replacement of streetlights along San Antonio Road. Outdoor lighting would also be located throughout the swim center for the purpose of allowing use during the evening, and for the security and safety of the community swim center users. Low-pressure sodium lighting would be used. The lights will be fully shielded to prevent light spill over onto the adjacent properties.

The lighting would not substantially increase the level of illumination in the project area. The outdoor lighting proposed by the project would not be excessive and, as required by City Code, would be shielded and angled down towards the ground. For these reasons, the proposed project would not result in significant light and glare impacts.

4.1.3.5 *Agricultural Resource Impacts*

The majority of the project site is currently developed with structures. The site is not designated as Farmland, zoned for agricultural use, or under a Williamson Act contract. The remnant orchard located in the northern portion of the site primarily consists of apricot trees. The health condition and ages of the trees vary, and some insect activity has been observed. Consistent with the agricultural heritage of Los Altos, the project proposes to plant apricot trees throughout the site, particularly around the new Community Center. Some of the younger trees located in the existing orchard area may be transplanted in the new landscape areas, and the existing apricot trees located in the upper northeast corner of the site will be preserved.

Although the orchard is actively used for agricultural production, reducing the size of the on-site orchard would not result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. For the reasons above, the proposed project would not result in a significant impact to agricultural resources. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.1.3.6 *Population and Housing Impacts*

The proposed project does not include the construction or demolition of residential uses, and therefore, would not affect the City's housing stock. The purpose of the project is to provide enhanced community services and facilities that would meet the current and future needs of the on-site employees and community, as anticipated under the Los Altos General Plan. Although the proposed City Hall, Police Station, community center, and library would be larger than the existing facilities, the replacement of these buildings would not substantially increase the number of City employees on the site. The proposed swim center would require new employees, and would result in a minor increase in the total number of employees on the site.

The proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of people or existing housing. The site is served by existing infrastructure and would not extend roads or other infrastructure to undeveloped or unserved areas. The proposed Master Plan would not foster economic or population growth, or result in the construction of additional housing in the surrounding area. For these reasons, the proposed project would not induce substantial population growth in the area. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.1.4 Land Use Conclusion

The proposed Los Altos Community Center Master Plan is consistent with the City's Zoning Ordinance and the policies in the City of Los Altos General Plan. The proposed project would not physically divide the existing community. Operation of the new facilities on the project site would be compatible with the surrounding residential and commercial uses. Mitigation measures are included in the proposed project to reduce operational noise levels to a less than significant level (refer to Section 4.3, *Noise*). While the proposed buildings would be taller than most of the existing buildings on the project site, the project would include appropriate setbacks and landscaping to reduce potential impacts to adjacent residences adjacent.

Given that the proposed project would not affect a scenic vista, damage resources within a scenic highway, or create a new source of substantial light or glare, the project would not result in significant visual impacts.

The proposed project would not result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. Implementation of the proposed Master Plan would not displace people or existing housing, and would not induce substantial population growth in the area.

For these reasons and those stated above, the proposed project would not result in a significant land use impact. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.2 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

This section is based upon a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) prepared for the proposed project by *AECOM* in September 2009, which is included in Appendix C of this EIR. The TIA identifies the impacts to the transportation system that would result from the proposed project. This section is also based on information contained in the TIA prepared for the Los Altos Community Swim Center, which is also included in Appendix C of this EIR.

4.2.1 Regulatory Setting

4.2.1.1 *Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority*

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is the Congestion Management Agency (CMA) for Santa Clara County and oversees the Santa Clara County Congestion Management Program (CMP). The CMP identifies regional intersections in the county that are under the control of the CMA. As the CMA of Santa Clara County, VTA requires a Transportation Impact Analysis if 100 or more peak hour vehicle trips are generated by a proposed project.

As discussed in Section 3, *Consistency with Adopted Plans*, the Los Altos General Plan contains goals and policies that support safe vehicular travel, alternative transportation, and parking management. The City of Los Altos has also established level of service policies that monitor traffic operations at intersections within their jurisdiction.

4.2.2 Existing Setting

The project site is bounded by San Antonio Road to the west and Hillview Avenue to the south. Access to the project site is currently provided by four non-signaled full-access driveways, including two off San Antonio Road and two off Hillview Avenue. The two driveways on San Antonio Road are located north and south of the signalized San Antonio Road/Main Street/Edith Avenue intersection. The driveway north of the intersection provides access to a surface parking lot that serves the existing City Hall, Police Station, and LAYC. This parking lot is connected to the parking lot of the AT&T facility, located adjacent to the northern site boundary. The driveway south of the intersection provides direct access to surface parking areas that serve the existing library.

The two driveways on Hillview Avenue provide access to the large surface parking lot between the existing community center, baseball field and soccer field. In addition, a one-way turnaround driveway with nine parking spaces is also located off Hillview Avenue, at the entrance to the existing community center. Additional surface parking areas are provided adjacent to the Bus Barn Theater and the History House and Museum. A north-south internal driveway links the parking areas on the site (refer to Figure 1-3).

The existing project site currently provides 343 surface parking spaces. There are currently enough parking spaces on the site to accommodate demand generated by the existing uses; however, some of the facilities experience functional parking shortfalls, because sufficient parking is not provided in the parking lots serving these facilities to accommodate peak demand. There are no above- or below-grade parking garages on the site.

4.2.2.1 *Transportation System*

The transportation system in the project area includes the roadway network, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and public transit. These components of the transportation system, as they relate to the project site, are discussed in further detail below.

Roadway Network

Local access is provided by San Antonio Road, Hillview Avenue, and West Edith Avenue. The roadway network is shown on Figure 1-2 and described in further detail below.

San Antonio Road is a major roadway located east of the project site that extends northward from Foothill Expressway to U.S. 101. San Antonio Road is a six-lane roadway north of El Camino Real and a four-lane roadway with Class II bicycle lanes south of El Camino Real. San Antonio Road provides direct access to the site via two full access driveways with left-turn pockets for southbound traffic. In the project area, San Antonio Road has a landscaped median, and parking is generally prohibited along both sides of the roadway.

Hillview Avenue is a two-lane residential street that extends east from San Antonio Road to Osage Avenue. Hillview Avenue provides direct access to the site via two full access driveways and a one-way turnaround driveway. Street parking is allowed on the north side of Hillview Avenue, but is prohibited on the south side in the project area.

West Edith Avenue is a two-lane undivided collector road, extending west from San Antonio Road to West Fremont Road in Los Altos Hills. West Edith Avenue is west of the site, and provides access to the site via San Antonio Road and Foothill Expressway.

Regional access to the project site is provided by Interstate 280 (I-280), Foothill Expressway, and El Camino Real. *I-280* (Junipero Serra Freeway) is an eight-lane, north-south facility with an interchange at El Monte Avenue that serves Los Altos and the project site. *Foothill Expressway* is a four-lane divided expressway that extends between Cupertino and Palo Alto through Los Altos. *El Camino Real* (State Route 82) is generally a six-lane, north-south arterial that runs from San Francisco to San Jose, parallel to and between US-101 and I-280. Foothill Expressway and I-280 are located south of the site, while El Camino Real is located to the north. Access from these regional facilities is provided by San Antonio Road and West Edith Avenue.

Pedestrian Facilities

Pedestrian facilities within the project area include sidewalks and signalized and unsignalized crosswalks. San Antonio Road has an eight-foot sidewalk along the western site boundary. Hillview Avenue has a sidewalk on the north side of roadway along the southern site frontage, although no sidewalks exist on the south side of the roadway. Sidewalks are provided on one or both sides of most of the other streets in the area, including West Edith Avenue. Street lighting is located along San Antonio Road in the project area.

Signalized crosswalks on San Antonio Road occur at Edith Avenue, Almond Avenue, Cuesta Drive and Foothill Expressway. Unsignalized crosswalks are provided on San Antonio Road at the intersections with Hillview Avenue, Hawthorne Avenue, and Pepper Drive. The signalized crosswalks at the San Antonio Road/Main Street/Edith Avenue intersection provide connections to the downtown; however, this intersection is complex because of the number of intersecting streets and because of the angle of Main Street. The signal cycle length is fairly long, and pedestrians crossing San Antonio Road on the south side of the intersection must use at least two crosswalks, each with a separate signal phase.

While there are many pedestrian paths throughout the project site, there are some areas where no sidewalks exist.[7] For example, there are no sidewalks along the internal north-south driveway. The lighting for the on-site pedestrian pathways appears to be inconsistent, as some pathways have many light poles and others have none.

Bicycle Facilities

Bicycle facilities include paths (Class I), lanes (Class II), and routes (Class III). Bike lanes are delineated sections of the roadway that are separated from the vehicle travel lanes by a painted white stripe and are designated for bicycle use. The nearest Class I bike path is provided along Berry Avenue between El Monte Avenue and Miramonte Avenue, southeast of the site. Class II bike lanes are provided on San Antonio Road, Almond Avenue (to the north), and El Monte Avenue (to the east). Bicycles are also allowed on Foothill Expressway.

Public Transit

The VTA provides bus services in the vicinity of the project site. Bus route #40 runs past the site on San Antonio Road between Foothill College in Los Altos Hills and Shoreline Boulevard in Mountain View. The headways for this route are about 30 minutes Monday through Saturday and 60 minutes on Sundays. Bus stops are located west of the site at the corner of San Antonio Road and Hillview Avenue, and north of the site near the driveway to the existing City Hall. Existing sidewalks and crosswalks provide pedestrian access between the project site and the bus stops.

Bus route #40 provides access to the San Antonio Transit Center, located on Showers Drive in Mountain View approximately 1.5 miles north of the site. From the Transit Center, passengers can transfer to other forms of transit, including the Shopping Express Marguerite Service operated by Stanford University. The Marguerite Service, which is free and open to the public, runs between the University and San Antonio Transit Center on evenings and weekends during the academic year. In addition, passengers can walk about a half mile north from the San Antonio Transit Center to the San Antonio Caltrain Station. Caltrain, a commuter rail service operated by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, runs between San Francisco and San José with some service extending to Gilroy.

Light Rail Transit (LRT) services operated by VTA are available at the Mountain View Transit Center, located approximately 2.5 miles from the site. The Mountain View - Winchester LRT line runs seven days a week with various frequencies. Bus route #35 provides access between the San Antonio Transit Center and the Mountain View Transit Center.

4.2.2.2 *Existing Traffic Operations*

The operations of the intersections in the study area were evaluated during the weekday AM and PM peak hours, which are the highest one-hour volume periods between 7:00 and 9:00 AM and between 4:00 and 6:00 PM. The following six intersections were evaluated:

1. San Antonio Road / West Edith Avenue
2. San Antonio Road / Hillview Avenue (unsignalized)
3. San Antonio Road / First Street
4. San Antonio Road / Foothill Expressway
5. West Edith Avenue / First Street
6. West Edith Avenue / Los Altos Avenue / Foothill Expressway

[7] Anderson Brulé Architects, Inc, *Los Altos Community Center Master Plan*, "Existing Facility Assessment," page 143.

None of these intersections are under the control of the CMA, as identified by the Santa Clara County CMP. All of the study intersections are signalized, except for the intersection of San Antonio Road and Hillview Avenue. This unsignalized three-way intersection is stop-controlled at Hillview Avenue and has a left-turn lane from San Antonio Road. Figures showing the location of these intersections, existing intersection lane configurations, and existing AM and PM peak-hour turning movement volumes are included in Appendix C.

Level of Service Methodology

The operations of the roadways were evaluated using Level of Service (LOS) calculations. Level of Service is a qualitative description of an intersection's operation, ranging from LOS A (free-flow conditions with little or no delay) to LOS F (oversaturated conditions where traffic flows exceed design capacity, resulting in long delays). The transportation analysis completed for City of Los Altos General Plan is based on LOS, and the performance criterion for evaluating operations at City-controlled intersections is LOS D.

The 2000 *Highway Capacity Manual* (Transportation Research Board) analysis methodology and TRAFFIX software were used to calculate average control delay (expressed in seconds per vehicle for all approaches), which is then correlated with an LOS rating for each intersection in the study area. At two-way or side-street controlled intersections, LOS is calculated for each control movement, not for the intersection as a whole. For single lane approaches, the control delay is calculated as the average of all movements in the lane. Table 4-1 and Table 4-2, below, summarizes the relationship between delay and LOS for signalized and unsignalized intersections, respectively.

Table 4-1
Level of Service Criteria for Signalized Intersections

Level of Service Description	Average Control Delay Per Vehicle (seconds)
A	≤ 10
B+	10 to 12
B	12 to 18
B-	18 to 20
C+	20 to 23
C	23 to 32
C-	32 to 35
D+	35 to 39
D	39 to 51
D-	51 to 55
E+	55 to 60
E	60 to 75
E-	75 to 80
F	> 80

Source: Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Congestion Management Program, *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines*, June 2003.

Table 4-2 Level of Service Criteria for Unsignalized Intersections		
Level of Service	**Description**	**Average Control Delay Per Vehicle (Seconds)**
A	Little or no delay	≤ 10.0
B	Short traffic delays	10.1 to 15.0
C	Average traffic delays	15.1 to 25.0
D	Long traffic delays	25.1 to 35.0
E	Very long traffic delays	35.1 to 50.0
F	Extreme traffic delays with intersection capacity exceeded	> 50.0
Source: Transportation Research Board, *Highway Capacity Manual*, 2000.		

Existing Intersection Levels of Service

The existing levels of service at the San Antonio Road/Hillview Avenue intersection (#3) were based on turning movement counts collected in March 2009 together with a 24-hour traffic count along Hillview Avenue. Traffic volume counts for other intersections were obtained from two earlier studies: *City of Los Altos Downtown-Wide Traffic and Parking Analysis* (AECOM, January 2008) and *45 Main Street Los Altos* (Fehr and Peers, August 2007). As shown in Table 4-3, all six study intersections operate at an acceptable LOS D or better under existing conditions (refer to Appendix C of this EIR for the complete LOS analysis and the corresponding LOS calculation sheets).

Table 4-3 Intersection Levels of Service							
Intersection	**Peak Hour**	**Existing Conditions**		**Background Conditions**		**Project Conditions**	
		Delay[1]	**LOS**	**Delay[1]**	**LOS**	**Delay[1]**	**LOS**
San Antonio Road, West Edith Avenue, and Main Street	AM	21.4	C+	21.5	C+	28.1	C
	PM	27.4	C	27.8	C	38.9	D+
San Antonio Road and Hillview Avenue	AM	22.4	C	23.0	C	21.3	C
	PM	27.0	D	28.8	D	28.3	D
San Antonio Road, First Street, and Cuesta Drive	AM	15.7	B	15.8	B	18.2	B-
	PM	14.7	B	14.7	B	15.8	B
San Antonio Road and Foothill Expressway	AM	12.9	B	12.9	B	13.0	B
	PM	18.0	B	19.2	B-	20.6	C+
Foothill Expressway and West Edith Avenue	AM	22.2	C+	22.3	C+	22.4	C+
	PM	22.2	C+	22.2	C+	22.3	C+
First Street, Los Altos Avenue, and West Edith Avenue	AM	18.7	B-	18.0	B	18.1	B-
	PM	19.9	B-	20.3	C+	20.6	C+
[1] Average Control Delay Per Vehicle (expressed in seconds) Source: AECOM, April 2009							

As described above, the existing site access driveways are non-signaled, but allow full turning movements (left- and right-turns to and from the site). While the LOS analysis does not address traffic operations at these driveways, it has been observed that queues from the San Antonio Road/West Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection block the driveway near the City Hall building on a regular basis, and left turns out of this driveway are difficult because of the lack of gaps in traffic on San Antonio Road, particularly during the PM peak hour.[8]

4.2.2.3 *Background Conditions*

The peak hour traffic volumes for Background Conditions were estimated by adding the peak hour traffic volumes from approved but not yet constructed projects in the site vicinity to the existing peak hour traffic volumes. The projected traffic was assigned to the study intersections and added to existing volumes. The six approved projects in the project vicinity included in the Background Conditions analysis are:

- 950 San Antonio Road Mixed-Use Development
- 4390 and 4400 El Camino Real Condominium Development
- 100 Mayfield Avenue, Condominium Development
- 45 Main Street, Mixed-Use Development
- 240 Third Street, Mixed-Use Development
- 100 First Street, Mixed-Use Development

Background Intersection Levels of Service

Under Background Conditions, all six study intersections would continue to operate at an acceptable LOS D or better. As shown in Table 4-3 above, the San Antonio Road/Foothill Expressway intersection LOS would change from a B to a B- during the PM peak hour, and the First Street/Los Altos Avenue/W. Edith Avenue intersection LOS would change from a B- to a C+ during the PM peak hour. The remaining intersections are expected to operate at the same level of service as under Existing Conditions. The largest increase in average delay (1.8 seconds) is expected to be at the unsignalized intersection of San Antonio Road and Hillview Avenue, which would continue to operate at LOS D during the PM peak hour.

4.2.3 Transportation and Traffic Impacts

4.2.3.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, a transportation and traffic impact is considered significant if the project would:

- Cause a signalized intersection operating at level D or better under existing conditions to deteriorate to LOS E or F; or

- Cause an increase in the critical movement delay at an signalized intersection operating at LOS E or F under existing conditions by four (4) or more seconds; or

- Cause an unsignalized intersection operating at level D or better under existing conditions to deteriorate to LOS E or F, and result in total traffic volumes that exceed the Caltrans Peak Hour Volume Warrant Criteria; or

[8] Anderson Brulé Architects, Inc, *Los Altos Community Center Master Plan*, "Existing Facility Assessment," page 143.

- Cause an unsignalized intersection already operating at LOS E or F to worsen due to increasing control delay, and result in total traffic volumes that exceed the Caltrans Peak Hour Volume Warrant Criteria; or

- Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system; or

- Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., dangerous intersection) or incompatible uses; or

- Result in inadequate emergency access; or

- Result in inadequate parking capacity; or

- Conflict with adopted plans or policies supporting alternative transportation.

4.2.3.2 *Intersections*

The effect of project-generated traffic on intersections is estimated using a three-step process: (1) trip generation, (2) trip distribution, and (3) trip assignment. In the first step, the amount of traffic that will be entering and exiting the site is estimated on both a daily and a peak-hour basis. In the second step, the directions the trips will use to approach and depart from the site are estimated. The trips are assigned to specific street segments and intersection turning movements in the third step. The results of this analysis are described in the following sections.

Trip Generation

The trip generation for the proposed Master Plan was calculated using the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) trip generation rates (*Trip Generation*, 8th Ed.) for the individual existing and proposed uses on the site. As discussed further below, only the construction of the new library and swim center are expected to generate additional trips to and from the site during the AM and PM peak hours. The removal of the existing preschool that operates within the community center (Children's Corner Preschool) would reduce the number of peak hour trips. The other proposed uses, including the new theater and additional play area space, are not anticipated to affect peak hour traffic. The estimated net increase in project-generated trips is shown in Table 4-4 below.

As shown in Table 4-4, the proposed project is estimated to generate 2,160 additional daily trips with 66 AM peak-hour trips (32 inbound and 34 outbound) and 182 PM peak-hour trips (106 inbound and 76 outbound). The new library is expected to generate additional trips because it would be approximately 19,816 square feet larger than the existing library, provide additional capacity for library materials and resources, and result in a minor increase in the number of employees on the site. Given that the proposed 39,860-square foot swim center would be a new use to the project site, it is expected to generate new vehicular traffic in the project area. The trips generated by the proposed swim center are based on a TIA completed for a similar swim center project proposed but never built on a different site in Los Altos (Fehr and Peers, March 2004).

Table 4-4
Project Trip Generation Rates and Estimates

Land Use	Size	Daily Rate	AM Peak Hour				PM Peak Hour				Daily Trips
			Rate	In	Out	Total	Rate	In	Out	Total	
Swim Center (new)	39,860 sf	**		59	65	124		74	42	116	1,419
Library (expansion)	19,816 sf	56.24/ 1,000 sf	1.04	14	6	20	7.3	70	76	146	1,114
Theater (expansion)	100 seats	0.66/seat	No peak hour trips generated								66
Children's Corner Preschool (remove)	98 students*	4.48/ student	0.8	(41)	(37)	(78)	0.82	(38)	(42)	(80)	(439)
Net Total				**32**	**34**	**66**		**106**	**76**	**182**	**2,160**

* Under existing conditions, the Children's Corner Preschool has an enrollment of 209 students and an average of 18 staff/teachers. The students are divided into two sessions; the Monday-Wednesday-Friday session (111 students) and the Tuesday-Thursday session (98 students). The lower number of students was used to provide a conservative estimate of the net increase in project trips.
** Trips generated by the swim center are based on the *Transportation Impact Analysis for the Los Altos Community Pool* (Fehr and Peers, March 2004).
Source: AECOM, 2009, and the Institute of Traffic Engineers, *Trip Generation* (8th Ed.)

The proposed replacement of the existing 100-seat Bus Barn Theater with a new 200-seat theater is estimated to generate approximately 66 additional daily trips, due to the higher seating capacity. However, the new trips associated with the audience would not be made during the commute peak hours, given that performances and events would continue to occur mainly during the weekend or weekday evenings. Trips by employees or performance crew are not expected to increase due to construction of the new theater. Therefore, the peak hour trip generation would not change due to the replacement of the theater.

The number of community center, City Hall, and Police Station employees would not increase as a result of the proposed project. The larger facilities would better accommodate existing employees, services, and programs. Therefore, the new community center, City Hall, and Police Station would not generate more traffic than their existing counterparts. However, peak hour trips associated with the community center and visitors to the Police Station were redistributed to the new driveway at the San Antonio Road/Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection, as described further below.

Under the proposed Master Plan, the new soccer and baseball fields would be located in the southeastern portion of the site, in same general location as the existing fields proposed for removal. Given that the level of activity associated with these fields is not expected to increase, the replacement of the soccer and baseball fields on the site would not generate a substantial number of additional trips. Given that the existing Neutra House, History House, and History Museum would remain in their existing locations with no change in size or activity level, additional vehicular trips would not be generated by these facilities.

Although the project proposes to increase the square footage of outdoor children's play areas on the site by approximately 2,800 square feet, the new play areas are not expected to generate additional vehicular trips. It is assumed that most users of this type of park facility would be residents living in the vicinity that would most likely walk to the site instead of drive. Moreover, it is also expected that most parents would use the play areas outside the peak hours. Therefore, any vehicle trips associated with this use would not affect intersection operations.

Trip Distribution and Assignment

The trip distribution patterns for the project-generated and redistributed trips are shown in Figure 4-1. Three driveways would provide public to access the site, two on San Antonio Road and one on Hillview Avenue. The two driveways off Hillview Avenue on the southeast corner of the site only access a small isolated parking lot. These driveways do not provide access to the site, as shown on the site plan (refer to Figure 2-1). The project proposes to reduce the number of site access points on Hillview Avenue from two driveways to one driveway. There would still be two public access points on San Antonio Road, but the existing driveway on the north end of the site would be modified to provide private access for authorized police vehicles and a new driveway would be constructed to align with the San Antonio Road/West Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection. The existing driveway south of the library would be modified, but would continue to provide site access to the site. Given that all of the proposed parking areas on the site would be connected via the internal road network (expect for the secured parking garage beneath the Police Station), drivers have the flexibility to use all three driveways. However, the following assumptions were made regarding the trip distribution under Project Conditions, based on the proposed changes to site access:

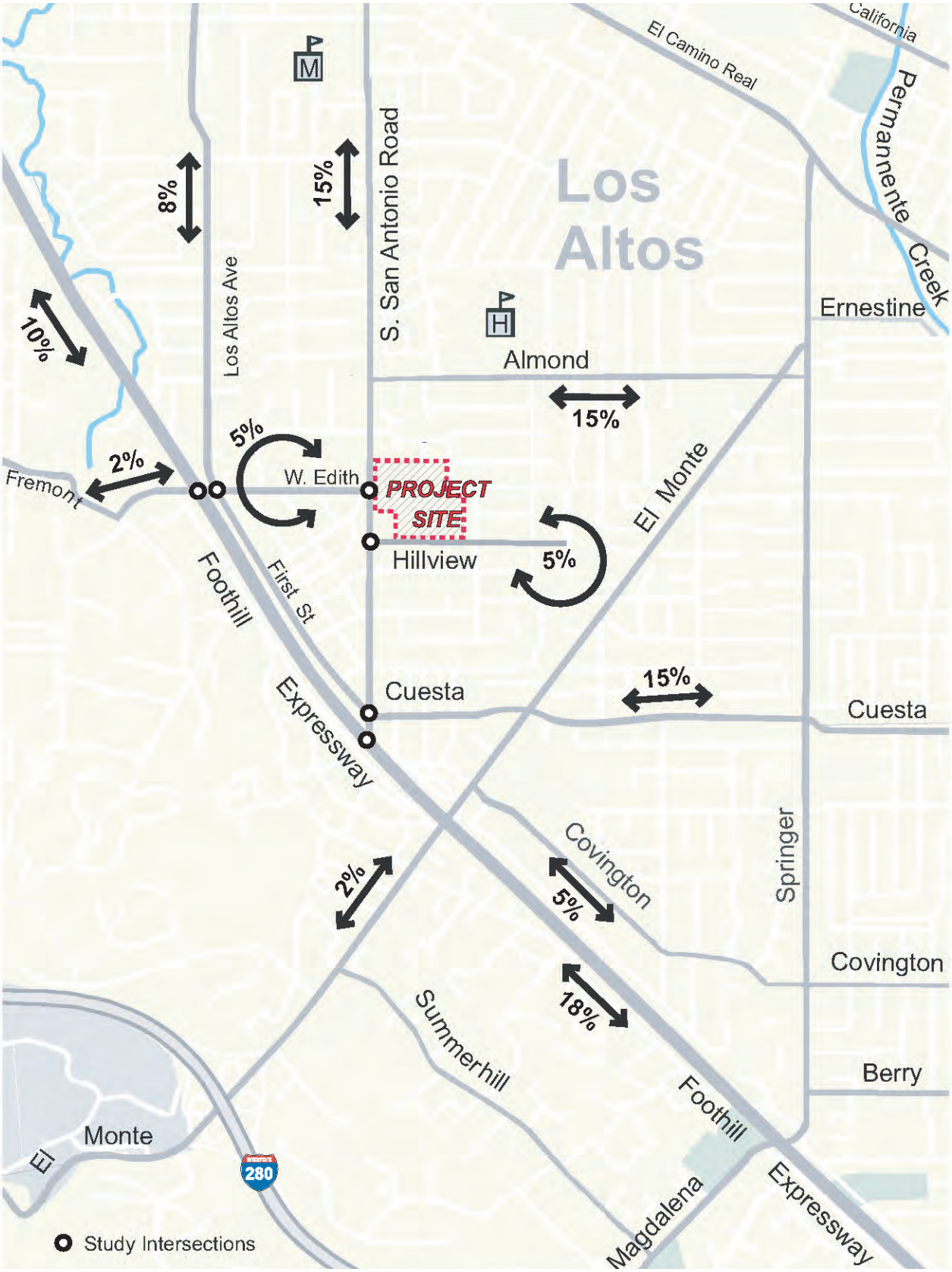
- Trips generated by the Police Station visitors and community center would enter/exit the site at the San Antonio Road/Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection.
- While some visitors to City Hall trips are expected to access the site enter/exit the site at the San Antonio Road/Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection, most employee trips would use the San Antonio Road driveway south of the library to access the public below-grade parking garage.
- Most of the trips generated by the proposed library and theater would continue to use the the San Antonio Road driveway south of the library, although a small percentage of these trips are expected to use the new Hillview Avenue driveway.
- Approximately half of the visitors to the proposed swim center would use the Hillview Avenue driveway, due to the availability of parking spaces west and north of the facility. The other half would use the San Antonio Road driveway south of the library.
- Visitors to the new soccer field, baseball field, open space area, and existing History House and Museum would use both the Hillview Avenue driveway and the San Antonio Road driveway south of the library. However, trips associated with these uses would not affect peak hour traffic. These uses would also use the small parking lot south of the soccer field.

After determining the trip distribution pattern, the redistributed existing trips and the new trips generated by the proposed project were assigned to the roadway system and intersections based on the direction of travel discussed above. Project trips were added to Background traffic volumes to identify Project Conditions.

Level of Service

As summarized in Table 4-3 above, all intersections are expected to operate at acceptable levels (LOS D or better) under Project Conditions. The average delay is estimated to increase the most at the San Antonio Road/West Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection, given the new connection to the main driveway to the site; however, the modified intersection would operate within an acceptable level of service during both peak hours.

Given that implementation of the proposed Master Plan is not expected to cause any intersection operating at level D or better under existing conditions to deteriorate to LOS E or F, the project would not significantly impact any of the study intersections. **[Less than Significant Impact]**



TRIP DISTRIBUTION FIGURE 4-1

4.2.3.3 *Neighborhood Streets*

The Traffic Infusion on Residential Environments (TIRE) index is used to evaluate the effects of increases in traffic on neighborhood streets. The TIRE index uses average daily traffic (ADT) volumes to determine the amount of daily traffic that could be added to a roadway before residents would perceive the increase in traffic. Based on traffic count data collected on Hillview Avenue (adjacent to the soccer field, just west of the existing site access driveways), the existing average daily trips (ADT) on Hillview Avenue is 1,557 vehicles per day, which would increase slightly to 1,572 vehicles per day under Background Conditions.

The projected ADT on Hilllview Avenue (east of the proposed driveway) under Project Conditions is projected to decrease to 565 vehicular trips per day. This trip reduction on Hillview Avenue is attributed to relocating the community center to the northern portion of the site, removing the preschool from the site, and locating the site access driveway on Hillview Avenue closer to San Antonio Road. All of these features of the proposed project would reduce traffic on Hillview Avenue. The other residential streets in the project area do not provide direct access to the project site and, therefore, would not be substantially affected by traffic traveling to and from the project site. For these reasons, the proposed project would not result in a significant traffic impact to neighborhood streets. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.2.3.4 *Alternative Transportation*

The Circulation Element of the Los Altos General Plan establishes policies supporting alternative transportation. Goals in this element include: "Provide for the convenient and safe movement of bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the City to meet the commuter and recreation needs of the community" and "Promote local and regional transit as a viable alternative to automobile travel for all residents and especially for transit-dependent individuals."

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Under the proposed Master Plan, pedestrian pathways would be provided throughout the site, connecting the proposed parking lots and existing sidewalks to the new buildings, recreational facilities, and existing buildings to remain on the site. The project proposes to provide nighttime lighting, bicycle parking, pedestrian plazas, and other pedestrian-scale amenities (picnic tables, signage, etc.) throughout the site. The project also includes streetscape improvements along the site frontages, including crosswalks across the entrance/exit driveways to enhance pedestrian safety at these locations. The proposed improvements to the San Antonio Road/West Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection (i.e., the addition of landscaping, the installation of concrete pavers in the crosswalks, etc.) are intended to improve visual character and safety of the pedestrian connection between the project site and the Downtown core area of Los Altos. The enhanced pedestrian environment at this intersection and throughout the site would encourage more residents to walk or bike to the site.

The existing sidewalks fronting the project site would be maintained or replaced, and would continue to serve the project site. The existing pedestrian facilities in the area, including crosswalks (both signalized and unsignalized), would continue to provide direct pedestrian connections between the new facilities, existing transit stops, and nearby development. In addition, employees and visitors to the site would still have access to the existing bicycle facilities in the area, including the bike lanes on San Antonio Road. While the majority of the local streets in the area do not have striped bike lanes, traffic volumes on these streets are relatively low and would continue to provide a relatively bike-friendly environment for bicycle travel to and from the site.

Although the proposed project would incrementally increase pedestrian and bicycle activity in the project area, the project would not create substantial additional demand for pedestrian or bicycle facilities. For this reason and those described above, the existing off-site and proposed on-site pedestrian and bicycle facilities are expected to accommodate any increase in use resulting from the proposed project.

Transit

The VTA bus service along San Antonio Road provides connections to the San Antonio Transit Center and the Caltrain station, which are both located on Showers Drive, north of the project site. The existing pedestrian facilities, including sidewalks and crosswalks, would continue to provide access between the bus stops on San Antonio Road and the project site. The proximity to transit and pedestrian-friendly design measures included in the project support transit as a viable transportation mode for accessing the site. It is anticipated that the existing transit system would have capacity to accommodate any additional demand resulting from the project. Based on observations of the current transit conditions, the bus stops along San Antonio Road are sufficient to serve the proposed and existing uses on the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not adversely impact transit facilities in the area.

For these reasons and those discussed above, the proposed project would not conflict with adopted plans or policies supporting alternative transportation. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.2.3.5 *Site Access and Circulation*

As described above in Section 4.2.3.2, *Trip Distribution and Assignment*, three full access driveways would provide vehicular ingress/egress to most of the site. The main driveway to the site would align with the existing San Antonio Road/West Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection, and would provide direct access to the proposed surface lot north of the new community center, as well as a smaller surface lot adjacent to the Police Station. The second full access driveway off San Antonio Road, constructed in the general location of the existing driveway south of the library, would provide direct access to the below-grade parking garage beneath the proposed library and theater, in addition to the surface parking lot between the new City Hall, library, and theater. The third full access driveway would be located off Hillview Avenue, and would provide direct access to the parking lot west of the swim center. Additional parking areas would be provided north of the swim center and baseball field. All of these on-site parking areas would be connected via the internal road network, and drivers would have the flexibility to use all three driveways.

The proposed project also includes modifying the existing driveway on the north end of the site to provide private access to the secured below-grade parking garage serving the Police Station. As a result, the existing secondary access to the adjacent AT&T facility from this driveway would be closed. Vehicles would enter and exit the AT&T facility from the existing driveway off San Antonio Road. In addition, the isolated parking area in the southeast corner of the site would be reconfigured and served by two full access driveways. This isolated parking area mainly would serve the Neutra House and new sports fields.

The parking areas would be designed according to City of Los Altos standards with two-directional parking aisles. Based on the proposed parking area layout, there would be sufficient space for maneuvering, and all driveways would have sufficient queuing space for cars entering and exiting the project site. The current site plan provides adequate access to and circulation within the proposed project. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Emergency Vehicle Access

The proposed project would not affect emergency vehicle access to the project area, given that the project-generated traffic would not substantially increase congestion or affect operations on roadways in the project area. The proposed project will be reviewed by the Santa Clara County Fire Department and will meet all design guidelines required by County Fire. As discussed in Section 5.2, *Police Protection*, the proposed project would not affect police responseFor these reasons, the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency vehicle access to the project area or site. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Parking

The proposed on-site parking supply for employees, visitors, and residents is approximately 609 parking spaces, of which 373 would be surface parking spaces. The remaining 236 spaces would be located in two below-grade garages, including a 66-space garage beneath the proposed Police Station and a 170-space garage beneath the proposed library and theater. The 66-space garage beneath the Police Station would be for police use only. The 170-space garage would be accessible to all site employees and visitors. In addition, up to 30 on-street parking spaces are available along Hillview Avenue.

According to Section 14.74.120 of the Los Altos Municipal Code, the parking space requirement for community facilities (including public playgrounds, parks, community centers, libraries, museums, and other public buildings) is one parking space for every two employees, plus additional parking area as prescribed by the Planning Commission. These requirements form the basis for the parking rate calculations summarized in Table 4-5. The parking rates calculations are also based on the City's experience with the existing uses on the site and similar uses in Los Altos.

As shown below, a total of 793 spaces would be required to serve the individual project elements, based on parking rate assumptions and assuming no shared use of parking. However, the baseball field, soccer field, theater, and City Hall Council Chambers would generate vehicle trips requiring parking at off-peak hours, such as during the evening or on weekends. Users of these facilities would have access to the spaces intended to serve the other on-site uses, which typically generate the most vehicle trips during the daytime on weekdays. Assuming this shared use of parking spaces between the various on-site uses, the project designers and City Staff have determined that the provision of 609 spaces would be sufficient to meet the parking demand generated by the project.

The proposed project would increase the number of parking spaces on the site by 272 spaces over existing conditions. The additional spaces would accommodate the increased parking demand from the larger library, larger theater, and new swim center, as well as address any existing parking shortages that may exist.

The activities and uses on the site will be scheduled to avoid parking shortages. Maximizing shared use of parking spaces and providing the minimum amount of parking would reduce the amount of land dedicated to parking lots, while still ensuring there is sufficient parking to meet peak demand. The proposed on-site parking supply is considered adequate to serve the project. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Table 4-5 Parking Rate per Proposed Individual Uses			
Project Element	**Parking Rate Assumptions***	**Basis of Calculation**	**Spaces Required**
City Hall Staff	1 space per employee	45	45
City Hall Pool Cars	1 space per vehicle	10	10
City Hall Visitors	-	10	10
City Hall Council Chambers	1 space per 2 seats	200 seating capacity	100
Community Center (Including Staff)	1 space per 300 square feet (Public Space)	55,600 sq ft	185
Police Staff (Secured)	1 space per 2 employees	60	30
Police Staff Patrol and Department Cars (Secured)	1 space per vehicle	36	36
Police Visitors	-	5	5
Library (including Staff)	1 space per 400 square feet (Public Space)	47,866 sq ft	120
History House and Museum	-	Maintain Existing Usage	44
Swim Center		84 (per EIR)	84
Baseball	1 space per player/coach	15 players/team + coach	32
Soccer	1 space per player/coach	22 players/team + coach	46
Theater	1 space per 4 seats required	200 seats	50
TOTAL			***793***
* Parking rates are based on the City's experience with the existing uses on the site and similar uses in the city, and the parking requirements in the Zoning Ordinance.			

4.2.3.6 *Construction-related Parking, Access, and Vehicle Traffic*

Parking

The number of parking spaces on the site would change depending on the phase of project construction. During each phase, the project will provide adequate parking spaces to accommodate parking demand generated by the on-site uses. Construction workers and vehicles would park on the project site. The minimum spaces needed during each phase are based on the assumptions in Table 4-5 above.

During Phase 2, the large existing parking lot west of the existing community center would be removed and replaced with a smaller lot and the new baseball field. To partially compensate for the loss of parking spaces, the area of the existing baseball field (which would be removed from the site in Phase 1) would serve as a temporary parking area. This temporary parking area would be used until Phase 3 when the below-grade parking garage is constructed and this temporary parking area is converted to an open space area. In addition, up to 20 on-street spaces on Hillview Avenue may be required to accommodate the uses on the site during Phase 2. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Construction Vehicle Access and Traffic

Excavation of the below-grade parking garages proposed by the project would generate a substantial amount of soil, most of which would be exported from the site during construction of the project. Using an average of 320 cubic yards of soil per below-grade parking space, construction of the proposed below-grade parking garages would generate approximately 75,000 cubic yards of soil.[9] The capacity of soil hauling trucks ranges from 10 to 20 cubic yards. Assuming a capacity of 10 cubic yards per truck, exporting 75,000 cubic yards of soil from the site would require 7,500 truck trips to and from the site. If the capacity of all the trucks were 20 cubic yards, then 3,750 truck trips would be required. Some of this soil could be used on-site for building pads and to provide proper drainage. In which case, the amount of soil hauled off the site would be incrementally reduced.

Although this is a substantial amount of truck trips, during all phases, construction vehicles would enter and exit the site via San Antonio Road, and construction vehicles would not be allowed to travel on residential streets. A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) would be prepared prior to the issuance of project-related building/grading permits. The CTMP would be subject to review and approval by the Los Altos Community Development Director. All necessary permits for construction vehicle traffic will be obtained from Caltrans and/or the County of Santa Clara, if the construction traffic route includes state or county roadway facilities. For these reasons, construction vehicle traffic is not expected to impact traffic operations in the area. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.2.4 Conclusions Regarding Transportation Impacts

Project-generated traffic would not significantly impact intersection operations in the project area. The average daily traffic volumes on the neighborhood streets in the project vicinity would not substantially increase under the proposed project. Traffic on Hillview Avenue would decrease under the proposed project due to the reconfiguration of the uses on the site, access to the site, and the removal of the preschool from the site. Access to and from the project site is adequate and would not result in any safety hazards. The proposed project would not adversely impact any existing or planned pedestrian, bicycle, or transit facilities. Adequate parking will be provided during and after project construction to accommodate the on-site uses. A substantial amount of truck trips to and from the site would be necessary to export soil from the site that is excavated during construction of the below-grade parking garages, but this is not expected to significantly impact traffic operations in the project area. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

[9] City of Los Altos, *Pilgrim Haven Expansion and Redevelopment Project Environmental Impact Report*, August 2008.

4.3 NOISE

The following discussion is based upon an Environmental Noise Assessment prepared for the project by *Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc.* in October 2009, which is included as Appendix D of this EIR. The assessment was based on an older version of the site plan (Figure 4-2), in which the currently proposed open space area was shown as a parking lot, the new theater and parking garages were not included in the Master Plan, and the proposed swim center was oriented differently but in the same general location. The changes to the site plan since the preparation of the Environmental Noise Assessment would not result in noise impacts, and in some cases (i.e., removing the parking lot), would reduce noise impacts.

4.3.1 Background Information

Noise is usually defined as unwanted sound. Noise is any sound that may produce physiological or psychological damage and/or interfere with communication, work, rest, recreation or sleep.

Noise is measured in "decibels" (dB), which is a numerical expression of sound levels on a logarithmic scale. A noise level that is 10 dB higher than another noise level has 10 times more sound energy and is perceived as being twice as loud. Sounds less than five dB are barely audible, and then only in the absence of other sounds. Intense sounds of 140 dB are so loud that they are painful and can cause damage with only a brief exposure. These extremes are not commonplace in our normal working and living environments. An "A-weighted decibel" (dBA) filters out some of the low and high frequencies which are not as audible to the human ear. Thus, noise impact analyses commonly use the dBA to measure sound intensity.

Although the A-weighted noise level may adequately indicate the level of noise at any instant in time, environmental noise levels vary continuously. Most environmental noise includes a mixture of noise from distant sources which create a relatively steady background noise in which no particular source is identifiable. To describe the time-varying character of environmental noise, the equivalent continuous sound level (L_{eq}) descriptor is commonly used. L_{eq} is the average noise level during a stated period of time, L_{50} is the noise level that is exceeded 50 percent of the time during a measurement period, and L_{max} is the maximum instantaneous noise level measured during a stated period of time.

To account for human sensitivity to nighttime noise levels, and because excessive noise interferes with the ability to sleep, 24-hour average noise level descriptors have been developed. These descriptors add noise penalties to nighttime noise levels. CNEL is the time-varying noise over a 24-hour period (evening hours), with a 5 dBA addition to the hourly L_{eq} for noises occurring from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM and a 10 dBA addition to noise occurring from 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM (defined as sleeping hours). L_{dn}, which stands for Day-Night level, is similar to the CNEL scale but without the penalty for events occurring during the evening hours. CNEL and L_{dn} are typically within one dBA of each other and are normally interchangeable.

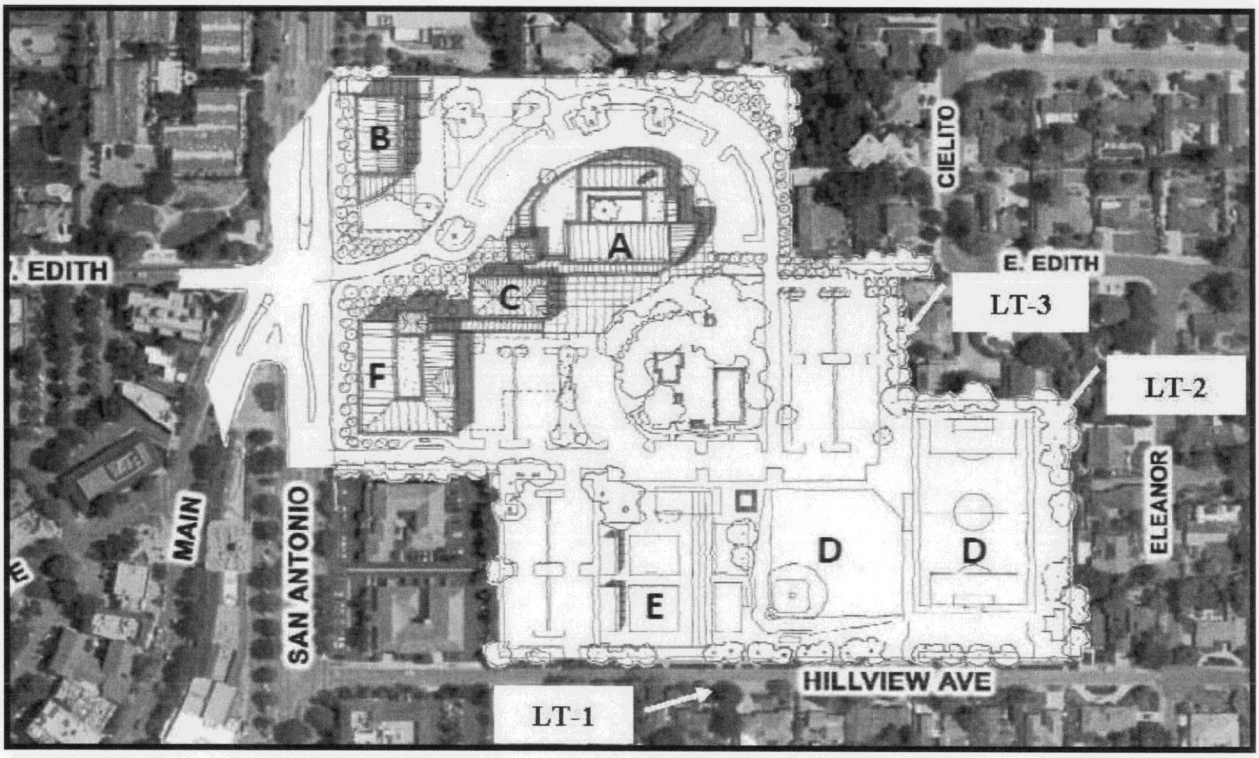
4.3.2 Existing Setting

4.3.2.1 *Existing Noise Sources and Levels*

The project site is located in a mixed commercial and residential neighborhood, adjacent to the Downtown core area of Los Altos. Roadways adjacent to the site include San Antonio Road to the west and Hillview Avenue to the south. The predominant source of noise in the project area is vehicle traffic on San Antonio Road. The project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within the vicinity of a private airstrip or public use airport.

To determine the existing ambient noise levels in the project area, noise measurements were taken in the project vicinity from Thursday, April 16 to Tuesday, April 21, 2009, which allowed noise levels to be measured during the week and the weekend. As shown on Figure 4-2, three long-term (LT) noise measurements were taken. LT-1 was taken from Hillview Avenue across from the existing parking lot east of the soccer field. LT-2 was taken from the property line with residences located on Eleanor Avenue and East Edith Avenue. LT-3 was taken from the property line east of the existing baseball field.

FIGURE 4-2 NOISE MEASUREMENT LOCATIONS



The range of the hourly average noise levels and CNEL at each noise measurement location are shown in Table 4-6, below. Daytime hourly average noise levels were typically 45 dBA L_{eq} to 55 dBA L_{eq} at LT-2 and 45 dBA L_{eq} to 50 dBA L_{eq} at LT-3.

Table 4-6
Hourly Average Noise Level Range at Measurement Locations

Noise Measurement Location	Hourly Average at Night (dBA L_{eq})	Daytime Hourly Average (dBA L_{eq})	Weekday	Weekend
			CNEL (dBA)	CNEL (dBA)
LT-1	36 - 58	48 - 66	61	57
LT-2	36 - 55	44 - 63	57	51
LT-3	31 - 48	38 - 65	54	49

4.3.2.2 *Sensitive Receptors*

Noise-sensitive uses are located adjacent to and on the project site. Sensitive noise receptors in the project vicinity include single-family residences located adjacent to the site to the north, east, and south, and a senior housing development located to the west. The rear yards of the residences to the north and east abut the project site. The residential uses south and west of the site are located across Hillview Avenue and San Antonio Road, respectively.

The existing library on the site is considered a sensitive receptor. The adjacent commercial buildings to the west and on-site institutional uses, such as the City Hall, Police Station, and private preschool facility, also have interior spaces sensitive to noise.

4.3.3 Regulatory Setting

4.3.3.1 *City of Los Altos General Plan*

The Natural Environment and Hazards Element of the Los Altos General Plan contains policies and goals which pertain to desired noise levels for various land uses located within the City. These policies and goals are expressed in terms of the CNEL. According to Policy 7.2, the maximum acceptable outdoor noise exposure levels are 60 dBA CNEL for single-family residential areas and 70 dBA CNEL for libraries, parks, and recreation areas (except water recreation).

4.3.3.2 *City of Los Altos Noise Ordinance*

The City's Noise Ordinance (adopted as Chapter 6.16 of the Municipal Code) further limits acceptable sound levels for various land uses. The Noise Ordinance establishes interior and exterior noise standards by zoning district for daytime and nighttime hours, and identifies prohibited acts relative to noise, including maximum noise levels at affected properties for mobile and stationary noise sources. The sections of the Noise Ordinance applicable to the proposed project is included in the Environmental Noise Assessment prepared for the proposed project (refer to Appendix D).

4.3.4 Noise Impacts

4.3.4.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, a noise impact is considered significant if the project would 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; or
- Exposure of persons to, or generation of, excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels; or
- A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project; or
- A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project; or
- For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, the project would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels, or

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

The California Environmental Quality Act does not define what noise level increase would be considered substantial. Typically, long-term noise impacts would be considered significant if the project increases noise levels by three dBA or more at sensitive receptors. Changes of less than three dBA in noise levels are considered imperceptible.

As described above, the project site is surrounded by sensitive noise receptors, including single-family residences and a senior housing development. Noise sensitive uses are also located on the site. These sensitive land uses were evaluated for potential construction, traffic, and operational noise impacts from the proposed project.

4.3.4.2 *Long-Term Noise Impacts*

The proposed project would reconstruct and relocate on-site the City Hall, Police Station, community center, library, theater, sports fields, bocce ball courts, and children's outdoor play areas. The project also proposes to construct a new community swim center on the site.

Impacts to the Uses on the Project Site

Under the proposed Master Plan, the new Police Station and library would be exposed to the highest noise levels given their proximity to San Antonio Road. Based on the noise contours in the City's General Plan, exterior noise levels at a distance of 50 feet from the center of the nearest travel lane (which corresponds to the approximate setback of the new buildings) will be approximately 71 dBA CNEL in the year 2025. The proposed library would be exposed to exterior noise levels one dBA CNEL above the maximum acceptable outdoor noise exposure level of 70 dBA, as established by General Plan policy and the Land Use Compatibility Standards table. While there do not appear to be any proposed outdoor activity areas at the library that would be sensitive to noise, interior noise levels could be unacceptable if appropriate noise control measures are not included in the building design.

The Police Station falls under the "office buildings, business commercial, and professional" category in the General Plan's Land Use Compatibility Standards table. Traffic noise levels at the new Police Station are estimated to reach 71 dBA CNEL, which is four dBA below the maximum "conditionally acceptable" noise level of 75 dBA CNEL. As with the library, interior noise levels could be unacceptable at noise-sensitive office or conference rooms if control measures are not considered during building design.

The new sports fields and swim center would be located over 30 feet from the center of the nearest travel lane on Hillview Avenue. Exterior noise levels at these facilities are estimated to be 58 dBA CNEL or less, which would meet the 70 dBA CNEL limit for parks and recreation areas. Given the distance from Hillview Avenue and San Antonio Road, the City Hall, community center, and other proposed uses on the interior of the site would not be exposed to noise levels exceeding the City's maximum acceptable outdoor noise exposure standards set forth in the General Plan.

The proposed project includes the following measure to reduce noise impacts to on-site uses:

- An acoustical consultant shall participate in the design of the library and Police Station buildings to recommend project specific measures that would adequately reduce interior noise to levels appropriate for the proposed uses. A detailed analysis shall be conducted so that the design of the project incorporates treatments necessary to minimize noise intrusion in

noise sensitive areas. Mitigation may include the incorporation of a complete forced-air mechanical ventilation system and sound-rated windows to allow occupants to control traffic noise intrusion by closing windows and doors.

With the above measure, which is included in the project, exterior noise levels at the new library would not exceed the City's maximum acceptable outdoor noise exposure standards. Interior noise levels would be acceptable at both the new library and Police Station. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Impacts from the Project

Mechanical Equipment

Mechanical equipment normally associated with the proposed land uses can include heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, boilers, pumps, and exhaust fans. Operation of this equipment generally produces fairly steady noise levels. While mechanical equipment is currently used on the existing on-site buildings to be replaced, the proposed project could introduce new sources of equipment-generated noise that may permanently increase ambient noise levels. Noise levels at adjacent residential uses would depend on the number and type of equipment used on the new buildings, the location of the equipment relative to nearby sensitive receptors, and the presence of shielding. If noise from mechanical equipment is not properly controlled and occurs during nighttime hours, noise levels could exceed Municipal Code standards.

The existing Police Station and Community Center are located closer to the northern and eastern site boundaries than the proposed Community Center (refer to Section 4.1, *Land Use*). The adjacent residential uses are currently exposed to noise from the existing uses on the project site. However, given the lack of screening between the residential uses and the proposed community center and the relatively low existing ambient noise levels in this area, the proposed project could affect residential uses due to the operation of mechanical equipment.

Parking Lot Activities

Under the proposed Master Plan, parking areas would be provided in similar locations as the existing lots. The proposed project would not construct new parking areas immediately adjacent to any residences. Noise levels resulting from parking lot activities, such as vehicle pass-bys, door slams, and engine starts would generally be audible at residences in the project vicinity. However, parking lot noise would not exceed Municipal Code standards, and would not substantially increase hourly or daily average noise levels at adjacent residential uses.

Sports Fields

The project proposes to relocate the soccer field to the southeastern corner of the site, adjacent to residences located on Eleanor Avenue. The baseball field would be relocated on the southern boundary of the site adjacent to Hillview Avenue. The soccer field would replace the existing community center and preschool, while the baseball field would replace a portion of an existing parking lot. Similar to existing conditions, the proposed fields would be used for organized games, as well as other summer camp and community events. Lighting would not be provided, and use of the sports fields during nighttime hours would not be allowed.

The primary noise-generating use of the soccer field would be organized games. Average noise levels resulting from soccer games would be 60 dBA L_{eq}, and maximum instantaneous noise levels would range from 60 to 65 dBA L_{max} at adjoining Eleanor Avenue residences. The sounds of

children or adults using the soccer field would exceed the adjusted exterior noise limit of 50 dBA L_{50} (recognizing that the noise source contains speech conveying informational content) established in the Municipal Code for receiving properties zoned *R1* (single-family residential). During use of the soccer field, noise levels would exceed Municipal Code standards at adjacent residential uses. The relocation of the soccer field could result in a substantial increase in typical ambient noise levels at the eastern site boundary over existing daytime levels.

Organized games would also be the primary noise-generating use of the baseball field. Maximum instantaneous noise levels of about 65 dBA typically result from baseballs being hit and shouting from players and spectators. Based on previous studies throughout the Bay Area, Little League baseball games typically generate "worst case" noise levels of about 57 dBA L_{eq} at a distance of 100 feet from the center of the infield. Noise levels resulting from baseball games would be similar to those currently generated by activities on the existing soccer field, and would not be expected to result in a substantial increase in the ambient noise levels at sensitive residential receptors south or east of the site.

Swim Center

The proposed swim center would be located along the southern site boundary, west of the proposed baseball field. The swim center would be a new use on the project site, and would include one competitive swimming pool, one recreational pool, a water feature, and up to two ancillary buildings containing offices, locker room, and a mechanical room. General uses of the swim center could include public recreational swim, lap swim, community youth programs, private rentals, and other special activities and events. It is assumed that the swim center would be open every day, year-round. Outdoor lighting would be provided throughout the swim center to allow evening use of the facility. The swim center would also include a public announcement (PA) system, which would mainly be used during competition events and emergencies.

As described in Appendix D, noise measurements from a similar community pool project were used to determine a credible "worst-case" noise level generated by operation of the proposed swim center. This data indicated that noise levels varied depending on the activities occurring at the pool. The highest noise levels result from public swimming and pool rental periods when the slide and play features were turned on. During public swim, playing children were the dominant noise source. Average noise levels at the pool ranged from approximately 65 to 70 dBA L_{eq}, and maximum noise levels ranged from about 72 to 82 dBA L_{max}. When noise levels at the pool were measured at 66-67 dBA L_{eq}, noise levels approximately 260 feet from the pool were measured at 54-55 dBA L_{eq}. From this off-site location, playing children were only occasionally audible and identifiable, and made no measurable contribution to average or maximum noise levels during the noise survey.

In the absence of the children playing, steady noise from the water features typically ranged from about 64 to 65 dBA. Lap swim generated noise levels about 10 dBA lower than public swim, with average noise levels typically ranging from 50 to 57 dBA. Maximum noise levels during lap swim were typically in the range of 65 to 70 dBA.

As described above, noise levels at the community pool were highest during recreational swimming periods, which occurred on weekends in the afternoons and evenings during the summer (1:00 PM to 9:00 PM, Friday to Sunday). Based on this data, the worst-case noise levels that could be generated by the proposed swim center are assumed to be 67 dBA L_{eq} at a distance of 70 feet from the acoustic center of the facility (the southernmost portion of the pool closest to Hillview Avenue).

The nearest residential land uses to the proposed swim center are located on the south side of Hillview Avenue, approximately 140 feet south of the acoustic center of the pool facility. At these

receptors, the average noise level is expected to be about 61 dBA L_{eq}, and maximum noise levels would range from about 66 to 76 dBA L_{max}. At the nearest residences, noise levels resulting from operation of the swim center would exceed the adjusted Municipal Code exterior noise limit (50 dBA L_{50} for steady noise).

Conclusion

The proposed public project includes the following measures to reduce operational noise impacts to nearby residential uses:

- In accordance with the City's Municipal Code, the project will implement measures to achieve a continuous noise level of 45 dBA or less at the adjacent residential property line. Measures could include locating the heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment away from adjacent residences located north and east of the project site, shielding rooftop mechanical equipment with rooftop screens or perimeter parapet walls, and/or employing noise control baffles, sound attenuators, or enclosures where required. HVAC noise controls shall be analyzed and reviewed by a qualified acoustical consultant during final project design.

- The project shall construct a six to eight-foot noise barrier along the site's eastern property boundaries adjacent to residences located on Cielito Drive, East Edith Avenue, and Eleanor Avenue. Suitable materials include wood (when properly detailed), concrete or masonry panels, or masonry block. The final design of the noise barrier shall be confirmed when grading plans are complete.

- The proposed swim center will be located on the site as far as possible from residences on Hillview Avenue. The project shall utilize buildings and noise barriers to attenuate swim center noise to below Municipal Code noise level limits.

- The use of loudspeakers or public address systems shall be prohibited before 7:00 AM and after 10:00 PM daily. The selected public address system shall not generate maximum noise levels exceeding 50 dBA at neighboring residential properties.

- Signs shall be posted in the parking lot reminding park users to be good neighbors and to turn off automobile stereos while in the parking lot.

With the implementation of the above measures included in the project, the proposed Master Plan would not result in operational noise levels that could exceed the standards established in the Los Altos Municipal Code. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Traffic Noise

Traffic noise modeling was completed to determine the change in noise levels along nearby residential streets resulting from project-generated traffic, based on data from the TIA prepared for the project (AECOM, 2009). In order for noise levels from increased traffic to be perceptible, noise levels must increase by at least three dBA, which roughly corresponds to a doubling of roadway traffic volumes.

Due to the net increase of vehicle trips resulting from the proposed project, traffic noise would increase along some of the roadways in the vicinity (refer to Section 4.2, *Transportation and Traffic*). Traffic noise levels on Hillview Avenue (west of the proposed swim center) were estimated to increase by less than two dBA CNEL above existing traffic noise conditions. Along all other

roadways serving the project site and east of the proposed driveway on Hillview Avenue, the increase in traffic noise was estimated to be less than one dBA CNEL. Given that the proposed project would not cause traffic noise levels to increase by three dBA CNEL or more over existing conditions, the noise levels in the project area would not noticeably increase as a result of project-generated traffic. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.3.4.3 *Temporary Construction Noise Impacts*

The significance of temporary construction noise impacts is directly proportional to the duration of construction activities, the use of heavy equipment, the hours of construction, and the distance between construction noise sources and noise-sensitive receptors. Construction noise impacts primarily result when construction activities occur during noise-sensitive times of the day (e.g., early morning, evening, or nighttime hours), the construction occurs in areas immediately adjoining noise sensitive land uses, or when construction lasts over extended periods of time.

The proposed project includes the demolition of 13 existing buildings, and the construction of five new buildings, a swim center, various park and recreational facilities, and two below-grade parking garages on the project site. As described in *Section 2.1.2*, construction of the proposed project is expected to be completed in four phases over a time period of up to 19 years. Each phase would include demolition of existing structures, site preparation (grading and excavation), installation of underground utilities, construction of new facilities, and finishing work (paving, landscaping, etc.).

Noise levels are expected to be the highest at the beginning of the phase during demolition of existing buildings, foundation work, and building erection. These activities would require the use of heavy equipment (e.g., bulldozers, loaders, backhoes, graders, and excavators).[10] Maximum noise levels generated during the individual use of these heavy equipment types ranges from 90 to 98 dBA L_{max}, at a distance of 50 feet from the construction area. Typical hourly average noise levels range during active construction would range from about 77 to 89 dBA L_{eq} measured at 50 feet from the center of the site during busy construction periods. Construction-generated noise levels drop off at a rate of about six dBA for every doubling of distance between the source and receptor. Shielding provided by buildings or terrain can result in much lower construction noise levels at distant receptors.

Noise levels in the project area would increase during construction. The nearest noise-sensitive receptors that would be exposed to construction noise are the library on the site and residential uses adjacent to the site to the north, south, and east. Noise exposure to these sensitive uses would depend on the phase of project construction.

Project-related construction noise impacts to surrounding land uses are based on both hourly average noise levels and maximum instantaneous noise levels. For the purposes of the EIR, a significant impact to surrounding land uses would occur if:

- Noise from construction activities would exceed 60 dBA L_{eq} and the ambient noise environment by at least five dBA L_{eq} for a period of one year or more at exterior areas of uses sensitive to noise inside and outside (e.g., residences, residential care facilities, schools, libraries); or

- Noise from construction activities would exceed 70 dBA L_{eq} and the ambient noise environment by at least five dBA L_{eq} for a period of one year or more at the exterior of offices or other commercial, retail, or institutional uses with interior spaces sensitive to noise.

[10] Construction of proposed project would not require the use of a pile driver.

- Maximum noise levels at affected residential properties exceed 75 dBA L_{max} between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM daily except Sundays and legal holidays, or the maximum instantaneous noise levels at adjacent office land uses exceed 85 dBA L_{max} (according to the Municipal Code).

Table 4-7 summarizes the anticipated hourly average (L_{eq}) and maximum instantaneous (L_{max}) noise levels expected at surrounding land uses ("receivers") during each phase. The noise levels were estimated from the center of the construction area. A 10 dB reduction was applied to construction noise levels where existing or future buildings would provide acoustical shielding. Estimated construction noise levels at residential land uses exceeding 60 dBA L_{eq} (and 70 dBA L_{eq} for office uses) or 75 dBA L_{max} (and 85 dBA L_{max} for office uses) are indicated in bold to show the receivers that would be exposed to construction noise levels exceeding the significance criteria.

Table 4-7
Construction Noise Levels by Phase

Receivers during Each Construction Phase	Distance from Construction Area (feet)	Average Noise Level Range (dBA)	Maximum Instantaneous Noise Level Range (dBA)
Phase 1A (18 to 24 months)			
West of San Antonio Road	450	58-**70**	71-**79**
Navajo Lane/Sioux Lane	150	**67-79**	**80-88**
Cielito Drive/East Edith Avenue	350	**60-72**	73-**81**
Eleanor Avenue [1]	850	42-54	55-63
Hillview Avenue	800	53-**65**	66-74
San Antonio - Hillview Offices	500	57-69	70-78
Phase 1B (two to four weeks)			
West of San Antonio Road [2]	1,200	39-51	52-60
Navajo Lane/Sioux Lane	850	52-**64**	65-73
Cielito Drive [3]	500	47-59	60-68
Eleanor Ave./East Edith Avenue	150	**67-79**	**80-88**
Hillview Avenue	250	**63-75**	**76-84**
San Antonio -Hillview Offices	750	53-65	66-74
Phase 2 (10 to 12 months)			
West of San Antonio Road [4]	850	42-54	55-63
Navajo Lane/Sioux Lane [5]	875	42-54	55-63
Cielito Drive	600	55-**67**	68-**76**
Eleanor Ave./East Edith Avenue	550	56-**68**	69-77
Hillview Avenue	100	**71-83**	**84-92**
San Antonio -Hillview Offices	350	60-**72**	73-81

Table 4-7 Construction Noise Levels by Phase			
Receivers during Each Construction Phase	**Distance from Construction Area (feet)**	**Average Noise Level Range (dBA)**	**Maximum Instantaneous Noise Level Range (dBA)**
Phase 3 (10 to 12 months)			
West of San Antonio Road	250	**63-75**	**76-84**
Navajo Lane/Sioux Lane [6]	550	46-58	59-67
Cielito Drive	600	55-**67**	68-**76**
Eleanor Ave./East Edith Avenue	950	51-**63**	64-72
Hillview Avenue	600	55-**67**	68-**76**
San Antonio – Hillview Offices	200	65-**77**	78-**86**

[1] Assumes existing community center buildings would provide 10 dBA of noise attenuation during Phase 1A construction.
[2] Assumes Phase 1A buildings would provide 10 dBA of noise attenuation during Phase 1B demolition.
[3] Assumes existing residences would provide 10 dBA of noise attenuation during Phase 1B demolition.
[4] Assumes existing/Phase 1A buildings would provide 10 dBA of noise attenuation.
[5] Assumes existing residences would provide 10 dBA of noise attenuation during Phase 2 demolition/construction.
[6] Assumes existing residences would provide 10 dBA of noise attenuation during Phase 3 demolition/construction.

Surrounding Land Uses

As shown in Table 4-7, construction activities would result in hourly average noise levels exceeding 60 dBA L_{eq} at most receivers adjoining the site, during all phases of construction. Hourly average noise levels would also exceed 70 dBA L_{eq} and maximum instantaneous noise levels would exceed 85 dBA L_{max} at the commercial buildings at the corner of San Antonio Road and Hillview Avenue, during Phases 2 and 3. Phase 4 construction noise is not included in the table because it is anticipated that construction noise levels at nearby receivers would be similar to levels during Phases 2 and 3 when the swim center and new library would be constructed in the vicinity of the proposed theater. Phase 4 activities involve the smallest area of the site relative to other phases, and could occur concurrently with Phase 3. For these reasons, construction noise resulting from Phase 4 project activities would not result in substantial, additional impacts to surrounding land uses.

Although the proposed project would result in noise levels during construction that exceed the established thresholds, construction would not be continuous over the 19 year period. It is anticipated that each phase would require 10 to 24 months to complete. Although full implementation of the proposed Master Plan could require up to19 years, depending on funding, construction activities would only occur on the site for a cumulative total of approximately 60 months (about 5 years) over this time period. No Phase would take longer than 24 months to complete, and due to the fact that construction is dependent on funding, the City does not intend to construct the project all at one time. Years could go by without any construction occurring on the project site. Given that construction activities would not occur at any one area of the 18-acre project site for more than two years, the construction-related impacts to surrounding uses would be considered temporary.

In accordance with the Municipal Code, construction activities occurring on weekdays before 7:00 AM and after 5:30 PM and Saturdays before 9:00 AM or after 3:00 PM or any time on Sundays or

the city observed holidays will be prohibited.[11] Heavy equipment would only be used for a portion of each phase, including the use of trucks to transport soil from the site. As the core and shell of the buildings are completed, the remaining construction time would be devoted to interior finishing work (e.g., plumbing, floors, walls, and painting) and other minor outdoor activities (e.g., landscaping), which generate lower levels of noise. For this reason, exposure of sensitive receptors to excessive noise levels would occur for periods of time less than the length of each phase of construction.

On-site Uses

The active uses on the project site would be exposed to the highest levels of construction noise. Some of the existing and proposed buildings contain noise-sensitive interior spaces, particularly the library. Given that on-site facilities would continue to operate throughout the entire construction process, employees and frequent visitors to the site would be exposed to the intermittent construction noise for five years within a 19-year time period.

As with off-site uses, noise levels at the existing and proposed buildings on the project site would vary as the distance to the active construction area changes and new buildings are constructed between the noise source and the receiver, which would partially shield the receiver from construction noise. For this reason, noise levels at the new Police Station, City Hall, and community center are expected to drop during Phase 2 construction activities. During this phase, these facilities would be partially shielded by the History House and Museum, which would remain on the site for the entire construction process. The new City Hall, and to a lesser extent, the Police Station would be exposed to elevated noise levels during Phases 3 and 4 of project construction.

Impact NOI-1: Construction activities would substantially increase noise levels at sensitive receptors in the project area and on the project site. Noise from construction activities would exceed 60 dBA L_{eq} and the ambient noise environment by at least five dBA L_{eq} for a period of one year or more and maximum noise levels would exceed 75 dBA L_{max} at exterior areas of the surrounding residences. **[Significant Impact]**

4.3.5 Mitigation and Avoidance Measures for Noise Impacts

4.3.5.1 *Temporary Construction Noise Impacts*

The proposed project shall implement the following mitigation measures to reduce construction-related noise impacts to adjacent residential and commercial uses to the greatest extent feasible. Implementation of these measures will reduce the construction noise impacts of the proposed project to a less than significant level:

MM NOI-1.1 Pursuant to the Municipal Code, noise-generating activities at the construction site or in areas adjacent to the construction site shall be restricted to the hours between 7:00 AM and 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday and 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM on Saturday. Construction shall be prohibited on Sundays and city observed holidays.

MM NOI-1.2 A construction mitigation plan shall be developed in close coordination with adjacent noise-sensitive land uses so that construction activities can be

[11] As stated in the Municipal Code, construction activities occurring on weekdays before 7:00 AM and after 5:30 PM and Saturdays before 9:00 AM. or after 3:00 PM or any time on Sundays or the city observed holidays are prohibited if the sound there from creates a noise disturbance across a residential or commercial real property line, except for emergency work of public service utilities or by special exception.

scheduled to minimize noise disturbance. The construction mitigation plan shall consider the following noise control measures to reduce construction noise levels to the extent possible:

- Construct solid plywood fences (minimum eight feet in height) around the construction site;
- Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with mufflers, which are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment;
- Prohibit all unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines;
- Route construction related traffic to and from the site via designated truck routes and avoid residential streets where possible;
- Utilize "quiet" models of air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists;
- Locate all stationary noise-generating equipment, such as air compressors and portable power generators, as far away as possible from adjacent land uses;
- Shield adjacent sensitive uses from stationary equipment with individual noise barriers or partial acoustical enclosures; and
- Locate staging areas and construction material storage areas as far away as possible from adjacent land uses.

MM NOI-1.3: All adjacent property owners shall be notified of the construction schedule in writing;

MM NOI-1.4: A "disturbance coordinator" shall be designated who will be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator will determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and will require that reasonable measures warranted to correct the problem be implemented. A telephone number for the disturbance coordinator will be conspicuously posted at the construction site and included in the notice sent to neighbors regarding the construction schedule.

4.3.6 Conclusions Regarding Noise Impacts

Measures included in the project would reduce long-term operational noise impacts to a less than significant level. The noise levels in the project area would not noticeably increase as a result of project-generated traffic. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Impact NOI-1: Construction activities would substantially increase noise levels at sensitive receptors in the project area and on the project site. Noise from construction activities would exceed 60 dBA L_{eq} and the ambient noise environment by at least five dBA L_{eq} for a period of one year or more and maximum noise levels would exceed 75 dBA L_{max} at exterior areas of the surrounding residences. The project does not intend to construct the development all at one time; it will be spread over a 19-year timeframe. Mitigation measures are included in the project to reduce construction-related noise impacts to a less than significant level. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

4.4 AIR QUALITY

4.4.1 Existing Setting

4.4.1.1 *Background Information*

Air quality and the amount of a given pollutant in the atmosphere are determined by the amount of pollutant released and the atmosphere's ability to transport and dilute the pollutant. The major determinants of transport and dilution are wind, atmospheric stability, terrain and for photochemical pollutants, sunshine. Pollutants can be diluted by mixing in the atmosphere both vertically and horizontally. Vertical dilution is often suppressed by inversion conditions, in which a warm layer of air traps cooler air close to the surface. Terrain restricts horizontal dilution by creating a barrier to air movement.

The Bay Area typically has moderate ventilation and frequent inversions that restrict vertical dilution. The Santa Cruz Mountains and Diablo Range, located on either side of the South Bay, restrict horizontal dilution and channel winds from the north to the south. The combined effects of these factors give Los Altos a relatively high atmospheric potential for pollution.

4.4.1.2 *Regulatory Framework*

Los Altos is within the jurisdiction of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), which regulates regional air quality and is responsible providing strategies to bring the San Francisco Bay Air Basin (SFBAB) into compliance with the ambient air quality standards described below.

Ambient Air Quality Standards

Both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board have established air quality standards for common pollutants. These ambient air quality standards represent safe levels of contaminants in order to avoid specific adverse health effects associated with each pollutant. The ambient air quality standards cover what are called "criteria" pollutants (because the health effects of each pollutant are described in criteria documents).

The federal and state ambient air quality standards were developed independently, and as a result, the federal and state standards differ in some cases. In general, the state standards are more stringent, particularly for ozone and particulate matter. These two criteria pollutants are known to at times exceed the state and federal standards in the project area. Ozone, also known as smog, is formed by photochemical reactions between nitrogen oxides (NOx) and reactive organic gases (ROG), rather than being directly emitted. Particulate matter consists of a mixture of liquid droplets found in the air and solid particles, which are emitted into the atmosphere as byproducts of fuel combustion, through abrasion (tire or break lining wear), or through fugitive dust (wind or mechanical erosion of soil). Coarse particulate matter is referred to as PM_{10}. Both ozone and particulate matter are considered regional pollutants in that concentrations are not determined by proximity to individual sources, but show a relative uniformity over a region.

The region has occasionally exceeded state or federal standards for carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is formed by the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, almost entirely from motor vehicles. Carbon monoxide is considered a local pollutant because elevated concentrations are usually only found near the source, such as congested intersections.

Attainment Status and Regional Air Quality Plans

The Federal Clean Air Act and the California Clean Air Act of 1988 require that the State Air Resources Board, based on air quality monitoring data, designate portions of the state where the federal or state ambient air quality standards are not met as "non-attainment" areas. Because of the differences between the federal and state standards, the designation of non-attainment areas is different under federal and state legislation.

Under the California Clean Air Act, Santa Clara County is a non-attainment area for ozone and particulate matter (PM_{10}). The California Clean Air Act requires the local air pollution control districts of non-attainment areas to prepare air quality attainment plans. The *Bay Area 2005 Ozone Strategy* (Ozone Strategy) serves as the current Clean Air Plan (CAP) for the region. The Ozone Strategy shows how the San Francisco Bay Area will achieve compliance with the state one-hour air quality standard for ozone as expeditiously as practicable and how the region will reduce transport of ozone and ozone precursors to neighboring air basins.

Both ozone and PM_{10} were found to exceed state standards at the two nearest BAAQMD monitoring stations (i.e., Sunnyvale and San José) to Los Altos. No pollutants were found to exceed federal standards.

4.4.1.3 *Sensitive Receptors*

BAAQMD defines sensitive receptors as facilities where sensitive receptor population groups (children, the elderly, and the acutely and chronically ill) are likely to be located. These land uses include residences, schools, playgrounds, child care centers, retirement homes, convalescent homes, hospitals, and medical clinics. The site currently contains sensitive receptors (children's play areas and a preschool). Sensitive receptors in the project area include nearby residences.

4.4.2 Air Quality Impacts

4.4.2.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, an air quality impact is considered significant if the project would:

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan; or
- Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation; or
- Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors); or
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or
- Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

4.4.2.2 *Regional Air Quality Plans*

As discussed in Section 3, *Consistency with Adopted Plans*, the consistency of the proposed project with the *Bay Area 2005 Ozone Strategy* (Ozone Strategy) primarily depends on its consistency with

the population and employment assumptions utilized in developing the Ozone Strategy. The Ozone Strategy is based on the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) *Projections 2002* and the City's General Plan in effect at the time the Ozone Strategy was approved. Population growth beyond what is accounted for in the Ozone Strategy may result in regional air quality impacts from the increase vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and other emission sources.

The proposed project does not include the construction of or demolition of residential uses. The Master Plan is intended to serve the existing population, as well as meet future needs associated with changing demographics and anticipated growth, as envisioned in the Los Altos General Plan. The increase in on-site employees resulting from the project is expected to be minor. Because the site is served by existing infrastructure and is located in a developed area, the project would not induce substantial population growth. The project would be consistent with the Ozone Strategy, given that it would not result in a population increase over what is currently planned for the City of Los Altos. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.4.2.3 *Long-Term Air Quality Impacts*

BAAQMD has established thresholds used to determine if a project substantially contributes to existing air pollution. According to the *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, a project that generates more than 80 pounds per day of reactive organic gases (ROG), nitrogen oxides (NOx), or particulate matter (PM_{10}) is considered to have a potentially significant impact on regional air quality. Motor vehicles traveling to and from the site represent the main source of emissions associated with project operations. As described in Section 4.2, *Transportation*, it is anticipated the project would generate approximately 2,160 vehicle trips per day over existing conditions. Per the *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, emissions from the net project trips were estimated using the URBEMIS2007 model (refer to Appendix E) and information from the transportation impact analysis prepared for the project.[12] As shown in Table 4-8 below, the proposed project would not exceed BAAQMD thresholds for project emissions of ROG, NOx, or PM_{10}.

Table 4-8
Estimates of Project Emissions

Pollutant	Pounds per Day Generated by Net Project Trips	BAAQMD Threshold (pounds per day)
ROG	17	80
NOx	26	80
PM_{10}	27	80

According to BAAQMD guidelines, localized carbon monoxide concentrations should be estimated for projects in which: 1) vehicle emissions of carbon monoxide would exceed 550 pounds per day, 2) project traffic would impact intersections or roadway links operating at Level of Service (LOS) D, E or F or would cause LOS to decline to D, E or F, or 3) project traffic would increase traffic volumes on nearby roadways by 10 percent or more. Using the URBEMIS2007 model, it was estimated that the project would generate up to 195 pounds per day of carbon monoxide (CO) over existing conditions (refer to Appendix E). The project would not increase congestion at intersections

[12] Emissions vary depending on the season. For this project, the estimated emissions of ROG, NOx, and carbon monoxide were higher during winter. PM_{10} emissions are the same for both seasons. This impact analysis is based on the higher estimates.

operating at LOS D, E or F, and would not substantially increase traffic volumes on nearby roadways (refer to Section 4.2, *Transportation*). Therefore, localized carbon monoxide concentrations were not estimated for any intersections, and the project would not result in a significant impact related to carbon monoxide emissions.

Because the majority of the new daily trips are associated with the proposed swim center, the project's long-term affect on regional air quality would be greater during the summer months, when maximum usage of the pools would occur. In addition to the proposed swim center, the new library and theater are also expected to generate additional vehicle trips. However, it is assumed that some Los Altos residents are currently driving to farther destinations to access community pools and other public services that are not currently provided on the site or not sufficiently meeting their needs (access to library computers, for example). Providing a swim center and enhanced community facilities on the project site would reduce the distances these residents would need to travel, further reducing the City's overall VMT.

BAAQMD recommends implementing land use and design measures that reduce vehicle trips and VMT to reduce project emissions from motor vehicles.[13] The project includes features that provide opportunities for reducing both vehicle trips and VMT. The site is located in a central location in proximity to residential neighborhoods and commercial uses in the Downtown core, which minimizes the distance that employees and residents would travel to access the site. Furthermore, clustering a variety of civic, community, and recreational uses on the same site provides opportunities for residents to access multiple facilities with one trip. The intensification of development on an infill site could reduce vehicle trips and VMT within the project area.

As described in Section 4.2, *Transportation and Traffic*, the surrounding area is pedestrian and bike friendly, and a VTA bus route between Downtown and El Camino Real is provided on San Antonio Road, which allows residents to walk, bike, or take transit to and from the site. The proposed improvements to the San Antonio Road/Edith Avenue/Main Street intersection would provide a safer, more attractive pedestrian connection between the site and Downtown. Measures that would enhance the pedestrian environment and encourage employees and visitors to use alternative transportation modes to access the site include an on-site pedestrian path network and bicycle parking (similar to what is currently provided).

The project would not generate emissions that exceed BAAQMD thresholds for criteria pollutants. Overall, the location, design, and nature of the proposed project support the goals of reducing vehicle trips and VMT, which would reduce emissions from automobiles. Because the site is not located near major sources of odorous emissions and project operations would not generate objectionable odors, the proposed project would not expose the public to odors. For these reasons, the proposed project would not result in a significant long-term air quality impact. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.4.2.4 *Construction-related Air Quality Impacts*

Construction activities would temporarily affect local air quality, causing a temporary increase in particulate dust and other pollutants. Air pollutant emissions would vary depending on the construction activity. The proposed project includes the demolition of 13 existing buildings, site preparation (grading and excavation), construction of five new buildings and recreational facilities, construction of two below-grade parking garages, and finishing work (paving, landscaping, etc.). It is anticipated that project construction would occur in four phases, with each phase including the activities listed above and requiring 10-24 months to complete. Although full implementation of the

[13] BAAQMD, CEQA Guidelines, December 1999.

proposed Master Plan could require up to19 years, depending on the acquisition of funding, construction activities would occur on the site for a cumulative total of approximately 50-64 months (about 5-6 years) over this time period; therefore, years without any construction would occur.

Construction activities such as demolition, excavation and grading operations, construction vehicle traffic and wind blowing over exposed earth would generate exhaust emissions and fugitive particulate matter (PM10) emissions that would affect local and regional air quality. Construction activities are also a source of organic gas emissions. Asphalt used in paving is a source of organic gases for a short time after its application. Solvents in adhesives, non-waterbase paints, thinners, some insulating materials and caulking materials would evaporate into the atmosphere and would participate in the photochemical reaction that creates urban ozone.

Many types of construction equipment emit diesel exhaust, which is known to result in adverse health effects. BAAQMD has not developed any procedures or guidelines for indentifying the impacts from temporary diesel exhaust emission impacts. They are typically evaluated for stationary sources (e.g., diesel generators) in health risk assessments over the course of lifetime exposures (i.e., 24 hours per day over 70 years). During construction, there would be numerous diesel trucks traveling to and from the site and various types of diesel equipment operating on the site. These temporary emissions would elevate diesel particulate matter concentrations downwind of construction activities.

The primary effects of construction activities would be increased dust-fall and locally elevated levels of particulate matter downwind of construction activity. Construction dust could create a nuisance at surrounding properties, which include single-family residences and commercial uses, a senior housing facility, and a public park.[14] Sensitive receptors that could be exposed to construction-related dust and emissions include the adjacent residential uses and on-site children's play areas. The specific uses that would be the most exposed to construction-related air quality impacts would depend on the phase of project construction. For example, the residences north of the site and senior housing across San Antonio Road would be most exposed during Phase 1, while residences east of the site and across Hillview Avenue to the south would be most likely to experience a nuisance during Phase 2. Given that construction activities would not occur at any one area of the 18-acre project site for more than two years, the construction-related impacts to surrounding uses would be considered temporary, even though construction could occur on the site intermittently over a period of 19 years.

Children using the on-site park and recreational facilities could be temporarily exposed to construction dust and particulate matter emissions while construction activities are taking place at other areas of the project site. Visitors to the existing and proposed on-site facilities in operation during any given phase could also be exposed. However, given the short duration that visitors are on the site and implementation of the mitigation measures described below, project construction would not expose these sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. While full-time employees of on-site facilities (i.e., City Hall, library, etc.) could be temporarily exposed to construction dust and emissions intermittently for up to 19 years, there are no sensitive receptors on the site that would be subject to mid- to long-term air quality impacts resulting from project construction.[15]

[14] The word nuisance is used in this EIR to mean "annoying, unpleasant, or obnoxious" and not in its legal sense.
[15] According to the *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, institutional and office uses are not considered "sensitive receptors" in terms of air quality impacts.

Although construction-related emissions are temporary, the project may still result in adverse air quality impacts at nearby properties and on-site uses unless proper emission control measures are implemented.

Impact AIR-1: The proposed project would result in short-term demolition and construction-related air quality impacts from dust PM10 and diesel exhaust. **[Significant Impact]**

Objectionable Odors

Project-related odor sources (mainly trucks and construction equipment) would not be stationary sources, therefore, the odors would dissipate as trucks and machinery operate on and travel to and from the site. The emission of diesel odors during construction would occur intermittently and on a temporary basis. While they may be considered a nuisance to residents on and immediately adjacent to the project site, they would not result in a significant environmental impact. Many of the standard measures included in the project to reduce short-term diesel particulates impacts would also reduce odor impacts. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.4.3 Mitigation and Avoidance Measures for Air Quality Impacts

4.4.3.1 *Construction-related Air Quality Impacts*

The proposed project shall implement the following mitigation measures to reduce construction-related air quality impacts to a less than significant level:

Construction Dust Emissions

MM AQ-1.1 Prior to the onset of demolition/construction activities, chain-link construction fencing with a wind screen (e.g., PVC slats) shall be installed around the construction site.

MM AQ-1.2 The developer shall implement the following measures, which would reduce dust generation to a less than significant level during demolition of existing structures. These measures shall be printed on all construction documents, contracts, and project plans:

- Watering will be used to control dust generation during demolition of structures and break-up of pavement.
- All trucks hauling demolition debris from the site will be covered.
- Dust-proof chutes to load debris into trucks will be used whenever feasible.

MM AQ-1.3 The developer shall implement the following measures, which would reduce dust generation during construction to a less than significant level. These measures shall be printed on all construction documents, contracts, and project plans:

- Water all active construction areas at least twice daily and more often during windy periods; active areas adjacent to existing land uses shall be kept damp at all times, or shall be treated with non-toxic stabilizers or dust palliatives.

- Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard.

- Pave, apply water three times daily, or apply (non toxic) soil stabilizers on all unpaved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas at construction sites.

- Sweep daily (preferably with water sweepers) all paved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas at construction sites; water sweepers shall vacuum up excess water to avoid runoff related impacts to water quality.

- Sweep streets daily (preferably with water sweepers) if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent public streets.

- Hydroseed or apply non toxic soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas.

- Enclose, cover, water twice daily, or apply non-toxic soil binders to exposed stockpiles (dirt, sand, etc.).

- Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 mph.

- Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways.

- Replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.

- Suspend construction activities that cause visible dust plumes to extend beyond the project site.

- Install wheel washers for all existing trucks, or wash off the tires or tracks of all trucks and equipment leaving the site.

- Install wind breaks, or plant trees/vegetative wind breaks at windward side(s) of construction areas.

- Suspend excavation and grading activities when instantaneous wind gusts exceed 25 mph; and

- Limit the area subject to excavation grading, and other construction activity at any one time.

Construction Diesel Exhaust Emissions

MM AQ-1.4 Implementation of the following standard control measures required by BAAQMD will reduce construction-related diesel exhaust impacts to a less than significant level:

- Prohibit use of "dirty" equipment. Opacity is an indicator of exhaust particulate emissions from off-road diesel-powered equipment. The project shall ensure that emissions from all construction diesel powered equipment used on the project site do not exceed 40 percent opacity for more than three minutes in any one hour. Any equipment found to exceed 40 percent opacity (or Ringelmann 2.0) shall be repaired immediately.

- The contractor shall install temporary electrical service whenever possible to avoid the need for independently powered equipment (e.g. compressors).

- Diesel equipment standing idle for more than two minutes shall be turned off. This would include trucks waiting to deliver or receive soil, aggregate or other bulk materials. Rotating drum concrete trucks could keep their engines running continuously as long as they were on-site and staged away from residential areas.

- Properly tune and maintain equipment for low emissions.

4.4.4 Conclusions Regarding Air Quality Impacts

Given that the proposed project would not conflict with the regional air quality plan or generate emissions that exceed air quality standards for criteria pollutants, the project would not result in significant long-term local or regional air quality impacts. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Impact AIR-1: Demolition and construction activities associated with the proposed project would generate dust PM10 and diesel exhaust that could temporarily affect nearby sensitive receptors. Implementation of mitigation measures MM AQ-1.1, MM AQ-1.2, MM AQ-1.3, and MM AQ-1.4 would reduce short-term, construction-related air quality impacts to a less than significant level. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The following discussion is based, in part, upon an archaeological resources report and the Community Center Task Force Report entitled "Legal and Historical Status of the Landmark Apricot Orchards of Los Altos," included as Appendix F of this EIR. The archaeological report was completed by *Holman & Associates* in November 2008, and includes the findings of a literature review and field inspection of the project site. This report is on file with the City of Los Altos, Community Development Department and can be viewed during normal business hours.

4.5.1 Regulatory Setting

4.5.1.1 *California Public Resources Code*

The California Public Resources Code, Sections 21083.2 and 21084.1 defines archaeological and historical resources, respectively. For the purposes of CEQA, a historical resource is a resource listed on or eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) or the National Register of Historic Places. In order for a resource to be eligible for the California Register, it must satisfy all of the following three criteria:

A. Meet one or more of the 4 criteria of significance:

1. The resource is associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local and regional history.
2. The resource is associated with the lives of persons important to the nation or to California's past.
3. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.
4. The resource has the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the state or the nation. (This criteria applies to archaeological sites.)

B. The resource retains historic integrity (i.e. it must retain enough of its historic character or appearance to be recognizable as a historical resource); and

C. The resource is fifty years old or older (except for properties meeting additional criteria).

4.5.2.2 *City of Los Altos Historic Resource Inventory*

Resources included in local inventories or designated under local ordinances can also be considered a "historic resource" if they meet certain criteria. During 1990-1991, a historic resource survey was undertaken to prepare a list of significant properties in Los Altos. The Los Altos Historical Commission developed a rating scale to evaluate various buildings and features for their eligibility for the local Historic Resource Inventory. The Los Altos Planning Code Chapter 12.44 (Historical Preservation) incorporates the Historic Resource Inventory criteria for purposes of evaluating and designating Los Altos historic resources.

4.5.2 Existing Setting

4.5.2.1 *Archaeological Resources*

The project site is within the territory of the Ohlone and Muwekma Indian tribes, who had settlements along creeks in the area. While past construction has unearthed some archaeological findings with evidence of prehistoric habitation and burial sites in Los Altos, the literature review found no record of historic or prehistoric sites within the project boundaries or within a quarter mile of the site. The project area is considered to have low to moderate archaeological sensitivity. The nearest riparian zone, which were common Native American habitation areas, is located approximately one mile east of the site, where Hale and Permanente Creeks merge.

The visual field inspection of the site was limited to the open ground portions of the site, specifically the fields and orchards surrounding the City Hall, Police Station, and soccer field. The field inspection did not find any of the indicators typical of Native American use or habitation, such as darker than surrounding soil of a more friable nature than native soil, evidence of fires (ash, charcoal, fire altered rock or earth), concentrations of fresh water or salt water shellfish, concentrations of stone and bone, and artifacts of these materials. No evidence of historic trash deposits that may have been created in the early 20th century were observed on the surface. Given the history of discing and plowing, it is likely that any archaeological materials that existed in the area would have already been brought to the surface.

4.5.2.2 *Historic Resources*

Spanish-Mexican Period

During the Spanish period, the Los Altos area was under the control of Mission Santa Clara and the Pueblo San Jose de Guadalupe, both founded in 1777. After Mexico seceded from Spain in 1822, the Mexican governor made many land grants throughout Santa Clara County. In 1839, Don Juan Prado Mesa was granted 7,800 acres for Rancho San Antonio, which includes what is today Los Altos. Don Juan Prado Mesa, a commander stationed at the San Francisco Presidio, built a large adobe at the current location of El Monte Avenue near Summerhill Avenue, south of the project site.

American Period

The state's rapid population growth after the "Gold Rush" created a demand for agricultural products. The ranchos in the Los Altos area were divided and sold as smaller ranches for cattle grazing, orchards, and vineyards. Throughout the late 19th century, farmers throughout Santa Clara County began growing fruit crops, such as prunes, plums, pears, peaches, cherries, and mainly apricots.

In 1907, the Altos Land Company, formed by Paul Shoup, began to lay out the Los Altos town site. Shoup was an executive of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which had built a new electric railway line that extended from Mayfield (now south Palo Alto) to Los Gatos and Santa Cruz through Los Altos.[16] Commercial buildings were constructed around the Los Altos railroad station, in the vicinity of the current downtown area.

Through the 1920's and 1930's, Los Altos remained primarily rural with small family-run fruit ranches surrounding the town. During this time, however, residential subdivisions with tree-lined

[16] Ward Hill, Consulting Architectural Historian, *Historic Evaluation Report, Spagnoli House and Pilgrim Haven*, March 2008.

streets began to replace orchards outside of the original town grid. Since World War II, Los Altos has increasingly become part of the residential boom in Santa Clara County. The seven square mile City is now developed with small businesses, schools, libraries and churches. Today remnants of the historical orchards are scattered among the residential areas of Los Altos.

The City of Los Altos was incorporated in 1952. The City purchased an approximately 10.4-acre property from J. Gilbert Smith in 1954 and developed the existing City Hall, Police Station, LAYC, and library buildings in the 1960s. The City preserved an approximately five-acre portion of the original apricot orchard, including several rows adjacent to San Antonio Road and the area bounded by City Hall, the northern parking lot, the LAYC, and library. This orchard remains one of the last intact, active orchards in Los Altos and Santa Clara County.

History House and Museum

J. Gilbert Smith purchased the original 10.4-acre property in 1901, and soon after, planted an apricot orchard and built a house. The shingled farm house (circa 1905) was constructed with many Craftsman-style features.[17] Through an agreement with the City of Los Altos, Smith and his wife Margaret continued to live in the house until their deaths in 1961 and 1973, respectively. The house and surrounding acre of land were then reverted to the City.

In 1974, the Los Altos City Council created the Historical Commission for the purpose of transforming the Smith house into a museum. The house was refurbished to replicate a farmhouse of the 1930's, and opened to the public in 1977 as the History House. In 1987, the History House was designated by the City of Los Altos a Historical Landmark. The History House was also listed as a California Point of Historical Interest.

The Los Altos History Museum was constructed in 2001 through private funding, and was transferred to City ownership in 2002. The museum includes a changing exhibit gallery and a permanent exhibit on the history of Los Altos. In addition to the History House, the permanent exhibit includes a tank house and antique farm equipment (e.g., walnut hullers and tools for cutting, sulfuring, and drying apricots). The tank house, originally constructed in 1915, was recently relocated on-site from another location within the City. The History House and Museum are separated by a landscaped courtyard with picnic tables, and are surrounded by mature oak trees. The approximately one-acre portion of the project site containing these buildings and the surrounding gardens is also referred to as the Museum Complex.

Apricot Orchard

A five-acre remnant of the Smith orchard remains on-site today. When the History House was designated a Historical Landmark by the City of Los Altos in 1987, the five-acre orchard was also designated a Historical Landmark by City Council resolution. The historic orchard is located between City Hall and the LAYC building, and includes additional trees next to the library and City Hall, along San Antonio Road. The orchard is actively farmed, and remains one of the last active orchards in Los Altos and Santa Clara County. Over the years, the original apricot trees have been replanted, because they were either dying, dead, or no longer productive. The orchard now contains trees with a wide range of health, condition, and age.

[17] Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum, Los Altos Historical Museum website, "J.Gilbert Smith House," http://www.losaltoshistory.org/, viewed April 30, 2009.

Neutra House

The Neutra House was designed in 1935 and completed in 1939 by internationally renowned architect Richard Neutra (1892-1970).[18] Neutra collaborated with Otto Winkler on about 15 projects in the San Francisco Bay Area between 1933 and 1940.[19] The Neutra House was one of three houses designed for the poets Jacqueline Johnson and Clayton Stafford. The residences were located at 180/184 Marvin Avenue, approximately 0.25 miles south of the site. In 2005, the Neutra House was moved to its current location on the project site, and was adapted for reuse as a small conference center. The Los Altos Community Foundation initiated the relocation/reuse project to honor Neutra and his influence on mid-century modern architecture. The Neutra House is listed in the Los Altos Historic Resource Inventory as a landmark eligible structure. Because the Neutra House has been relocated onto the site and adapted for reuse as a conference center, the integrity of the structure has been diminished and, therefore, it may not be eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources or the National Register of Historic Places.

4.5.3 Cultural Resource Impacts

4.5.3.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, a cultural resources impact is considered significant if the project will:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource as defined in §15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines; or
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines; or
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature; or
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Under the CEQA Guidelines, any project that may cause a "substantial adverse change" in the significance of a historic resource (building or site) is considered to have a significant effect on the environment (Section 15064.5). A "substantial adverse change" in the significance of an historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.

4.5.3.2 *Impacts to Archaeological Resources*

Given that the literature review and field inspection did not identify any prehistoric resources within or near the project site, development of the project site is not anticipated to impact buried cultural resources. No archaeological monitoring or subsurface testing is recommended for the proposed project. However, there is always a potential that buried archaeological materials could be discovered during grading and excavation.

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[18] Los Altos Community Foundation, The Neutra House Project website, http://www.neutrahouse.org/, viewed April 30, 2009.

[19] Los Altos Community Foundation, *The Neutra House Project: Honor the Past and Invest in the Future*, September 9, 2008.

Impact CUL-1: Although not anticipated, archaeological resources could be discovered during construction of the proposed project. **[Significant Impact]**

4.5.3.3 *Impacts to Historic Resources*

History House

The History House, the Neutra House, and the five-acre apricot orchard are the only designated historic resources on the site. The other existing buildings on the site have not been formally evaluated for listing on the California or National Register, but the City of Los Altos does not consider them historic resources.

The History House, including the surrounding landscaping, would remain with the proposed project. The Master Plan does not propose any physical changes to the History House. The History House and Museum, including the mature oak trees, preserves the important features of the setting of the History House, and separates the History House from the surrounding on- and off-site uses. The redevelopment of the site with the same or similar community, civic, and recreational uses would not substantially affect the setting of the History House. The Neutra House and its adjacent landscaping will remain in its existing location on the site and will not be altered as part of the project. For these reasons, the proposed project would not result in a substantial adverse change to historic significance of the History House.

Apricot Orchard

Under the proposed project, the existing historic apricot orchard would not remain on the site. As described in Section 2, *Description of the Proposed Project*, some of the younger apricot trees located in the existing orchard area may be transplanted in the new landscape areas, and the existing apricot trees located in the upper northeast corner of the site will be preserved. To maintain the orchard-like nature of the project site, the project proposes to plant new apricot trees throughout the site, particularly around the new Community Center. Although planting/transplanting apricot trees throughout the site would help retain the appearance of the existing orchard, removing the actively farmed apricot orchard would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of this historic resource.

Impact CUL-2: The proposed project would remove the existing historic apricot orchard. This is a significant impact. **[Significant Impact]**

4.5.4 Mitigation and Avoidance Measures for Impacts to Cultural Resources

4.5.4.1 *Archaeological Resources Impacts*

The proposed project shall implement the following mitigation measures to reduce impacts to archaeological resources to a less than significant level:

MM CUL-1.1 In the event of the discovery of unanticipated buried prehistoric or historic era cultural materials during project construction, work will halt within 30 feet of the discovery until it has been inspected by a qualified archaeologist. If it appears that additional construction related earthmoving will affect a potentially significant resource, the archaeologist shall submit a plan for the evaluation of the resource to the Los Altos Planning Department for approval. Evaluation normally takes the form of limited hand excavation of the suspected cultural deposit to determine if it contains information and/or

materials that make it eligible for placement on the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR).

If it is determined that construction activity will impact an eligible resource, the City of Los Altos shall prepare a plan for mitigation of impacts to the resource before work is allowed to recommence in the zone designated as archaeologically sensitive. Mitigation can take the form of additional hand excavation coupled with limited hand excavation to ensure that significant archaeological materials and information are retrieved for analysis and report preparation as required by CEQA.

MM CUL-1.2 If human remains are discovered during construction, construction activities that could disturb the remains and any associated artifacts would halt and the project sponsor will contact the local Coroner's Office and the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC would then name a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) to advise the project sponsor on the manner of exposure and removal of burials and associated grave goods, and to help designate a place for the reburial of these materials.

4.5.4.2 *Historic Resources Impacts*

The proposed project includes the following measure to reduce impacts to the historic apricot orchard. The following measure would not, however, reduce this impact to a less than significant level:

MM CUL-2.1 Existing younger apricot trees on the site may be transplanted to the new landscape areas on the site. The project would also plant new apricot trees throughout the site. The existing apricot trees located in the upper northeast corner of the site will be preserved.

4.5.5 Conclusion regarding Cultural Resources Impacts

Impact CUL-1: Although not anticipated, archaeological resources could be discovered during construction of the proposed project. In the unlikely event that buried archaeological materials or human remains are discovered during grading and excavation, implementation of mitigation measures MM CUL-1.1 and 1.2 would avoid or reduce these impacts to a less than significant level. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

Impact CUL-2: The proposed project would remove the existing historic apricot orchard. Implementation of mitigation measure MM CUL-2.1 would reduce the impact to the historic orchard; however, this measure would not reduce this impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, this impact is significant and unavoidable. **[Significant Unavoidable Impact]**

4.6 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The following discussion is based, in part, upon a tree survey completed for the project by *Concentric Ecologies* in October 2008. This report is included as Appendix G of this EIR.

4.6.1 Regulatory Setting

Biological resources include plants and animals and the habitats that support them. Individual plant and animal species that are listed as rare, threatened or endangered under the state and/or federal Endangered Species Act, and the natural communities or habitats that support them, are of particular concern. Sensitive natural communities (e.g., wetlands, riparian woodlands, and oak woodland) that are critical to wildlife or ecosystem function are also important biological resources.

The avoidance and mitigation of significant impacts to biological resources under CEQA is consistent with and complementary to various federal, state, and local laws and regulations that are designed to protect these resources. These regulations often mandate that project sponsors obtain permits that include measures to avoid and/or mitigate impacts required as permit conditions, prior to the commencement of development activities.

4.6.1.1 *City of Los Altos Tree Ordinance*

The City of Los Altos Tree Ordinance (Chapter 11.08 of the Los Altos Municipal Code, "Tree Protection Regulations") protects the following types of trees: [20]

- Any tree with a circumference of 48-inches or greater measured at 48-inches above the ground;
- Any tree located within the public right-of-way;
- Any Canary Island Palm trees located on Rinconada Court; and
- Any tree which was required by the City to either be saved or planted in conjunction with a development review application (Ord. 07-314 § 2 (part); prior code § 10-2.26504).

A tree removal permit is required from the City for the removal of any tree protected by the ordinance. As a condition of approval, project applicants may be required to plant one or more replacement trees. The removal of trees without a permit will subject the property owner and the tree removal service to fines and penalties. Protected trees designated for preservation shall be protected during development of a property with the use of at least the following measures: 1) protective fencing, 2) minimal grading, 3) installation of drain wells, and 4) tree repair in accordance with accepted arboricultural methods.

4.6.2 Existing Biological Resources

4.6.2.1 *Habitat/Setting*

The 18-acre project site is urban in nature and developed with numerous buildings, two sports fields and an apricot orchard. Landscaping is provided within the parking lots and along the pathways throughout the site. The apricot orchard is regularly disced to control weeds and reduce fire hazard.

Animal species found on the site are those adapted to urban environments and human encroachment and activity. Common species that may occur on the site include the mourning dove, Anna's

[20] Street trees are addressed in Chapter 9.20 of the Los Altos Municipal Code, "Trees and Shrubs."

hummingbird, American crow, and eastern gray squirrel. Bird species tolerant of human activity may use the trees on the project site as breeding habitat.

There are no undisturbed areas or sensitive habitats on the site. The site does not contain any streams, waterways, or wetlands. The project site is not within the boundaries of a habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other conservation plans. Because of its urban setting and isolation from larger areas of undeveloped lands, the site does not function as a movement corridor for local wildlife.

4.6.2.2 *Special Status Species*

Special status species are those plants and animals listed under the state and federal Endangered Species Acts (including candidate species); plants listed on the California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (1994); and animals designated as Species of Special Concern by the California Department of Fish and Game.

Given the lack of suitable habitat for special status species known to occur in the project area (i.e., serpentine, grassland, salt marsh, riparian scrub, chaparral, or woodland), special status plant and animal species are not expected to occur on the site, except for possibly raptors.

Raptors (birds of prey) and their nests are protected under both federal and state laws and regulations, including the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the California Fish and Game Code. Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, and American Kestrel may occur in the project area as visitors, migrants, or transients, or may forage or nest on the project site due to the large trees on the site.

The play fields and orchard on the site provide foraging habitat for bats. Bats could roost under the eves or in roofs of the structures on the site, including the special-status Townsend's big-eared bat, pallid bat, and California mastiff bat.

4.6.2.3 *Trees*

The tree survey completed for the project site identified a total of 367 trees on the project site, excluding the orchard trees. The on-site trees range in size from four to 215 inches in circumference, measured at a height of four and one-half feet above the ground. The most common trees on the site are redwoods, coast live oaks, Japanese maples, and pistaches. Table 4-9, below, summarizes the existing trees on the site by species (common name) and circumference. Please refer to Appendix G for the site map showing the location of the existing trees.

Based on their size, 99 existing trees on the site or within the public right-of-way adjacent to the site are protected under the City of Los Altos Tree Ordinance. The purpose of the ordinance is to preserve the character of the City by retaining large healthy trees to the greatest extent feasible. Per the ordinance, a tree removal permit is required for the removal of a protected tree.[21] All applications for a tree removal permit are reviewed by City Staff and evaluated on the basis of the criteria below:

- The condition of the tree with respect to disease, imminent danger of falling, proximity to existing or proposed structures and interference with utility services.

[21] City of Los Altos Community Development Department, "Tree Removal Permit Reviewing Criteria and Process," http://www.ci.los-altos.ca.us/commdev/planning/documents/TreeRemovalCriteriaHandout_000.pdf, viewed July 28, 2009.

- The necessity to remove the tree for economic or other enjoyment of the property.
- The topography of the land and the effect of the tree removal upon erosion, soil retention and the diversion or increased flow of surface waters.
- The number, species, size and location of existing trees in the area and the effect the removal would have upon shade, privacy impact, scenic beauty, property values and any established standards of the area.
- The number of healthy trees the property is able to support according to good forestry practices.
- The approximate age of the tree compared with average life span for that species.
- Whether there are any reasonable and feasible alternatives that would allow for the preservation of the tree.

Table 4-9
Summary of Trees on the Project Site[1]

Species	Circumference (Less than 48 inches)	Circumference (Greater than or equal to 48 inches)	Total
Ash	3	4	**7**
Birch	2	0	**2**
Camellia	2	0	**2**
Camphor	0	4	**4**
Canary Island Pine	1	5	**6**
Cedar	0	2	**2**
Cherry	13	0	**13**
Chinese Elm	1	1	**2**
Coast Live Oak	25	27	**52**
Crabapple	2	0	**2**
Crape Myrtle	3	0	**3**
Date Palm	0	1	**1**
English Hawthorn	1	0	**1**
Eucalyptus	0	4	**4**
Fig	2	0	**2**
Hawthorn	6	0	**6**
Japanese Black Pine	1	0	**1**
Japanese Maple	38	0	**38**
Juniper	2	0	**2**
Locust	7	0	**7**
Maple	0	1	**1**
Mayten	2	0	**2**
Mulberry	1	0	**1**
Olive	5	1	**6**

Table 4-9 Summary of Trees on the Project Site[1]			
Species	Circumference (Less than 48 inches)	Circumference (Greater than or equal to 48 inches)	Total
Pear	18	0	**18**
Photinia	3	0	**3**
Pine	0	9	**9**
Pistache	30	0	**30**
Pittosporum	6	0	**6**
Purple-Leaf Plum	16	0	**16**
Redwood	39	21	**60**
Saucer Magnolia	2	0	**2**
Southern Magnolia	2	5	**7**
Sweet Gum	20	7	**27**
Sycamore	6	0	**6**
Tulip Poplar	10	4	**14**
Valley Oak	0	1	**1**
Washington Thorn	1	0	**1**
TOTAL	**270**	**97**	**367**

[1] The existing five-acre apricot orchard on the site was not surveyed. The orchard consists of a few hundred apricot trees, with a wide range of health and ages. The orchard is the remnant of a much larger orchard originally planted in 1901, and is designated as a historic landmark (refer to Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources*).

4.6.3 Biological Resources Impacts

4.6.3.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, a biological resources impact is considered significant if the project would:

- 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; or

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

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

- 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; or

- Conflict with any local ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation ordinance; or

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

4.6.3.2 *Impacts to Biological Resources*

The habitat on the project site includes urban development with landscaping and a five-acre apricot orchard that is actively farmed and regularly disced for weed control and fire prevention. The habitat is highly disturbed. There are no federally protected wetlands or sensitive natural communities on the site. Given the urban setting, isolation from larger areas of natural lands, and the high level of human activity on the site, the value of the plant and wildlife habitat is limited. For these reasons, the proposed redevelopment of the site would not impact sensitive plant or wildlife habitat on the project site, or affect wildlife movement or corridors. The project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted conservation plan. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.6.3.3 *Special Status Species*

Tree Nesting Raptors

Hawks, owls, and other tree nesting raptors are common in the project area and could nest in the large trees on the project site and forage in the orchard. The project site represents a very small proportion of the suitable nesting and foraging habitat available for these species regionally and; therefore, the project would have not measurable effect on regional raptor populations. Raptors are, however, protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code. Construction-related disturbances have the potential to "take" nests, eggs, or individuals, and otherwise lead to the abandonment of nests. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment or destruction of nests would be a significant impact.

Impact BIO-1: Construction of the proposed project could disturb or destroy active raptor nests. **[Significant Impact]**

Bats

Special-status bat species including the Townsend's big-eared bat, pallid bat, and California mastiff bat are known to occur in the project area. These special-status bat species and non-status bat species, such as the Mexican free-tailed bat, could roost in the roofs or eves of some of the structures on the site.[22] The proposed project includes the demolition of most of the structures on the site. Therefore, the project could result in the loss of a local bat colony. The loss of a local bat colony, regardless of the species' status, is a significant impact.

Impact BIO-2: Demolition of the existing structures on the site could result in the loss of a bat colony. **[Significant Impact]**

4.6.3.4 *Trees*

It is anticipated that the proposed project would require the removal of approximately 192 trees on the project site. As shown in Table 4-10, 30 protected trees (street trees or those with a circumference of 48 inches or greater) would be removed. Trees would mainly be removed from the

[22] Bats are also known to roost in tree cavities or in the bark fissures of large trees.

large parking lot, the landscaped courtyards of the existing community center, and the area surrounding the existing Police Station and City Hall buildings on the site.

The project proposes to retain approximately 175 of the existing on-site trees, including 69 protected trees. The trees surrounding the History House and Museum and most of the trees lining the eastern site boundary, within the northern parking lot, and along Hillview Avenue would be preserved under the proposed site plan. Of the 52 existing on-site coast live oak trees, only five would be removed.

Most of the existing apricot orchard would be removed from the site. To maintain the orchard-like nature of the project site, the proposed landscaping will include apricot trees located around the new Community Center. Some of the younger apricot trees located in the existing orchard area may be transplanted in the new landscape areas, and the existing apricot trees located in the upper northeast corner of the site will be preserved. The orchard trees do not provide habitat for any special-status plant or animal species. Impacts associated with the modification of the historic orchard are discussed in Section 4.6, *Cultural Resources.*

The removal of approximately 192 trees, 30 of which are protected trees, is a significant impact. In addition, construction of the proposed project could also affect the trees to be retained on the project site. Construction activities, such as the compaction of soil or placing of fill, could damage existing trees and their root systems.

As described below, the project will replace each mature tree that is removed from the site, and will implement standard tree protection measures, per the Tree Ordinance. The tree removals will be approved as part of the design and building permit process; therefore, the project would not conflict with any local ordinances protecting biological resources.

Impact BIO-3: Construction of the proposed project would result in the removal of approximately 192 trees, 30 of which are protected trees, and could damage the existing trees to be retained. **[Significant Impact]**

Table 4-10
Protected Trees To Be Removed

Tree No.	Species	Diameter (Inches)	Suitability for Preservation
123	Camphor	81	Good
126	Ash	77	Good
128	Olive	80	Good
129	Valley Oak	85	Good
130	Southern Magnolia	67	Good
132	Pine	102	Good
134	Sweet Gum	60	Poor
135	Southern Magnolia	120	Moderate
141	Coast Live Oak	65	Good
143	Coast Live Oak	65	Good
191	Redwood	51	Moderate
195	Redwood	67	Moderate
204	Redwood	54	Moderate
224	Redwood	60	Moderate
225	Redwood	51	Moderate
226	Redwood	49	Moderate

Table 4-10 Protected Trees To Be Removed			
Tree No.	**Species**	**Diameter (Inches)**	**Suitability for Preservation**
228	Redwood	64	Moderate
230	Redwood	50	Moderate
248	Cedar	104	Good
249	Redwood	66	Moderate
250	Redwood	79	Moderate
270	Sweet Gum	77	Good
271	Cedar	112	Good
287	Ash	56	Poor
289	Redwood	49	Moderate
290	Redwood	56	Moderate
294	Ash	51	Poor
368	Ash	80	Moderate
374	Canary Island Pine	52	Poor
430	Sweet Gum	60	Moderate

Notes:
Tree numbers refer to the tree survey map in Appendix G of this EIR.
Source: Concentric Ecologies, *Preliminary Tree Report, Los Altos Community Center*, October 2008, and Giuliani & Kull, Inc., Aerial Topographic Survey, provided to David J. Powers & Associates, Inc. in April 2009.

4.6.4 Mitigation Measures for Biological Resource Impacts

4.6.4.1 *Special Status Species Impacts*

The proposed project will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce construction-related impacts to special status species to a less than significant level:

MM BIO-1.1 In compliance with the MBTA and the California Fish and Game Code, the proposed project shall implement the following measures to reduce and avoid construction-related impacts to nesting raptors and their nests:

- Pre-construction surveys shall be completed by a qualified ornithologist to identify active nests that may be disturbed during project implementation. All potential nesting areas (trees, tall shrubs) shall be surveyed no more than 30 days prior to tree removal or pruning, if the activity will occur within the breeding season (February – August). If more than 30 days pass between the completion of the preconstruction survey and the initiation of construction activities, the preconstruction survey shall be completed again and repeated at 30-day intervals until construction activities are initiated.

- If an active nest is observed, tree removal and pruning shall be postponed until all the young have fledged. An exclusion zone shall be established around the nest site, in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Exclusion zones for active

passerine (songbirds) nests shall have a 50-foot radius centered on the nest tree or shrub.

- Active nests shall be monitored weekly until the young fledge. No construction activities, parking, staging, material storage, or other disturbance shall be allowed within the exclusion zones until the young have fledged from the nest.

MM BIO-2.1 The proposed project shall implement the following measures to reduce and avoid construction-related impacts to bats:

- Pre-demolition bat surveys shall be completed by a qualified bat biologist to determine if bats are present on the site. If no bats are observed to be roosting in the building(s) or trees to be removed, then no further action would be required and demolition/tree removal could proceed.

- If a maternity colony is present, demolition cannot occur until it has been confirmed by a qualified bat biologist that all young are volant (flying) and independent of their mothers. Typically, demolition/tree removal should occur after August 31st and before March 1st to avoid interfering with a maternity colony.

- If a non-breeding bat colony is found in the structures/trees to be removed, then the bats should be safely evicted, under the direction of a qualified bat biologist, through a "partial dismantle" process, whereby the roosting area is opened to allow airflow through and sunlight into the roosting area, making it unsuitable habitat and undesirable for the bats to return to the roosting area. Demolition should then follow no earlier than the following day (i.e., there should be no less than one night between initial disturbance for airflow and the demolition). This action should allow bats to leave during the night, thus increasing their chances of finding new roosts and avoid predation during daylight hours.

4.6.4.2 *Tree Impacts*

The proposed project will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce tree impacts to a less than significant level:

MM BIO-3.1 The project shall implement the following measures to reduce impacts associated with tree removal:

- All healthy, mature trees will be incorporated into the proposed project to the greatest extent feasible.

- Each tree removed by the proposed project on the project site will be replaced by one 24- or 36-inch box specimen, incorporated into the site landscaping.

MM BIO-3.2 In accordance with Chapter 11.08 of the Los Altos Municipal Code, the project will implement standard measures during construction to protect the

trees to be retained on the project site. Protected trees designated for preservation shall be protected during development of the project site by compliance with the following:

- Protective fencing shall be installed no closer to the trunk than the dripline, and far enough from the trunk to protect the integrity of the tree. The fence shall be a minimum of four feet in height and shall be set securely in place. The fence shall be of a sturdy but open material (i.e., chainlink), to allow visibility to the trunk for inspections and safety. There shall be no storage of any kind within the protective fencing.

- The existing grade level around a tree shall normally be maintained out to the dripline of the tree. Alternate grade levels may be determined during final project design.

- Drain wells shall be installed whenever impervious surfaces will be placed over the root system of a tree (the root system generally extends to the outermost edges of the branches).

- Trees that have been damaged by construction shall be repaired in accordance with accepted arboriculture methods.

- No signs, wires, or any other object shall be attached to the tree.

4.6.5 Conclusions Regarding Biological Resource Impacts

The proposed project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted conservation plan, impact sensitive plant or wildlife habitat on the site, or affect wildlife movement or corridors. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Impact BIO-1: Construction of the proposed project could disturb or destroy active raptor nests. Implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-2.1 would reduce construction-related impacts to special status birds to a less than significant level. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

Impact BIO-2: Demolition of the existing structures on the site could result in the loss of a bat colony. Implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-2.2 would reduce construction-related impacts to special status bats to a less than significant level. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

Impact BIO-3: Construction of the proposed project would result in the removal of approximately 192 trees, 30 of which are protected trees, and could damage the existing trees to be retained. Implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-3.1 would reduce impacts associated with tree removal to a less than significant level. Implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-3.2 would reduce impacts to trees to be retained on the project site to a less than significant level. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

4.7.1 Existing Setting

4.7.1.1 *Regional Geology*

The project site is located in the Santa Clara Valley, an alluvial basin, bounded by the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west, the Mt. Hamilton Diablo Mountain Range to the east, and the San Francisco Bay to the north. The Santa Clara Valley was formed when sediments derived from the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Mt. Hamilton-Diablo Range were exposed by continued tectonic uplift and regression of the inland sea that had previously inundated this area. Bedrock in this area is made up of the Franciscan Complex, a diverse group of igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks of Upper Jurassic to cretaceous age (70 to 140 million years old). Overlaying the bedrock at substantial depths are marine and terrestrial sedimentary rocks of Tertiary and Quaternary age.

4.7.1.2 *Site Topography and Soils*

The site is relatively flat, with an elevation of approximately 178 feet above mean sea level in the southwest corner to 163 feet above mean sea level in the north east corner of the site. There are no significant topographical or water features on or adjacent to the project site.

The soils on the site are mapped as Pleasanton loam, which consists of well drained gravelly clay loam underlain by sedimentary alluvium.[23] This type of soil has no erosion hazard and a moderate expansion potential. Expansive soils shrink and swell as a result of moisture changes, which can cause heaving and cracking of slabs-on-grade, pavements, and structures founded on shallow foundations.

4.7.1.3 *Seismicity and Seismic Hazards*

The project site is located within the seismically active San Francisco Bay region. The major earthquake faults in the project area are the San Andreas Fault, located approximately five miles southwest of the site, and the Hayward Fault and the Calaveras Fault, both of which are located approximately 15 miles northeast of the site. These regional faults are capable of generating earthquakes of at least 7.0 in magnitude.

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) has reported that the Working Group on California Earthquake Probabilities (2003) has estimated that there is a 62% probability that one or more major earthquakes would occur in the San Francisco Bay Area between 2002 and 2031. A moderate to major earthquake on the San Andreas Fault is most likely to generate the strongest ground shaking at the site.

The project site is not located within any seismic hazard zone, including a Santa Clara County Fault Rupture Hazard Zone or Liquefaction Hazard Zone.[24] The nearest rupture zone to the site is the Monte Vista Fault Zone, located approximately 1.9 miles to the southwest. Seismically-induced liquefaction results in the transformation of loose water-saturated soils from a solid state to a liquid state during ground shaking. The site is not located in a liquefaction hazard zone, as identified by the County of Santa Clara and State of California.

[23] U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, *Soils of Santa Clara County*, 1968.
[24] County of Santa Clara, *Santa Clara County Geologic Hazard Zones*, Map 10, 2002.

4.7.1.4 *Mineral Resources*

The project site is located within a developed area. No record exists of gravel or other mineral resource extraction in the project area.

4.7.2 Geology and Soil Impacts

4.7.2.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, a geologic impact is considered significant if the project would:

- Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault,
  - Strong seismic ground shaking,
  - Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, and/or
  - Landslides.

- Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil; or

- Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse; or

- Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property; or

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

For the purposes of this EIR, a mineral resources impact is considered significant if the project would result in:

- The loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state; or

- The loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan.

4.7.2.2 *Soils Impacts*

Due to the flat topography of the site, development is not expected to be exposed to hazards related to slope instability, erosion, or landslides. A design-level geotechnical report will be prepared for the proposed project. The report will address the moderate expansion potential of the on-site soils. All of the design measures identified in the report will be included in the project to reduce and avoid geologic impacts. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.7.2.3 *Seismic Impacts*

As previously discussed, the project site is located in a seismically active region, and as such, strong ground shaking would be expected during the lifetime of the proposed project. While no active faults are known to cross the project site, ground shaking on the site could damage buildings and other proposed structures and threaten residents and occupants of the proposed development. To avoid or minimize potential damage from seismic shaking, all portions of the project would be designed and constructed in accordance with the seismic design guidelines in the most recent California Building Code. Given that the many of the existing on-site structures do not meet current seismic code requirements, the proposed project would reduce risks to people and property associated with seismic shaking by constructing new facilities that meet current building code standards.[25] **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.7.2.4 *Mineral Resources*

Because the project site is not located within an area designated as containing mineral deposits of regional significance, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. **[No Impact]**

4.7.4 Conclusions Regarding Geology and Soils Impacts

With the use of standard engineering and seismic design techniques, construction of the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to soils, geologic and seismic hazards. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. **[No Impact]**

[25] Anderson Brulé Architects, Inc., *The City of Los Altos Community Center Master Plan*, "Existing Facilities Assessment," June 10, 2008.

4.8 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

4.8.1 Regulatory Setting

The Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP), previously called the Santa Clara Valley Non-point Source Program, was developed in response to the Federal Clean Water Act, in accordance with the requirements of the 1986 San Francisco Bay Basin Water Quality Control Plan. The purpose of the program is to reduce water pollution associated with urban stormwater runoff.

In 1990, the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) issued (and reissued in 2001) an area-wide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) municipal stormwater permit to the SCVURPPP. This common permit allows for each of the SCVURPPP's 15 co-permittees, including the City of Los Altos, to discharge stormwater from their storm drain systems to the San Francisco Bay. Under the provisions of the NPDES Permit, the City is required to take steps within its area of authority to reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater to the maximum extent practical.

An amendment to Provision C.3 of the SCVURPPP NPDES permit requires new and redevelopment projects that result in the addition or replacement of impervious surfaces totaling 10,000 square feet or more to include specific construction and post-construction stormwater treatment measures. These projects are required to file a Notice of Intent (NOI) with the SWRCB and prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prior to commencement of construction. According to Provision C.3, applicable projects must implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) for reducing the volume of runoff to the maximum extent practicable and treat all runoff on-site prior to outfall into the drainage system. The proposed project is subject to the requirements of the SCVURPPP.

Provision C.3.f of the NPDES permit also requires development projects to implement hydromodification controls, when the site is within an area where increases in runoff flow or volume can cause increased erosion of creek beds and banks.[26] The requirements include the use of BMPs to ensure that post-project runoff does not exceed estimated pre-project rates and durations. To help local agencies and developers meet the requirements, the SCVURPPP prepared a Hydromodification Management Plan (HMP), adopted by the RWQCB in 2005. The HMP identifies areas where increases in runoff are most likely to impact channel health and water quality. Certain projects, such as infill projects in highly developed subwatersheds, are exempt from the HMP requirements.

According to the HMP Applicability Map for Los Altos (dated 2006), the project site is located within a subwatershed that is less than 65 percent impervious and greater than 90 percent built out. While hydromodification controls are encouraged on all sites within these subwatersheds, only projects on sites over 50 acres are subject to the HMP requirements. Given that the project site is 18 acres, the proposed Master Plan is exempt from HMP requirements.

4.8.2 Existing Setting

4.8.2.1 *Drainage and Flooding*

There are no waterways present on or adjacent to the project site. Stormwater runoff from the site collects in various drains and catch basins throughout the parking lots and landscape areas. Currently, most of the site drains to east, while a small area in the western portion of the site drains to the

[26] Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program, "Hydromodification Controls," http://www.scvurppp-w2k.com/hmp.htm, page last updated on April 18, 2008. Viewed September 18, 2009.

west.[27] The runoff from the majority of the site is conveyed to the storm drain beneath East Edith Avenue, which eventually flows into Hale Creek just before its confluence with Permanente Creek (refer to Section 4.10, *Utilities and Service Systems*).[28] The rest of the runoff is conveyed to the storm drain beneath San Antonio Road, which eventually discharges into Adobe Creek.

Hale Creek is located approximately 0.9 miles east of the site, and Adobe Creek is located approximately 0.5 miles west of the project site. Both Permanente Creek and Adobe Creek flow in a northerly direction and eventually empty into the San Francisco Bay.

The project site is located outside of a 100-year flood hazard area, and is not subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.[29]

4.8.2.2 *Water Quality*

The water quality of streams, creeks, ponds, and other surface water bodies can be greatly affected by pollution carried in contaminated surface runoff. Pollutants from unidentified sources, known as non-point source pollutants, are washed from streets, construction sites, parking lots, and other exposed surfaces into storm drains. Urban stormwater runoff often contains contaminants such as oil and grease, plant and animal debris (e.g., leaves, dust, animal feces, etc.), pesticides, litter, and heavy metals. In sufficient concentration, these pollutants have been found to adversely affect the aquatic habitats to which they drain.

4.8.3 Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts

4.8.3.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, a hydrology and water quality impact is considered significant if the project would:

- Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements; or
- Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted); or
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on-or off-site; or
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or off-site; or

[27] Jim Gustafson, City of Los Altos, Engineering Services Manager, Email Communication to Zachary Dahl, August 26, 2009.
[28] City of Los Altos, *Sewer and Storm Drain System*, Panel E2, October 2006.
[29] Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Insurance Rate Map, City of San José, Panel Number 060341 0001B, effective July 18, 1980.

- Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff or otherwise substantially degrade water quality; or

- Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map; or

- Place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area, such that flood flows would be impeded or redirected; or

- Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam; or be subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

4.8.3.2 *Long-Term Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts*

Drainage and Flooding

The project proposes to redevelop the approximately 18-acre site with community and civic uses. Given that the project site is not located within the 100-year floodplain of Adobe Creek, the potential for flooding on the site is very low and development of the proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

As shown in Table 4-11 below, approximately 54 percent of the existing project site is covered with paved, impermeable surfaces (building footprint, parking lots, driveways, pathways, etc.). The remaining 46 percent is covered with pervious surfaces, including sports fields, green spaces, and other undeveloped areas. The proposed project would increase the amount of impervious surfaces on the site by 12,551 square feet, which is equivalent to less than two percent of the total area of the project site. This small increase in impervious area would not substantially increase the volume or rate of stormwater runoff generated by the project site.

Table 4-11
Pervious and Impervious Surfaces on the Project Site

Site Surface	Existing Conditions	Percentage of Site	Project Conditions	Percentage of Site	Difference
Impervious	422,534	54%	435,085	56%	12,551
Pervious	357,856	46%	345,305	44%	-12,551
Total Area	**780,390**	**100**	**780,390**	**100**	0

The project proposes to maintain the existing drainage pattern of the site, as well as the existing connections to the City's storm drainage system. Connecting to the existing storm drains would facilitate the removal of water from the site during storm events, helping prevent localized flooding. The proposed project would not contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of the existing stormwater drainage system, nor significantly change the drainage conditions in the project area. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Water Quality

The proposed project would increase vehicular and pedestrian activity on the site and in the area, which could result in increases of both point and non-point source discharges. Runoff from the proposed project would be similar to existing runoff, containing urban pollutants such as oils, grease, and metals that could impact water quality downstream of the site. As described above, the small increase of on-site impervious surfaces that would result from the proposed project would incrementally increase the rate and amount of stormwater runoff from the project site. This increase in runoff could degrade water quality downstream of the site, because the runoff may contain contaminants (e.g., pesticides, herbicides and oil) and the increased rate of runoff could contribute to erosion or flooding downstream of the project site.

In accordance with the SCVURPP, the proposed project would treat runoff on the site prior to entering the City's storm drainage system. This can be achieved through a variety of methods, including the use of bioswales or detention basins. Although the project does not include specific treatment control measures at this conceptual stage, the proposed site plan includes many landscaped areas throughout the site that provide opportunities for the installation of grass swales or bioretention areas. Using biofilters not only removes pollutants from the stormwater, but also helps control the stormwater rate of runoff from the site.

The project will determine the specific treatment control, source control, and site design measures to be incorporated in the project will be determined during the final design stages. Site design measures would include minimizing directly connected impervious surface area, using permeable pavement, and redirecting runoff from impervious surfaces to pervious surfaces. Source control includes measures such as locating and covering trash enclosures to minimize potential for pollutants to enter storm drainage system. Prior to issuance of building permits, Stormwater Management Plans (SWMPs) will be developed for each phase of project construction to ensure compliance with City of Los Altos and NPDES permit requirements.

With the implementation of stormwater treatment controls and BMPs, as required for most development projects in Santa Clara County, the proposed project is not expected to provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff or otherwise substantially degrade water quality. However, a SWMP has not been developed for the proposed Master Plan and the project does not currently include specific stormwater treatment measures. Therefore, the proposed project could result in a significant long-term water quality impacts, and mitigation measures are required to reduce the potential impacts of urban runoff resulting from the proposed redevelopment project.

Impact HYD-1: The proposed project would increase the rate and amount of stormwater runoff from the site. Depending on the implementation of stormwater treatment controls and best management practices, the project could degrade water quality downstream of the project site. **[Significant Impact]**

Groundwater

Groundwater in the project area is approximately 150 feet below the ground surface (bgs). The proposed project does not include the use of on-site wells or result in direct contact with the groundwater beneath the site. Water would be provided to the proposed project by the California Water Service Company. Therefore, the proposed project would not adversely affect the groundwater beneath the site. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.8.3.3 *Short-Term Water Quality Impacts*

Construction of the proposed project, including demolition, grading, and excavation activities, could result in temporary impacts to water quality. In addition to generating dust, litter, oil, and other pollutants that could contaminate runoff from the site, construction activities would increase the potential for sedimentation and erosion by disturbing and exposing underlying soil to the erosive forces of water and wind. If standard control measures are not implemented during and immediately after construction, project construction could substantially degrade water quality downstream of the site.

Impact HYD-2: Construction activities could degrade water quality downstream of the site. **[Significant Impact]**

4.8.4 Mitigation and Avoidance Measures for Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts

4.8.4.1 *Long-Term Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts*

The proposed project shall implement the following mitigation measures to reduce long-term hydrology and water quality impacts to a less than significant level:

MM HYD-1.1 The proposed project shall comply with the requirements of the SCVURPPP, as well as other local, state, and federal requirements. Specifically, the project shall comply with provision C.3 of the NPDES permit, which provides enhanced performance standards for the management of stormwater for new development.

MM HYD-1.2 The project will implement BMPs for reducing the volume of runoff and pollution in runoff to the maximum extent practicable. These BMPs may include source control measures, site design elements, and post-construction treatment measures such as the following:

- Vegetated swales and flow-through areas;
- Bioretention areas or basins;
- Disconnected downspouts that are directed into landscape areas;
- Minimization of impervious surfaces and increased use of permeable pavement;
- Location of all storm drain inlets to be stenciled with, "No Dumping! Flows to Bay" to discourage illegal dumping;
- Location and design of trash enclosures (all shall be covered) and materials handling areas;
- Use effective, site-specific erosion and sediment control methods during post-construction periods.

MM HYD-1.3 The proposed project shall comply with all City of Los Altos' ordinances, policies, and processes regarding the post-construction treatment of stormwater runoff. Specifically, SWMPs will be developed prior to issuance of building permits for each phase of project construction, to ensure compliance with City of Los Altos and NPDES permit requirements. The SWMPs will meet the criteria for stormwater protection outlined in Chapters 10.16 of the Los Altos Municipal Code. The purpose of the SWMPs is to:

- Identify the pollutants of concern
- Identify the site constraints that could limit the types of BMPs and site design measures that can be implemented
- Incorporate site design measures to minimize imperviousness and redirect runoff from impervious surfaces to less pervious surfaces.
- Select BMPs (both source and treatment control measures) for those impervious areas that cannot be served by site design measures.

4.8.4.2 *Short-Term Water Quality Impacts*

The proposed project shall implement the following mitigation measures to reduce short-term, construction-related water quality impacts to a less than significant level:

MM HYD-2.1 The proposed project will file a Notice of Intent (NOI) with the State of SWRCB and prepare a SWPPP prior to commencement of construction. The project's SWPPP shall include measures for:

- Soil stabilization,
- Sediment control,
- Sediment tracking control,
- Wind erosion control, and
- Non-storm water management and waste management and disposal control.

MM HYD-2.2 BMPs shall be implemented for reducing the volume of runoff and pollution in runoff to the maximum extent practicable during demolitions, site excavation, grading, and construction. All measures shall be included in the project's SWPPP and printed on all construction documents, contracts, and project plans.

- Restrict grading to the dry season or meet City requirements for grading during the rainy season.

- Use effective, site-specific erosion and sediment control methods during the construction periods. Provide temporary cover of all disturbed surfaces to help control erosion during construction. Provide permanent cover as soon as is practical to stabilize the disturbed surfaces after construction has been completed.

- Cover soil, equipment, and supplies that could contribute non-visible pollution prior to rainfall events or perform monitoring of runoff. Cover stockpiles with secure plastic sheeting or tarp.

- Implement regular maintenance activities such as sweeping driveways between the construction area and public streets. Clean sediments from streets, driveways, and paved areas on-site using dry sweeping methods. Designate a concrete truck washdown area.

- Dispose of all wastes properly and keep site clear of trash and litter. Clean up leaks, drips, and other spills immediately so that they do not contact stormwater.

- Place fiber rolls or silt fences around the perimeter of the site. Protect existing storm and sewer inlets in the project area from sedimentation with filter fabric and sand or gravel bags.

4.8.5 Conclusions regarding Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts

The proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding. With the implementation of the stormwater controls and best management practices, as required for most development projects in Santa Clara County, the proposed project would not contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of the existing stormwater drainage system, nor significantly change the drainage conditions in the project area. The proposed project would not adversely affect the groundwater beneath the site. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Impact HYD-1: The proposed project would increase the rate and amount of stormwater runoff from the site, which could degrade water quality downstream of the project site. Implementation of mitigation measure MM HYD-1.1 would reduce long-term hydrology and water quality impacts to a less than significant level. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

Impact HYD-2: Construction activities could degrade water quality downstream of the site. Implementation of mitigation measures MM HYD-2.1 and MM HYD-2.2 would reduce short-term, construction-related water quality impacts to a less than significant level. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The following section is based, in part, on the letter from *ENGEO Inc.* (November 2007) presenting the soil sampling and laboratory test results for the existing on-site orchard and sports fields and a letter from *Weiss Associates* (May 1991) summarizing the previous civic center site remedial investigations. These letters are included as Appendix H of this EIR.

4.9.1 Regulatory Setting

Hazardous waste generators and users in the City are required to comply with regulations enforced by several federal, state, and county agencies. The regulations are designed to reduce the risk associated with the human exposure to hazardous materials and minimize adverse environmental effects. The Santa Clara County Fire Department coordinates with the County's Hazardous Materials Compliance Division to implement the Santa Clara County Hazardous Materials Management Plan and to ensure that commercial and residential activities involving classified hazardous substances are properly handled, contained, and disposed.

Federal, state, and local requirements govern the removal of asbestos or suspected asbestos-containing materials, including the demolition of structures where asbestos is present. Typically, a certified asbestos contractor must remove all asbestos-containing materials prior to demolition activities. Federal and state regulations also govern the demolition of structures where lead or material containing lead is present. During demolition, lead-based paint that is securely adhering to wood or metal may be disposed of as demolition debris, which is a non-hazardous waste. Loose and peeling paint must be disposed of as a California and/or federal hazardous waste if the concentration of lead exceeds applicable waste thresholds. Other hazardous materials encountered during demolition must be handled and disposed of in accordance with hazardous waste laws and regulations. State and federal construction worker health and safety regulations require protective measures during construction activities where workers may be exposed to asbestos, lead, and/or other hazardous materials.

4.9.2 Existing Setting

4.9.2.1 *Site Conditions*

Existing development on the project site includes various community uses, including the following:

- City Hall
- Police Station
- Library
- Neutra House
- Los Altos Youth Center
- History House and Museum
- Bus Barn Theater
- Hillview Community Center

In addition, the site contains an orchard, sports fields, landscaping, sidewalks, and asphalt roads and parking areas.

Historic uses on the site include agricultural, rural residential, an elementary school, and a school bus maintenance yard. The project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within the vicinity of a private airstrip. The site is not located in an area susceptible to wildland fires.

4.9.2.2 *Potential On-Site Sources of Contamination*

Current/Historic Agricultural Use

Historic use of the project site as orchards likely included use of pesticides, fertilizers, and other agricultural chemicals. Although most agricultural chemicals in use today have a short persistence, some agricultural chemicals used in the past may remain in soil, which may pose a health risk to persons who come into direct contact with the soil.

In October 2007, *ENGEO Inc.* collected a total of six near-surface soil samples from the project site. Two samples were taken from the existing orchard and four samples were taken from the existing Hillview Community Center outdoor use areas (e.g., fields, play areas, and landscaping). The soil samples were analyzed for the presence lead, arsenic and organochlorine pesticides. Trace levels of organochlorine pesticides were detected in the two soil samples from the orchard. Pesticides were not detected in the four samples from the Hillview Community Center. The concentrations ranged from 0.38 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) to 1.1 (mg/kg), which is below the California Environmental Protection Agency's California Human Health Screening Levels (CHHSLs) for residential uses, but above California's hazardous waste threshold.

Lead and arsenic were detected in all six samples. Lead concentrations ranged from 19 to 59 mg/kg, which is below the residential CHHSL of 150 mg/kg. Arsenic concentrations ranged from two mg/kg to 5.3 mg/kg, which is above the residential CHHSL of 0.07 mg/kg but within natural background soil concentrations for Santa Clara County.

Historic School Bus Maintenance Yard

A school bus maintenance yard was historically located on the project in the area of the existing Bus Barn Theater. Various chemicals are used for bus maintenance including lubricants, solvents, adhesives, and paints. As a result, chemicals may have been released and soil in the vicinity of the historic location of the bus maintenance yard may be contaminated with one or more of these types of chemicals.

Hazardous Building Materials

Up to the year 1979, building materials containing lead-based paint and/or asbestos were commonly used. Florescent light ballasts manufactured prior to 1980 may contain polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). All three of these substances can pose a threat to human health. Many of the existing buildings on the project site were built prior to 1979 and, therefore, are likely to contain one or more of these materials.

Government Code Section 65962.5 (Cortese List)

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) List is a planning document used by the State, local agencies and developers to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. Government Code section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List. The Cortese List includes lists maintained by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and the California

Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB)[30]. The project site is not listed by the DTSC, SWRCB, or CIWMB as a hazardous materials site.

4.9.2.3 *Potential Off-Site Sources of Contamination*

Cortese List

The project site is located at the northeast edge of Downtown Los Altos. A variety of uses are located in the immediate project vicinity, including residential, commercial, and public utilities. Three properties in the immediate vicinity of the project site were found on the SWRCB Cortese list. All three properties were listed for the removal of leaking underground storage tanks (LUST) and the case status of all three is closed. Based on the closed case status, on-site contamination from these three nearby LUST sites is not expected.

There are 13 LUST sites within a one-half mile radius of the project site. The case status of all but two of these 13 LUST sites is closed. The two open groundwater contamination (gasoline) cases are both located south of the project site on San Antonio Road. One site is the gas station located 330 South San Antonio Road and the other is the former gas station located at 470 South San Antonio Road. These sites are located approximately 900 and 1,800 feet south of the project site, respectively. Groundwater in the project area is approximately 150 feet below the ground surface and flows to the southeast, cross-gradient to the project site.[31] For these reasons, off-site gasoline contamination is not expected to affect groundwater beneath the project site.

Carbon Tetrachloride

Carbon tetrachloride was detected in low concentrations in the groundwater beneath the site. According to a letter from *Weiss Associates* dated May 30, 1991 (Appendix H), the contamination source was likely a drycleaner located up-gradient of the site. Unsaturated soil and vapor samples collected on-site did not detect the presence of carbon tetrachloride.

4.9.3 Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impacts

4.9.3.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, a hazardous materials impact is considered significant if the project would:

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment as a result of the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials; or
- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment; or
- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school; or

[30] The DTSC, SWRCB, and CIWMB hazardous material sites lists are available online at http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese_List.cfm, http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Swis/Search.aspx, and http://geotracker.swrcb.ca.gov/, respectively.

[31] Delta Consultants, *Quarterly Summary Report for 330 South San Antonio Road*, April 15, 2009.

- Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment; or

- For a project located within an airport land use plan, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area; or

- For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area; or

- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or

- 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.

4.9.3.2 *On-Site Hazardous Materials Concerns*

On-Site Use of Hazardous Materials

The development and operation of the swim center would require the use and transportation of chemicals to maintain water balance and chemical control of each of the proposed pools. Chlorine would be used to maintain water sanitation levels and muriatic acid would be used to maintain the pH of the pools. These materials would be stored at the site and would be brought to the site about one to two times per month. Both materials would be kept in double containment tanks inside the new building. Generally, there would be enough of these materials at the site at one time to be used for a two-week period. The use of a pool cover is known to reduce the chemical consumption by 35-60 percent.[32]

The only other existing use of hazardous materials on the site is the use of pesticides for landscape maintenance. The continued use, storage, and transportation of these materials, in addition to pool associated chemicals, would be managed in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The project plans would be subject to review/approval by the Fire Department prior to issuance of a building permit. For these reasons, the construction and operation of the proposed project would not result in a significant hazardous materials impact. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Agricultural Use Impacts

The entire project site historically operated as an apricot orchard, and a portion of the existing site is currently used for apricot production. For this reason, soil samples were collected from the site and analyzed for organochlorine pesticides and related heavy metals. Organochorine pesticides (e.g, DDT) were detected in the two soil samples collected from the existing orchard. Pesticides were not detected in the samples collected from the remainder of the site. The pesticide levels detected were below the California Environmental Protection Agency's California Human Health Screening Levels (CHHSLs) for residential uses, but above California's hazardous waste threshold. Therefore, the existing on-site pesticide levels would not affect construction and operation of the proposed uses, but

[32] U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, "Energy Savers. Swimming Pool Covers," http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/water_heating/index.cfm/mytopic=13140?print, last updated March 24, 2009. Viewed September 21, 2009.

the project would be required to comply with existing federal, state, and local hazardous waste regulations, if the soil from the existing orchard is transported off-site.

All the soil samples collected from the site contained lead and arsenic, both of which occur naturally in the project area. Lead levels were below the residential use CHHSLs and within background levels and, therefore, would not pose a significant hazardous materials risk to the construction workers during development or the employees and visitors during operation of the proposed project. Although arsenic levels were above the residential use CHHSLs, the detected levels were within naturally-occurring background levels and are not the result of agriculture or other manmade conditions. For these reason, on-site arsenic levels do not pose a significant hazardous materials risk to the construction workers during development or the employees and visitors during operation of the proposed project. These findings are consistent with the guidance provided by the California Environmental Protection Agency.[33] **[Less Than Significant Impact]**

Historic School Bus Maintenance Yard

A school bus maintenance yard was historically located on the project in the area of the existing Bus Barn Theater. Various chemicals are used for bus maintenance including lubricants, solvents, adhesives, and paints. As a result, chemicals may have been released and soil in the vicinity of the historic location of the bus maintenance yard may be contaminated with one or more of these types of chemicals. Therefore, only demolition and construction activities within the area of the Bus Barn Theater could potentially expose people and/or the environment to chemicals associated with the historic operation of the school bus maintenance yard.

Impact HAZ-1: Construction of the proposed project may expose people and/or the environment chemicals associated with the historic operation of the school bus maintenance yard. **[Significant Impact]**

Impacts from Hazardous Building Materials

Up to the year 1979, building materials containing lead-based paint and/or asbestos were commonly used. Florescent light ballasts manufactured prior to 1980 may contain polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). All three of these substances can pose a threat to human health. Except for the History House Museum and the Neutra House, all of the existing buildings on the project site would be demolished and removed during the planned redevelopment of the site. Many of the existing buildings on the project site were built prior to 1979 and, therefore, are likely to contain one or more of these materials.

Demolition of the existing structures on the project site would be completed in accordance with OSHA and EPA standards that protect workers and persons off-site from exposure to asbestos, lead-based paint, and polychlorinated biphenyls. Building materials classified as hazardous materials would be disposed of in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Impact HAZ-2: Demolition of the existing on-site structures could expose construction workers, surrounding residences, and/or the environment to asbestos, lead-based paint and/or polychlorinated biphenyls. **[Significant Impact]**

[33] "Naturally occurring background concentrations of arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, chromium and other metals in soils may exceed their respective soil CHHSLs. Cal/EPA generally does not require cleanup of soil to below background levels. This issue is frequently encountered with arsenic. Natural background concentrations of arsenic in California are often well above the health-based, direct-exposure goals in soil of 0.07 mg/kg for residential land use and 0.24 mg/kg for commercial/industrial land use." Source: California Environmental Protection Agency, *Use of California Human Health Screening Levels (CHHSLs) in Evaluation of Contaminated Properties*, January 2005.

4.9.3.3 *Off-Site Hazardous Materials*

Off-site hazardous materials concerns in the project area include carbon tetrachloride and gasoline groundwater contamination. The gasoline contamination plumes from the off-site LUST cases are not expected to extend beneath the project site because they are located at least 900 feet south and cross-gradient of the site, and they are currently under remediation. Although low levels were detected in the groundwater beneath the site, carbon tetrachloride was not detected in unsaturated soil or vapor samples collected on-site. The source of this contamination is most likely an off-site dry cleaning facility. Excavation activities associated with the proposed project, including the underground parking areas, would not extend to the groundwater, which is located approximately 150 feet below ground surface. For these reasons, groundwater contamination in the project area is not expected to affect people or the environment during construction or operation of the proposed project. **[Less Than Significant Impact]**

4.9.4 Mitigation Measures for Hazards and Hazardous Material Impacts

4.9.4.1 *Historic School Bus Maintenance Yard*

The proposed project shall implement the following mitigation measures to reduce hazardous materials impacts related to the possible presence of contaminated soil in the location of the historic school bus maintenance yard to a less than significant level:

MM HAZ-1.1 A Soil Management Plan (SMP) shall be prepared for the proposed project, prior to the start of any ground disturbance activities on the site. The SMP shall be implemented during construction of the project. The SMP shall establish management practices for handling contaminated soil, if contaminated soil is encountered during development of the project. The SMP shall include a discussion of the on-site contaminants of concern and the steps to be taken if suspect soil is encountered, procedures for removing and/or isolating contaminated soil, a list of parties to be notified if contaminated soil is encountered, and a sampling plan for excess soil planned for off-site disposal.

4.9.4.2 *Hazardous Building Materials*

The proposed project shall implement the following mitigation measures to reduce hazardous materials impacts related to ACMs, lead-based paint, polychlorinated biphenals, and other hazardous building materials to a less than significant level:

MM HAZ-2.1 In conformance with local, state, and federal laws, an asbestos building survey and a lead-based paint survey shall be completed by a qualified professional to determine the presence of ACMs and/or lead-based paint on the structures proposed for demolition. The surveys shall be completed prior to demolition of these structures.

MM HAZ-2.2 A registered asbestos abatement contractor shall be retained to remove and dispose of all potentially friable asbestos-containing materials, in accordance with the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) guidelines, prior to building demolition or renovation that may disturb the materials. All demolition activities shall be undertaken in accordance with Cal/OSHA standards, contained in Title 8 of the California

Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 1529, to protect workers from exposure to asbestos. Materials containing more than one percent asbestos are also subject to Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) regulations.

MM HAZ-2.3 During demolition activities, all building materials containing lead-based paint shall be removed in accordance with Cal/OSHA Lead in Construction Standard, Title 8, CCR 1532.1, including employee training, employee air monitoring and dust control. Any debris or soil containing lead-based paint or coatings shall be disposed of at landfills that meet acceptance criteria for the waste being disposed.

MM HAZ-2.4 Hazardous waste shall be appropriately managed, labeled, transported, and disposed of in accordance with local, state, and/or federal requirements by trained workers.

4.9.5 Conclusions Regarding Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impacts

The construction and operation of the proposed project in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations would not result in a significant hazardous materials impact. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

Impact HAZ-1: Construction of the proposed project may expose people and/or the environment chemicals associated with the historic operation of the school bus maintenance yard. Implementation of mitigation measure MM HAZ-1.1 would reduce hazardous materials impacts related to the possible presence of contaminated soil in the location of the historic school bus maintenance yard to a less than significant level. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

Impact HAZ-2: Demolition of the existing on-site structures could expose construction workers, surrounding residences, and/or the environment to asbestos, lead-based paint and/or polychlorinated biphenyls. Implementation of mitigation measures MM HAZ-2.1, MM HAZ-2.2, MM HAZ-2.3, and MM HAZ-2.4 would reduce hazardous materials impacts related to ACMs, lead-based paint, polychlorinated biphenals, and other hazardous building materials to a less than significant level. **[Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation]**

4.10 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

4.10.1 Existing Setting

The project site is located in a developed area within the City of Los Altos and is currently served by existing phone, electrical, water, stormwater, wastewater, and solid waste service systems. Phone service is provided to the project site by AT&T and electrical service is provided by PG&E.

Stormwater runoff from the site collects in various drains and catch basins throughout the parking lots and landscape areas. The runoff is then conveyed to the 12-inch diameter storm drains beneath the site, most of which connect to an existing 18-inch storm drain that extends east to Cielito Drive.[34] This storm drain connects to a 21-inch storm drain beneath East Edith Avenue that eventually discharges into Hale Creek. Runoff from a small portion of the site (near the existing library) is conveyed to a 24-inch storm drain beneath San Antonio Road, which eventually discharges into Adobe Creek.

Domestic water to the project site is currently is supplied by the California Water Service Company. Approximately 28 percent of the City's water supply comes from well water and 72 percent comes from Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) sources, which include aquifers, reservoirs, and the San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta.

Sanitary sewer and wastewater treatment is provided by the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant, which was designed to meet wastewater needs through the year 2020. The City of Los Altos has rights to discharge 3.6 million gallons a day of treatment, which will accommodate future development of vacant sites and the intensification of commercial areas in accordance with the General Plan. The sanitary sewer discharge from the site is currently collected in three existing six-inch diameter sanitary sewers in San Antonio Road, Hillview Avenue, and Edith Avenue.[35]

Solid waste in Los Altos is collected by the Los Altos Garbage Company and transferred to the Newby Island Landfill in San Jose. The City implements a residential curbside recycling program and participates in other programs of the Santa Clara County Integrated Waste Management Program, which has helped the City meet state-mandated waste reduction goals.

4.10.2 Utilities and Services Impacts

4.10.2.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, a utility and service impact is considered significant if the project would:

- Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board; or

- Require or result in the construction of new/expanded water or wastewater treatment facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects; or

[34] City of Los Altos, *Sewer and Storm Drain System*, Panel E2, October 2006.
[35] Jim Gustafson, City of Los Altos, Engineering Services Manager, Email Communication to Zachary Dahl, August 26, 2009.

- Require or result in the construction of new stormwater or wastewater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects; or

- Not have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, and would require new or expanded entitlements; or

- Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments; or

- Be served by a landfill without sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs; or

- Be inconsistent with federal, state or local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

The project proposes to obtain LEED certification, which requires selecting a sustainable project site, including features that promote water and energy efficiency, and reducing waste by promoting recycling, the reuse of building and materials, and the use of rapidly renewable materials.

4.10.2.2 *Water and Wastewater*

In accordance with City policies and LEED certification requirements, the project will be designed to conserve water to the greatest extent feasible. As required by the City's Municipal Code, the proposed project will include water efficient landscaping. The new sports field and play areas would replace existing facilities, and therefore, would not increase demand for water or sanitary sewer services. The larger buildings will include features that promote water efficiency (such as water efficient toilets and urinals), and would not substantially increase water use or wastewater discharge from the site.

The swim center, which includes two pools and a water feature, would increase demand for water. Covering a swimming pool when it is not in use would conserve water by reducing the amount of water replenishment needed by 30-50 percent.[36] Periodic pool maintenance such as cleaning the filters requires pumping pool water into the sanitary sewer system. Pool repairs may also require the complete draining of the pools. The City's Public Works Director has concluded that the occasional addition of wastewater from the swim center will not exceed the capacity of the existing sanitary sewer system. Therefore, wastewater generated on the site would not exceed the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant.

The existing sewer lines that currently serve the existing buildings on the site would not have capacity to serve the facilities proposed by the Los Altos Community Center Master Plan. The following sewer mains will require an upgrade from six-inch diameter pipes to eight-inch diameter pipes as each phase of construction is built:

- An approximately 1,400-foot long connection extending from the site west to San Antonio Road, north to Mt. Hamilton Avenue, and west to View Street.

[36] U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, "Energy Savers: Swimming Pool Covers," http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/water_heating/index.cfm/mytopic=13140?print, last updated March 24, 2009. Viewed September 21, 2009.

- An approximately 1,200-foot long connection extending down Hillview Avenue (adjacent to the site), east to Eleanor Avenue, and north to East Edith Avenue.

- An approximately 400-foot long connection extending from the site north to East Edith Avenue/Cielito Drive and east to Eleanor Avenue.

The larger buildings proposed by the project may require higher fire flows and pressures than currently required by the existing buildings on the site. Prior to the issuance of building permits, the site plans would be reviewed by the Fire Department and water flows and pressures would be verified. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.10.2.3 *Stormwater Drainage*

The project proposes to maintain the existing connections to the City's storm drainage system. As discussed in Section 4.8, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, the proposed project would slightly increase the impervious area on the site, which would incrementally increase the volume and rate of stormwater runoff generated by the project site. However, prior to discharge into the City's storm drainage system, runoff will be directed to on-site landscaping and/or treatment areas to the extent feasible, which would help reduce the volume and rate of runoff from the site. For these reasons, the proposed project would not contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of the existing stormwater drainage system, and would not require the construction of new or expanded off-site storm drain facilities. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.10.2.3 *Solid Waste*

Similar to existing conditions, the Los Altos Garbage Company would continue to serve the site on a weekly basis. While there may be small amounts of trash brought onto the site by visitors to the swim center, the proposed use would not generate substantial quantities of additional solid waste. As required for LEED certification, the project would provide storage and collection of recyclables on the site. Other measures that could be implemented to reduce waste during project construction include the recycling of construction waste, the reuse of building materials, and the use of materials with recycled content, rapidly renewable materials, and/or certified wood. The proposed project would not require additional landfills or waste facilities. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.10.3 Conclusions regarding Utilities and Service Systems Impacts

The increased demand from the proposed project on existing utilities would not require the expansion or extension of existing facilities or construction of new facilities. **[Less Than Significant Impact]**

4.11 ENERGY

This section discusses the potential impacts associated with the proposed project's consumption of energy. The information in this section is based largely on data and reports produced by the California Energy Commission and the Energy Information Administration of the U.S. Department of Energy.

4.11.1 Introduction

Environmental impacts associated with energy consumption include the depletion of nonrenewable resources (oil, natural gas, coal, etc.) and emissions of pollutants during both the production and consumption phases.

Energy usage is typically quantified using the British Thermal Unit (Btu). As points of reference, the approximate amount of energy contained in a gallon of gasoline, a cubic foot of natural gas, and a kilowatt hour (kWh) of electricity are 123,000 Btu's, 1,000 Btu's, and 3,400 Btu's, respectively. In the year 2000, total energy usage in California was 8,519 trillion Btu's, which equates to an average of 252 million Btu's per capita. The breakdown by sector was 15% residential, 14% commercial, 35% industrial, and 36% transportation. This energy supply primarily included coal (2.9 million tons), natural gas (2.3 trillion cubic feet), petroleum (647 million barrels), nuclear electric power (35.2 trillion kWh), and hydroelectric power (42.8 trillion kWh).

4.11.2 Regulatory Setting

Many federal, state, and local statutes and policies address energy conservation. At the federal level, energy standards apply to numerous products (e.g., the EnergyStar™ program) and transportation (fuel efficiency standards). At the state level, Title 24 of the California Administrative Code sets forth energy standards for buildings, rebates/tax credits are provided for installation of renewable energy systems, and the *Flex Your Power* program promotes conservation in multiple areas.

At the local level, the City's General Plan contains policies with the objective of maximizing energy efficiency (Goal 7 of the Housing Element). The City of Los Altos also adopted Green Building Regulations on December 14, 2007. These regulations require new public and community facility buildings to provide verification that the building design will exceed the state energy efficiency standards (see above) by at least 15 percent, prior to the issuance of a building permit. Prior to final inspection, projects must provide verification that the building was built consistent with the approved energy efficiency requirements.

LEED is an internationally-recognized green building certification system that was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), a non-profit organization.[37] LEED certified projects require selecting a sustainable project site, including features that promote water and energy efficiency, reducing waste (e.g., promoting recycling, reusing building materials, and using rapidly renewable materials), improving indoor environmental quality (e.g., use of low emitting materials), and being innovative in design. To obtain LEED Silver certification, the project must score at least 50 points out of 110 possible points using the most recent checklist for New Construction and Major Renovation, in addition to meeting the following prerequisites:

- Construction Activity Pollution Prevention.
- Water Use Reduction – 20%

[37] U.S. Green Building Council, "Intro What LEED Is," http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=1988, viewed July 23, 2009.

- Fundamental Commissioning of Building Energy Systems
- Minimum Energy Performance
- Fundamental Refrigerant Management
- Storage and Collection of Recyclables
- Minimum Indoor Air Quality Performance
- Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) Control

4.11.3 Existing Setting

The project site is currently developed with approximately 111,043 square feet of public and institutional uses, as well as two sports fields, several children's play areas, an orchard, and parking lots.[38] Existing energy use primarily consists of gasoline for vehicle trips to and from the site and electricity and natural gas for operation of the buildings.

4.11.3.1 *Electricity and Natural Gas*

Electricity usage in California for differing land uses varies substantially by the type of uses in a building, type of construction materials used in a building, and the efficiency of all electricity-consuming devices within a building. The average annual usage of electricity is approximately 17.3 kWh per square foot for office buildings (i.e., City Hall), approximately 15.3 kWh per square foot for public order and safety buildings (i.e., Police Station), and approximately 12.5 kWh per square foot for public assembly buildings (i.e., community center, library, museum, and theater).[39] Based on these rates, the existing buildings on the project site are estimated to use approximately 1.4 million kWh per year.

In 2001, California used natural gas to produce electricity (41%), in industrial uses (28%), in commercial uses (10%), and in residential uses (21%). Like electricity usage, natural gas usage depends on the type of land uses, type of construction materials used, and the efficiency of all gas-consuming devices within a building. The average annual usage of natural gas is approximately 22.0 cubic feet per square foot for office buildings, approximately 26.6 cubic feet per square foot for public order and safety buildings, and approximately 25.9 cubic feet per square foot for public assembly buildings.[40] Based on these rates, the existing buildings on the project site are estimated to use approximately 2.7 million cubic feet of natural gas per year.

4.11.3.2 *Gasoline*

Californians presently use roughly 49.5 million gallons of gasoline and diesel each day. According to the California Energy Commission's *2007 Integrated Energy Policy Report*, gasoline demand is expected to peak and then fall, although total transportation fuel demand will continue to increase through 2020. The average fuel economy for the fleet of light-duty vehicles (autos, pickups, vans, and SUVs) steadily increased from about 12.6 miles-per-gallon (mpg) in the mid-1970s to the current

[38] This total square footage assumes the area of the existing Community Center is 33,970 square feet, which does not include the external circulation areas.

[39] Energy Information Administration, Office of Energy Markets and End Use, *2003 Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey: Consumption and Expenditure Tables*, "Table C14. Electricity Consumption and Expenditure Intensities for Non-Mall Buildings, 2003," released December 2006. http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cbecs/cbecs2003/detailed_tables_2003/2003set10/2003pdf/c14.pdf. The description of building types used in the survey is available at: http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cbecs/building_types.html.

[40] Energy Information Administration, Office of Energy Markets and End Use, *2003 Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey: Consumption and Expenditure Tables*, "Table C1. Total Energy Consumption by Major Fuel for Non-Mall Buildings 2003," released December 2006. http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cbecs/cbecs2003/detailed_tables_2003/2003set9/2003pdf/c1.pdf.

20.7 mpg. At this rate, driving 12,000 miles in a year would equate to an annual gasoline usage of approximately 580 gallons.

4.11.4 Energy Impacts

4.11.4.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

For the purposes of this EIR, an energy impact is considered significant if the project would result in:

- The wasteful use of fuel or energy; or
- A substantial increase in demand upon energy resources in relation to projected supplies; or
- Longer overall distances between jobs and housing.

The proposed project includes the demolition of 13 existing buildings and the construction of five new buildings and a swim center. The project would increase the square footage of public and institutional uses on the site by approximately 94,128 square feet. It is anticipated that project construction would occur in four phases over a period of up to 19 years. Project construction would require the use of energy for demolition, transport of demolition debris off-site, manufacture and transport of building materials, site preparation, and the actual construction of buildings.

4.11.4.2 *Electricity and Natural Gas*

Operation of the proposed public and institutional buildings would consume energy (in the form of electricity and natural gas) for building heating and cooling, lighting, water heating, and the operation of appliances and electronic equipment. Based on the energy usage assumptions described above in Section 4.11.3.1, operation of the buildings would use approximately 2.2 million kWh of electricity per year, which is an increase of approximately 0.8 million kWh over existing conditions. Operation of the buildings is estimated to use about 4.2 million cubic feet of natural gas per year, which is an increase of approximately 1.5 million cubic feet over existing conditions.[41]

Operation of the proposed swim center would consume energy through heating the swimming pool water (using natural gas, electric heat pumps, and/or solar heaters), running filtration pump systems, and lighting.[42] Although pool facilities typically require large amounts of energy, best practices in energy management and the use of applicable energy technologies can reduce much of the required energy.[43] In particular, the use of solar heaters can significantly reduce the energy required to heat the swimming pools.[44] For example, the nearby International swim center in Santa Clara, California uses approximately 13,000 square feet of flatplate collectors to heat 1.2 million gallons of water. The

[41] Given the lack of reliable data regarding energy consumption rates for community pool facilities and the wide variation in energy usage among facilities, these estimates do not take into account the proposed Swim Center. These estimates also do not account for the energy saved by replacing the older energy-inefficient buildings with new energy-efficient buildings.

[42] California Urban Water Conservation Council, "Pool and Spa Energy Savings," http://www.h2ouse.org/tour/details/element_action_contents.cfm?elementID=D21ACAE2-1FC4-41D0-BC9A16B993ED790A&actionID=284A0F57-9F53-41B2-B43CAEFB6E12CC4D, 2009.

[43] Sandia National Laboratories, Solar Pools. "Solar Pools." updated May 4, 2007. http://energy.sandia.gov/swimmingpoolsandenergyuse.htm. Viewed September 21, 2009.

[44] U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, "Energy Savers: Swimming Pool Heating," last updated February 24, 2009. Available at: http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/water_heating/index.cfm/mytopic=13130. Viewed Sept 21, 2009.

solar panels have been providing 60 percent of the energy required to heat the swimming pools since its opening in 1979.[45]

Evaporation is the largest source of energy loss in swimming pools, and covering the pool when not in use is considered the most effective means of reducing evaporation (with cost reductions of 50 to 70 percent).[46] Installing wind breaks (that do not shade pool) can also help reduce evaporation. In addition, maintaining the water temperature as low as possible would also reduce energy usage, since each degree rise in temperature increases energy costs by 10 to 30 percent (for pools using electric heat pumps or gas heaters).[47] Energy usage can also be reduced by using small, high-efficiency pumps and operating them as little as possible, while still complying with health and safety regulations for public pool operations. According to the California Swimming Pool Industry Energy Conservation Task Force, reducing filter operating times to no less than four to five hours per day during the summer and two to three hours per day during the winter reduces annual electrical consumption by 40 to 50 percent.[48]

While the project would incrementally increase energy usage on the site, it will comply with the Green Building Regulations to maximize energy efficiency. In accordance with this requirement, the new buildings shall be constructed to exceed the state energy efficiency standards (i.e., Part 6 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) by at least 15 percent. The project will also be required to include energy efficiency features to obtain LEED certification. Measures could include improving energy performance by at least 12 percent for new buildings and using on-site renewable energy to meet at least one percent of energy needs. Because the proposed project would replace 13 older, less energy efficient buildings with five, new energy efficient buildings, the operation of the project would not result in the wasteful use of energy or substantially increase demand for energy resources in relation to projected supplies. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.11.4.3 *Gasoline*

The vehicle trips associated with the proposed project would consume energy (in the form of gasoline). The proposed swim center, expanded library, and new theater would result in a net increase of vehicle trips to and from the site compared to existing conditions. Based on an average fuel economy of 20.7 mpg, the additional 2,160 daily trips generated by the proposed project would require approximately 279,000 gallons of gasoline per day.[49] As discussed in Section 4.4, *Air Quality*, the location, design, and nature of the proposed project is consistent with goals and policies for reducing vehicle trips and VMT, which would in turn, reduce the use of gasoline. It is likely that Los Altos residents currently drive farther distances to access community facilities that are not currently provided on-site (i.e., swim center) or are not sufficiently meeting their needs (e.g., the library). Therefore, providing a swim center and enhanced community facilities could reduce overall VMT. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

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[45] U.S. Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, *Conserving Energy and Heating Your Swimming Pool with Solar Energy*, July 2000. Available at: http://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy00osti/28038.pdf

[46] U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, "Energy Savers: Swimming Pool Covers," updated March 24, 2009, http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/water_heating/index.cfm/mytopic=13140?print. Viewed September 21, 2009.

[47] The American Red Cross recommends a temperature of 78°F for competitive swimming, although young children and the elderly may require a temperature of 80°F or higher.

[48] California Energy Commission, "Pools and Spas," 2006, http://www.consumerenergycenter.org/home/outside/pools_spas.html. Viewed September 21, 2009.

[49] The annual gasoline consumption estimate was calculated by dividing the net total VMT, as estimated using the URBEMIS2007 model (refer to Appendix D), by the average fuel economy and multiplying by 365 days.

4.11.5 Conclusions Regarding Energy Impacts

The proposed project would not result in a significant impact associated with energy consumption. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.12 GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

4.12.1 Background Information

Global climate change is the alteration of the Earth's weather including its temperature, precipitation, and wind patterns. Global temperatures are affected by naturally occurring and human-generated atmospheric gases, such as carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide. These gases allow sunlight into the Earth's atmosphere, but prevent radiative heat from escaping into outer space, which is known as the "greenhouse" effect. The world's leading climate scientists have reached consensus that global climate change is underway and is very likely caused by humans.[50] Humans generate greenhouse gases (GHG) through the combustion of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, and coal) for energy production and transportation, decomposition of solid waste, burning of wood, deforestation, agricultural practices, and industrial activities.

According to the Draft 2009 Climate Action Team Report, extreme events from heat waves, floods, droughts, wildfires, and bad air quality are likely to become more frequent in California in the future, as a result of climate change.[51] By 2050, sea-level rise could range from 11 to 18 inches higher and by 2100 sea-level rise could be 23 to 55 inches higher than in the year 2000. Climate change is expected to increase electricity demand and affect the reliability of water supplies, due to the warmer-drier climate, changes in precipitation patterns, and earlier melting of the Sierra snow pack.

4.12.2 Regulatory Framework

Global climate change resulting from GHG emissions is an emerging environmental concern being raised and discussed at the international, national, and statewide level. At each level, agencies are considering strategies to control emissions of gases that contribute to global warming.

4.12.2.1 *State Regulations*

Regulatory efforts in California that apply to the project are summarized below.

State of California Executive Order S-3-05

In June 2005, the Governor of California signed Executive Order S-3-05 which identified Cal/EPA as the lead coordinating State agency for establishing climate change emission reduction targets in California. A "Climate Action Team", a multi-agency group was set up to implement Executive Order S-3-05. Under this order, the state plans to reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

Assembly Bill (AB) 32 – The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006

Subsequent to Executive Order S-3-05, California Assembly Bill (AB 32) was signed into law in the fall of 2006. The bill requires achievement by 2020 of a statewide GHG emissions limit equivalent to 1990 emissions, and the adoption of rules and regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emissions reductions.

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[50] IPCC, 2007: Summary for Policymakers. In: *Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Solomon, S., D. Qin, M. Manning, Z. Chen, M. Marquis, K.B. Averyt, M. Tignor and H.L. Miller (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA. Available at: http://www.ipcc.ch/.

[51] California Environmental Protection Agency, *Draft Climate Action Team Report to Governor Schwarzenegger and the Legislature*, April 1, 2009. Available at: http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/publications/cat/. Viewed April 22, 2009.

Senate Bill 97 – Modification to the Public Resources Code

On August 24, 2007, Governor Schwarzenegger signed SB 97 which requires the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to prepare, develop, and transmit guidelines to the Resources Agency for the mitigation of GHG emissions or the effects of GHG emissions. The Resources Agency is required to certify and adopt these guidelines by January 1, 2010.

Draft CEQA Guideline Amendments for Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Currently there is no established guidance from the state or in published CEQA case law for the determination of what constitutes a significant global climate change impact or what measures are necessary to off-set new GHG emissions. OPR has drafted amendments to the CEQA Guidelines for GHG emissions as required by Senate Bill 97 (SB 97). The proposed CEQA Guideline amendments address determining a project's incremental contribution to a cumulative effect and the significance of GHG emission impacts, consistency with plans, mitigation measures related to GHG emissions, and tiering from an environmental impact report (EIR). In the proposed CEQA Guideline changes, Lead Agencies would retain discretion to establish quantitative or qualitative thresholds of significance based on individual circumstances and substantial evidence.

Senate Bill 375 – Redesigning Communities to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

SB 375 encourages housing and transportation planning on a regional scale, in a manner designed to reduce vehicle use and associated GHG emissions. It requires the California Air Resources Board (ARB) to set regional targets for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions from passenger vehicles for 2020 and 2035. Per SB 375, the ARB appointed a Regional Targets Advisory Committee (RTAC) on January 23, 2009, to provide recommendations on factors to be considered and methodologies to be used in ARB's target setting process. The RTAC is required to provide its recommendations in a report to ARB by September 30, 2009. ARB must propose draft targets by June 10, 2010, and adopt final targets by September 30, 2010.

Each of the state's 18 metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) will be responsible for preparing and implementing a Sustainable Communities Strategy as part of their Regional Transportation Plan to meet the SB 375 regional targets, if feasible. The MPO for the San Francisco Bay Area is the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The MTC's Regional Transportation Plan update for 2013 would be the first MTC plan subject to SB 375. The MPOs also will be required to prepare an alternative planning strategy that identifies development patterns, infrastructure, or additional transportation measures or policies to meet identified targets.

4.12.2.2 *Existing City of Los Altos Policies, Ordinances, and Environmental Agenda*

Various policies in the City's General Plan and measures in the Municipal Code are designed to reduce energy use, encourage water conservation, and promote the use of alternative modes of transportation. These measures can result in a reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases from the combustion of fuels.

General Plan Goals and Policies

Measures in the Los Altos General Plan that are designed to reduce energy use in buildings, vehicle miles traveled, motor vehicle emissions, and water use include:

- *Housing Policy 7.1* – The City shall encourage energy conservation measures to reduce energy consumption in residential, governmental, and commercial buildings.

- *Housing Policy 7.2* – The City shall promote the use of solar energy in an aesthetically pleasing manner.
- *Housing Policy 7.3* – The City shall continue to implement building and zoning standards to encourage energy efficiency.
- *Natural Hazards & Environment Policy 8.1* – Support the principles of reducing air pollutants through land use, transportation, and energy use planning.
- *Natural Hazards & Environment Policy 8.2* – Encourage transportation modes that minimize contaminant emissions from motor vehicle use.
- *Natural Hazards & Environment Policy 8.4* – Ensure location and design of development projects so as to conserve air quality and minimize direct and indirect emissions of air contaminants.
- *Circulation Policy 1.3* – Cooperate with regional agencies to promote area-wide transportation solutions, and actively participate in area-wide planning studies and commissions.
- *Circulation Policy 2.6* – Implement and require developers to implement street improvements that accommodate and encourage the use of non-automobile travel modes including walking, bicycling, and transit.
- *Circulation Goal 3* – Promote local and regional transit as a viable alternative to automobile travel for all residents and especially for transit-dependent individuals.
- *Circulation Policy 3.1* – Promote expansion of regional public transportation service and usage to provide alternative means of transportation and help reduce air pollution generated by automobiles.
- *Circulation Goal 4* – Provide for the convenient and safe movement of bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the City to meet the commuter and recreation needs of the community.
- *Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Policy 1.4* – Continue to promote water conservation.

Los Altos Municipal Code

The City of Los Altos Municipal Code also promotes water and energy conservation. Water conservation requirements for new and existing development within the City are set forth in the Water Efficient Landscape Regulations (Chapter 12.36). The Los Altos Municipal Code requires all buildings to conform to the energy conservation requirements of California Administrative Code Title 24. The City's Zoning Regulations (Title 14) "encourage the use of solar, photovoltaic, and other energy conserving devices" in commercial zoning districts.

City of Los Altos Green Building Regulations

In December 2007, the City of Los Altos adopted Green Building Regulations (Chapter 12.66 of the Los Altos Municipal Code) for all new construction, including major additions and/or alterations to existing structures. The regulations were adopted to encourage energy and resource efficiency and reduce waste and pollution generation. The Green Building Regulations require new public and community facility projects to provide verification that the building design exceeds the energy efficiency standards required by Part 6 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations by at least 15 percent.

4.12.3 Existing Setting

Under existing conditions, the City includes a mix of residential, commercial, and public/quasi-public uses. Residential development in the City consists of mostly single family residences. The primary GHG emissions from human activities within the City are associated with transportation

(motor vehicles) followed by emissions from natural gas use and electricity generation. A relatively small amount of GHG emissions are generated by the breakdown of solid waste generated in the City.

4.12.4 Global Climate Change Impacts

Currently there is no established guidance, from the state or in published CEQA case law, for the determination of what constitutes a significant global climate change impact or what measures are necessary to off-set new GHG emissions. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) is currently developing amendments to the CEQA Guidelines that will provide regulatory guidance on the analysis and mitigation for Greenhouse Gas Emissions in CEQA documents. Under Senate Bill 97, these amendments are to be adopted on or before January 1, 2010. In the interim, OPR has prepared a technical guidance document regarding the steps lead agencies should take to address climate change in their CEQA documents.[52] The guidance document recommends that the Lead Agency identify individual or cumulative impacts of a project and mitigation measures to reduce GHG emissions associated with transportation, electricity generation and use, and other sources.

4.12.4.1 *Thresholds of Significance*

Under SB 97 (August 2007), the State Office of Planning and Research is to certify and adopt guidelines for evaluation of the effects of GHG emissions and mitigation of those effects by January 1, 2010. However, neither CEQA nor the CEQA Guidelines currently provide an adopted methodology for analysis of greenhouse gases. Absent established standards for gauging the significance of greenhouse gas emissions, a primarily qualitative approach will be used to evaluate possible impacts for this project.

For the purposes of this EIR, a global climate change impact would be significant if the project would:

- Result in substantial new greenhouse gas emissions; or
- Be substantially affected by global climate change.

At this time, for a project to be a substantial source of new greenhouse gas emissions it would have to meet the following criteria:

- Result in a net increase in greenhouse gas emissions, in terms of carbon dioxide equivalents,[53] that could substantially impede local, regional or statewide efforts to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels.

4.12.4.2 *Project Impacts*

The proposed project would generate GHG emissions through the combustion of fossil fuels for energy and transportation uses during both construction and operation of the proposed project. The primary project-generated GHG of concern would be carbon dioxide.

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[52] Governor's Office of Planning and Research. *Technical Advisory: CEQA AND CLIMATE CHANGE: Addressing Climate Change Through California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Review*, June 19, 2008.

[53] Each of greenhouse gas contributes to global climate change at a different relative rate. Methane has a global warming potential 23 times that of carbon dioxide, while nitrous oxide is 296 times that of the same amount of carbon monoxide.

Construction Emissions

Construction of the proposed project would temporarily generate GHG emissions through the combustion of fossil fuels for equipment use and vehicle trips to and from the site. The process of manufacturing materials used to construct the project would also generate GHG emissions. Given that the project is infill development within close distance of construction supplies, equipment, and landfills, and recycle centers, construction of the project would not generate substantial carbon dioxide emissions.

Operational Emissions

The URBEMIS2007 model was used to estimate vehicle emissions resulting from operation of the proposed project (refer to Appendix E for air quality data). GHG emissions resulting from electricity usage of the proposed building were also estimated.

The proposed project would increase the square footage of public and institutional uses on the site by approximately 94,128 square feet. The primary sources of GHG emissions from the proposed project would be the combustion of fossil fuels for vehicle trips to and from the site, the GHG emissions from power plants supplying electricity to the proposed buildings, and the use of natural gas for heating the buildings. Electricity would also be used to pump potable water from the source to the project site, and energy would be consumed to treat sewage generated by the new development.

The emission of carbon dioxide from increased electricity usage by the proposed buildings is estimated to be approximately 238 metric tons of carbon dioxide a year.[54] It is estimated that the net increase of project-generated vehicle trips would increase the emission of carbon dioxide by approximately 2,377 metric tons a year, according to the URBEMIS2007 model (refer to Appendix E). Efforts to reduce the project's GHG emissions by reducing electricity demand and reducing vehicle trips and miles, therefore, should be implemented.

Although it is anticipated that the project would likely result in a net increase of GHG emissions, there are several features inherent to the proposed project that reduces energy use and associated emissions. The proposed project is the redevelopment of an infill site that is well served by transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities and is located within walking distance ofresidences, restaurants, convenience stores, and other retail uses in the Downtown area. The project would provide pedestrian pathways and connections throughout the site, and maintain the existing sidewalks on the project street frontages. As discussed in Section 4.4, *Air Quality*, the design, location, and nature of the project (i.e., redevelopment of an infill site in a mixed-use neighborhood served by alternative transportation modes) provides opportunities for reduced vehicle trips and VMT, and thus GHG emissions. Although the proposed swim center and the larger library and theater would result in a net increase of vehicle trips to and from the site, it is likely that Los Altos residents currently drive farther distances to access community facilities that are not currently provided on-site (i.e., swim center) or are not sufficiently meeting their needs (e.g., library). Therefore, providing a swim center and enhanced community facilities on-site could reduce VMT.

As described in Section 4.11, *Energy*, the project would incrementally increase energy usage on the site; however, it will comply with the City's General Plan and Green Building Regulations. The

[54] Emissions from the use of natural gas, electricity to pump water, and energy to treat wastewater were not estimated due to the lack of reliable data. The estimate of carbon dioxide emissions from electricity usage was calculated by multiplying the estimated net project electricity usage of 825,803 kWhr/yr and the 2007 emission factor for PG&E, which is 0.63567 pounds per kilowatt-hour, according to the California Climate Action Registry ("Utility-Specific Emissions Factors," June 2009, http://www.climateregistry.org/resources/docs/PUP_Metrics-June-2009.xls.)

City's Green Building Regulations require the project to exceed the energy efficiency standards by at least 15 percent over that required by Part 6 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. Water efficient landscaping will also be included, as required by the City's Municipal Code. Because the proposed project would replace older, energy-inefficient buildings with new energy-efficient buildings, the proposed project is expected to require less natural gas and electricity (for heating and cooling) per square foot of building floor area. Best practices in energy management can reduce much of the required energy to operate the pool facilities of the proposed swim center.

Given the overwhelming scope of global climate change, it is not anticipated that a single development project would have an individually discernable effect on global climate change (e.g., that any increase in global temperature or rise in sea level could be attributed to the emissions resulting from one single development project). Rather, it is more appropriate to conclude that the GHG emissions generated by the proposed project would combine with emissions across the state, nation, and globe to cumulatively contribute to global climate change.

To determine whether the proposed project would have a significant impact on global climate change is somewhat speculative, particularly given the fact that there are no existing numerical thresholds to determine an impact. However, in an effort to make a good faith effort at disclosing environmental impacts and to conform with the CEQA Guidelines [§16064(b)], it is the City's position that the proposed project would not increase VMT per capita, result in excessive energy or water use, or otherwise impede the state's ability to reach the emission reduction limits/standards set forth by the State of California by Executive Order S-3-05 and AB 32. This conclusion is based on the nature and size of this redevelopment project, its location within an established urban area served by existing infrastructure (rather than a greenfield site), proximity to transit and a variety of other land uses, and project adherence to the City's Green Building Regulations. For these reasons, this project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change associated with greenhouse gas emissions. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.12.4.3 *Impacts to the Project*

Impacts to the project from global climate change could include reduced water availability due to droughts. The project includes water efficient landscaping and other measures to promote water conservation (water efficient toilets and urinals), which reduce the project's long-term demand for water. At this time, neither the State Department of Water Resources nor the Santa Clara Valley Water District has established the effects of global climate change on water supplies in California or locally. The City of Los Altos continues to work with the California Water Services Company to ensure sustainable and reliable water supplies through a range of activities, including water conservation.

Energy use on the project site could rise during hot summer months because energy demand for building cooling could increase. In the event regional demand exceeded supply, this could result in temporary interruptions in power supply. This would be primarily an operational and/or economic impact rather than an environmental impact and is not discussed further. As currently provided on-site, an emergency back-up power supply would ensure that vital public services, such as operation of the Police Station, can continue to function during temporary power interruptions. For these reasons, utilities required by the proposed project would not be directly impacted by the effects of global climate change.

The project site is located approximately 170 feet above sea level and is approximately four miles from the San Francisco Bay (as the crow flies); therefore, the project would not be adversely impacted by sea level rise of two to three feet. For this reason and those discussed above, it is not

anticipated that global climate change would result in a significant impact to the proposed project. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

4.12.5 Conclusion

The proposed project would not result in a global climate change impact. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

SECTION 5 AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Unlike utility services, public facilities and services are provided to the community as a whole, usually from a central location or from a defined set of nodes. The resources base for delivery of the services, including the physical service delivery mechanisms, is financed on a community-wide basis, usually from a unified or integrated financial system. The service delivery can be provided by a city, county, service, or other special district. Usually, new development would create an incremental increase in the demand for these services; the amount of the demand would vary widely, depending on both the nature of the development (residential vs. industrial, for instance) and the type of services, as well as on the specific characteristics of the development (such as senior housing vs. family housing).

The impact of a particular project on public services and facilities is generally a fiscal impact. By increasing the demand for a type of service, a project could cause an eventual increase in the cost of providing the service (more personnel hours to patrol an area, additional fire equipment needed to service a tall building, etc.). These impacts are economic; they are not environmental.

CEQA does not require an analysis of fiscal impacts unless the increased demand triggers the need for a new facility (such as a school or fire station), since the new facility could have a physical impact on the environment.

The public services discussion below focuses on fire, police, schools, libraries, and parks, using the following threshold of significance (CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G):

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services.

5.1 FIRE PROTECTION

5.1.1 Setting

Fire protection and emergency service to the project site is provided by the Santa Clara County Fire Department (SCCFD). The fire department participates in a mutual aid program with the Cities of Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto and San José. Moffett Field also participates in the mutual aid program. Through this program, should the City of Los Altos need assistance, one or more of the mutual aid cities would provide assistance to locations within the City of Los Altos in whatever capacity needed. The nearest fire station to the site is County Station No. 15, located at 10 Almond Avenue, approximately 0.2 miles north of the site. The first due response time to the project site is expected to meet the SCCFD's first response time goal of 5.5 minutes or less.

5.1.2 Impact

Under the proposed Master Plan, existing civic, community and recreational uses on the 18-acre project site would be demolished and reconstructed on-site. The only new use proposed under the Master Plan is the swim center. The replacement of existing on-site uses would not increase the demand for fire or emergency protection; however, given that the swim center would be a new use to the site, the project could result in a minor increase in demand for these services.

The proposed project will be designed and constructed in conformance with applicable Fire and Building codes to reduce fire risk. The replacement of older buildings with new structures that meet current codes would improve the safety for future employees and visitors to the public facilities. The proposed on-site access roads would be designed to accommodate emergency vehicles. During the City's design review process, the project may be required to include additional features to reduce potential fire hazards/additional safety measures to ensure adequate fire protection and emergency services.

For these reasons, the proposed project would not substantially impact the service ratios, response times, or performance of the fire department and would not result in the need for a new fire facility, the construction of which could result in an impact on the physical environment. Implementation of the proposed Master Plan would not result in a significant impact related to the provision of fire protection and emergency services. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

5.2 POLICE PROTECTION

5.2.1 Setting

Police protection services are provided to the project site by the City of Los Altos Police Department. Officers patrolling the project area are dispatched from police headquarters, located at the existing Police Station on the project site. The Los Altos Police Department is staffed with 30 sworn officers, six communications officers, and a non-sworn staff of six persons. The Police Department participates on the City's Emergency Preparedness Committee and the Traffic Advisory Task Force.

5.2.2 Impact

The redevelopment of the project site is not expected to substantially increase demand for police services in the project area. The proposed project would be designed and constructed in conformance with current codes and reviewed by the Police Department to ensure appropriate safety features that minimize criminal activity.

Under the proposed Master Plan, the existing 11,641-square foot Police Station would be replaced with an updated 18,815-square foot Police Station, which would be located in the northwest corner of the site, adjacent to San Antonio Road. Similar to the existing Police Station, the proposed station would contain offices, meeting rooms, holding cells, locker rooms, and other ancillary uses such as bathrooms and mechanical rooms.

Phase I of the Master Plan includes demolition of the existing Police Station and construction of the new Police Station and associated below-grade parking garage. The Police Station could be temporarily relocated on the site, possibly in trailers off Hillview Avenue and/or in the community center, until completion of the new Police Station. These facilities would allow the Police Department to continue to provide adequate police services, and no additional police facilities would be required. Although the temporary relocation of the Police Station could disturb the normal operations of the Police Department, it is anticipated that the project would not substantially impact their service ratios, response times, or performance. For these reasons, implementation of the proposed Master Plan would not result in a significant impact related to the provision of police protection and services. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

5.3 SCHOOLS

5.3.1 Setting

The City of Los Altos is served by a total of five public school districts, serving elementary, middle, high school, and community college students. The project site is located within the Los Altos Elementary School District and the Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District.

5.3.2 Impact

The proposed Master Plan would not generate students or otherwise increase demand upon school facilities in the project area. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

5.4 LIBRARIES

5.4.1 Setting

The Santa Clara County Library System consists of eight libraries and one branch library. The Los Altos Library, located on the project site, and the Woodland Branch Library, located at 1975 Grant Road in Los Altos, serves a population of approximately 41,000 residents living in Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, and the surrounding unincorporated area. [55] The City of Los Altos owns both of these libraries, but the Santa Clara County Library runs and maintains them with support from Los Altos Library Commission, the Friends of the Library, volunteers, the Los Altos Library Endowment, and the North County Library Authority.

The existing on-site library was built in 1964, was expanded and remodeled in 1993, and has over 290,000 volumes in its collection. It is currently open to the public from 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM, Monday through Thursday, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Friday and Saturday, and 12:00 PM to 6:00 PM on Sunday.

The *Library Services and Space Needs Assessment*, prepared for the Los Altos Library in May 2008, recommends a large expansion of the library building, requiring significant reconstruction or replacement of the existing building.[56]

5.4.2 Impact

Under the proposed Master Plan, the existing 28,050-square foot library would be replaced with a 47,866-square foot library, which would be located adjacent to San Antonio Road in the western portion of the site. Given that the proposed project does not include construction of residential uses, it would not increase demand for library services.

Library operations would be temporarily interrupted during construction of the new library. During this phase, residents of Los Altos would continue to have access to the Woodland Branch Library, as well as other Santa Clara County libraries and online resources such as the electronic library (http://www.santaclaracountylib.org/electronic_library/). Although the provision of library services in Los Altos would be reduced during construction of the new library, the effect on performance objectives would be temporary and no new or physically altered facilities would be required to provide library services. Because the new, larger library is designed to accommodate for the existing

[55] Santa Clara County Library website, "Los Altos Community Library History," last revised July 2, 2008, viewed May 13, 2009. http://www.santaclaracountylib.org/losaltos/history.html

[56] Page + Moris LLC, *Los Altos Library, Library Services and Space Needs Assessment*, May 2008.

and future needs of the residents of Los Altos, the proposed project would allow Santa Clara County to improve library services in Los Altos in the long-term. For these reasons, implementation of the proposed Master Plan would not result in a significant impact related to the provision of library services or facilities. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

5.5 PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

5.5.1 Setting

The City of Los Altos currently provides approximately 1.3 acres of dedicated park land per 1,000 residents. There are twelve parks in the City, including two passive parks and a nature preserve. Most of the park sites are smaller neighborhood parks, some of which are shared facilities with school sites. The City's goal is to have five acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents; therefore, the City is deficient in park space. In addition to park facilities, the City of Los Altos Recreation Department offers a wide-range of recreational programs and classes, including outdoor activities/ camps, fitness programs, dance classes, special programs for teens and seniors, and youth and adult sports leagues.

Hillview Park, located on the project site, includes the existing soccer field, baseball field, two bocce ball courts, and two outdoor children's play areas (tot lots). This park also provides a fitness par course and picnic tables. Connor Park is a 0.75-acre passive park, located on San Antonio Road, opposite from the existing City Hall. Other nearby parks located southwest and west of the site include Lincoln Park (a 2.5-acre passive park), Redwood Grove (a six-acre nature preserve with trails/picnic areas), and Shoup Park (a 2.84-acre park with outdoor recreation and picnic facilities and the Garden House).

5.5.2 Impact

Under the proposed Master Plan, the existing on-site soccer and baseball fields would be replaced with new soccer and baseball fields that would be constructed on the southeast portion of the project site. The use of the new natural turf sports fields would be similar to use of the existing fields. The soccer field would be used for soccer games, practice, instruction, summer camps, and other outdoor uses such as the community picnic. The baseball field would be used for baseball games and other summer camp and community events (e.g., dog obedience classes). Use of the fields would not increase as a result of the proposed project, as they are currently used at their maximum capacity.

The proposed Master Plan also includes the construction of a swim center (a new use to the site), three new bocce ball courts that would replace the existing on-site courts, and a children's play area, which would replace the three outdoor play areas currently on the site.

Given that the proposed project does not include construction of residential uses, it would not generate additional demand for parks. The proposed swim center may incrementally increase the use of Hillview Park, if swimmers also use the other park facilities; however, the addition of a new recreational facility is not anticipated to significantly impact or cause deterioration or overcrowding at the park.

The availability of parkland would be temporarily reduced after the existing fields have been removed and prior to during the completion of the new park facilities within Hillview Park. However, residents would continue to have access to nearby sports fields and parkland in Los Altos, and the project would provide additional/improved park and recreational facilities in the long-term. Overall, the proposed Master Plan would support the City's goal to expand recreation opportunities for its residents. For these reasons and those discussed above, the proposed project would not require

the construction or expansion of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

5.6 OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES

5.6.1 Setting

Other public facilities located on the site include the Hillview Community Center, the Los Altos History Museum, Bus Barn Theater, and the Los Altos Youth Center (LAYC). The existing community center includes classrooms/meeting space, a senior center, bocce ball courts, and a community garden. A private preschool facility also operates within the existing community center.

5.6.2 Impact

Under the proposed Master Plan, a 55,600-square foot community center would replace the existing community center and the LAYC on the site. The proposed community center would provide the same public services and classes as the existing community center; however, the preschool would no longer be provided. The new community center would be used for private rentals on the weekends (e.g., weddings). The additional square footage (approximately 9,350 square feet) would provide more internal circulation areas, office space for the existing staff, and slightly larger classrooms that would be used for community and recreational programs and events.

The Los Altos History House and Museum would remain unchanged with the project. The existing 100-seat Bus Barn Theater would be replaced with a new 200-seat theater. Similar to the existing theater, the proposed theater would be utilized by public and private groups for cultural events and performances, most of which would be held on the weekends or weekday evenings.

The new, larger community center and theater would serve the existing and future residents of Los Altos. Although community center operations would be temporarily interrupted during construction of the new community center, the proposed project would enhance the provision of cultural and community facilities and activities in the City. The project will attempt to keep the Bus Barn Theater open as long as possible until there is funding available for its construction. It should be noted that the new theater will be a larger permanent structure that would better serve the community in the long-term. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Master Plan would not impact other public facilities on the project site. **[Less than Significant Impact]**

SECTION 6 ALTERNATIVES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines provides extensive direction on identifying and evaluating alternatives to a proposed project, specifically:

(a) An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects...There is no ironclad rule governing the nature or scope of the alternatives other than the rule of reason.
(b) ...the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives...which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects...
(c) The range...shall include those [alternatives] that...could avoid or substantially lessen one or more significant effects.
(f) The range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a "rule of reason" that requires...only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. The alternatives shall be limited to ones that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.

The CEQA Guidelines also advise that the alternatives should feasibly attain most of the project's basic objectives, but are to be considered even if they impede to "some degree", the attainment of project objectives, or could be more costly than the proposed project.

The discussion of alternatives should include enough information to allow a meaningful evaluation and comparison with the proposed project. The CEQA Guidelines state that if an alternative would cause one or more additional impacts, compared to the proposed project, the discussion should identify the additional impact, but in less detail than the significant effects of the proposed project.

The three critical factors to consider in selecting and evaluating alternatives are, therefore (1) the significant impacts from the proposed project that could be reduced or avoided by an alternative, (2) the project's objectives, and (3) the feasibility of the alternatives available. Each of these factors is discussed below.

6.1.1 Significant Impacts

As discussed in the respective sections of this EIR, the proposed project would result in significant temporary noise and air quality impacts, hazardous material, water quality and biological and cultural resource impacts. Mitigation measures are included in the proposed project to reduce all of these impacts to a less than significant level, except for the cultural resource impact. Please refer to the respective sections in this EIR for a detailed discussion of the project's significant impacts.

As discussed in Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources* of this EIR, the proposed project would result in the following significant unavoidable impact:

- The proposed project would remove the existing historic apricot orchard. Implementation of mitigation measure MM CUL-2.1 (i.e., planting/transplanting apricot trees throughout the site) would partially compensate the substantial change to the historic orchard; however, this measure would not reduce this impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, this impact is significant and unavoidable impact. **[Significant Unavoidable Impact]**

6.1.2 Objectives

The stated objectives for the proposed project are as follows:

1. Consistency and compliance with the Los Altos General Plan.
2. Meet the current and future needs of the on-site employees.
3. Meet the current and future needs of the community.
4. Preserve the History House and Museum in the central portion of the site.
5. Align the site entry with the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection.
6. Meet current energy efficiency, code, and accessibility requirements.
7. Provide additional meeting, office, classroom, and community gathering spaces.
8. Construct a police station that meets the structural requirements for an Essential Services Facility as required by the current building code.
9. Expand the library building.
10. Construct a community pool.
11. Provide more indoor exercise areas and more green spaces on the site.
12. Improve multi-generational recreational facilities on the site.
13. Improve site access and traffic flow.
14. Correct the functional parking shortfall during peak usage times.

6.1.3 Feasibility of Alternatives

CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines, and case law on the subject have found that feasibility can be based on a wide range of factors and influences. CEQA's general definition of feasibility is "capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors." Among the factors that may be taken into account in considering the feasibility of an alternative are "...site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries...and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site..." [Section 15126.6 (f)(1)].

6.1.4 Selection of Alternatives

In addition to the No Project alternative, the CEQA Guidelines advise that the range of alternatives discussed in an EIR should include those that "would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project." As discussed above, the significant unavoidable impact that would result from the proposed project include removing the existing historic apricot orchard.

CEQA encourages consideration of an alternative site when the significant effects of the project might be avoided or substantially lessened. Proposing the project at another location would avoid the significant unavoidable impact to the historic apricot orchard. There are no other sites, however, that are suitable to accommodate the proposed project. Further, reconstructing and relocating the existing community uses on the site to a new location is not consistent with the General Plan. For these reasons, an alternative site is not evaluated any further in this EIR.

Reducing the project footprint could avoid impacting the historic apricot orchard. For this reason, the Reduced Footprint alternative is evaluated below. It is also possible to reduce the impact to the historic apricot orchard by constructing an orchard at another location on the site. Both of these alternatives are discussed below.

6.2 NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

6.2.1 No Development

Under the No Project alternative, no development would occur on the project site and the existing community facilities on the site would remain (i.e., City Hall, Police Station, Library, Los Altos Youth Center, History House and Museum, Neutra House, Bus Barn Theater, Hillview Community Center, baseball field, soccer field, and apricot orchard).

Because no development would occur under the No Project alternative, the significant unavoidable impact to the historic apricot orchard would be avoided. The benefits of the project would also be avoided.

As stated in Section 1.2, *Background*, many of the structures are in need of repair, upgrade, and/or replacement, in order to meet current energy efficiency, code, and accessibility requirements, to allow for technology upgrades, and to provide additional meeting, office, classroom, and community gathering space. The existing police station does not meet the structural requirements for an Essential Services Facility as required by the current building code. The *Library Services and Space Needs Assessment* (May 2008) recommends a large expansion of the existing library building, requiring significant reconstruction or replacement of the existing building.

There is also public demand for a community pool, more indoor exercise areas, improved multi-generational recreational facilities, particularly for seniors and youth, and more green spaces on the site. Other issues include poor site access and traffic flow. For example, the location of the City Hall building on the site conflicts with the goal for aligning the site entry with the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection. All of the on-site facilities suffer from a functional parking shortfall during peak usage times. The proposed project would address all of the issues described above; but would result in the loss of the historic orchard.

6.2.2 Redevelopment

Consistent with the project site's *Public and Institutional* General Plan Land Use Designation and *Public and Community Facilities (PCF)* zoning, the site is developed with public, governmental, and recreational uses (i.e., City Hall, Police Station, Los Altos Library, Los Altos Youth Center, History House and Museum, Neutra House, Bus Barn Theater, Hillview Community Center, baseball field, soccer field, and apricot orchard). Given these existing conditions, it is reasonable to assume that the uses on the site would be redeveloped in the future in a manner that is consistent with the site's existing General Plan Use Designation and zoning. The objectives of this future redevelopment would be similar to the proposed project and, for this reason, would likely result in the same significant unavoidable cultural resource impact as the proposed project (i.e.. remove the historic apricot orchard). Therefore, under this scenario of the No Project alternative, the project objectives would be met, but none of the project's significant impacts would be avoided.

6.2.3 Conclusion

Both of the No Project scenarios discussed above are feasible. The No Project alternative (no development) would avoid the significant impacts of the proposed project and, therefore, is environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Future redevelopment of the site, however, would result in the same significant impacts that would result from the proposed project. This is because the objectives of the proposed project would

inevitably guide future redevelopment of the site. For this reason, this scenario of the No Project alternative is not environmentally superior to the proposed project.

6.3 REDUCED FOOTPRINT ALTERNATIVE

Under the Reduced Footprint alternative, the existing uses on the site would be reconstructed within their existing footprints (except for the soccer field). The soccer field would be relocated east of its existing location, onto the adjacent parking lot. The swim center would be constructed in the general location of the existing soccer field. The driveway to the site off of Hillview Avenue would be located in the same general area as currently proposed. The parking for this alternative would be located below-grade, beneath the swim center, library, and theater. This alternative would avoid removing the historic apricot orchard, while not resulting in any additional impacts not currently anticipated to occur under the proposed project.

In order to increase the capacity of the existing uses, while maintaining the existing footprints, the buildings would need to be taller and greater in mass than proposed. Although this alternative would avoid the significant unavoidable cultural resource impact, many of the project objectives would not be met under this alternative, including the following:

1. Align the site entry with the Edith Avenue/San Antonio Road/Main Street intersection.
2. Improve site access and traffic flow.
3. Provide more green spaces on the site.

6.3.1 Conclusion

Although feasible, the Reduced Footprint alternative would not meet many of the project objectives. However, the Reduced Footprint alternative would avoid the significant unavoidable cultural resource impact and would not result in any new environmental impacts. For this reason, the Reduced Footprint alternative is environmentally superior to the proposed project.

6.4 CONSTRUCT ORCHARD ALTERNATIVE

Under the Construct Orchard alternative, the project site would be redeveloped exactly as described under the proposed project, except an apricot orchard would be constructed on the site. The apricot orchard would be constructed on-site in the area that currently contains the baseball field, which is approximately 0.7 acres in size. Under the proposed project, the existing baseball field would be converted to an open space area that could contain trees, grass turf, and picnic tables, or something similar. The 0.7-acre orchard constructed under this alternative would be small in comparison to the existing five-acre historic orchard that currently exists on the project site. While the constructed orchard would be contiguous and rectangular and it would be located adjacent to the History House and Museum, it would not be of significant size or character to effectively replace the historic orchard on the site. While this alternative may slightly reduce the impact due to the loss of the historic orchard, it would not reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

6.4.1 Conclusion

The Construct Orchard alternative is feasible and would meet all of the project objectives. As discussed above, the alternative would not reduce the significant unavoidable cultural resource impact of removing the historic apricot orchard to a less than significant level. For this reason, the Construct Orchard alternative is not environmentally superior to the proposed project.

SECTION 7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Cumulative impacts, as defined by CEQA, refer to two or more individual effects, which when combined, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. Cumulative impacts may result from individually minor, but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time. The CEQA Guidelines state (§15130) that an EIR should discuss cumulative impacts "when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable." The discussion does not need to be in as great detail as is necessary for project impacts, but is to be "guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness."

The purpose of the cumulative analysis is to allow decision-makers to better understand the potential impacts which might result from approval of past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects, in conjunction with the proposed project addressed in this EIR. The CEQA Guidelines advise that a discussion of cumulative impacts should reflect both their severity and the likelihood of their occurrence. The effects of past projects are generally reflected in the existing conditions described in the specific sections of this EIR. Present projects are those approved but not yet developed. For instance, the traffic from recently-approved but not yet constructed and/or occupied projects is reflected in the Background Conditions scenario described in Section 4.3, *Transportation and Traffic*.

For each subject area, the discussions below address the following aspects of cumulative impacts:

- Would the effects of the proposed project, when combined with the effects of all past, existing, and pending development, result in a cumulatively significant impact on the resources in question?

- If a cumulative impact is likely to be significant, would the contribution of the proposed project to that impact be cumulatively considerable?

7.2 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Based on the analysis in this EIR, the proposed project would not make a considerable contribution to a cumulative land use, biological resource, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, hazards and hazardous materials, visual and aesthetics, utilities and service systems, or public services impact. This is because the project either has a less than significant impact (i.e., land use, geology and soils, visual and aesthetics, utilities and service systems, and energy or includes mitigation to reduce its impact to a less than significant level (i.e., biological resource, hydrology and water quality, and hazards and hazardous materials) and, therefore, would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulative impact.

Development of the proposed project would contribute and, therefore, it is possible that in combination with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects that the project may have cumulatively significant impacts in the following areas:

- Transportation and Traffic
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Global Climate Change
- Cultural Resources

There are no other reasonably foreseeable projects in the Los Altos area that together with the proposed project would result in a significant cumulative impact. For this reason, the cumulative analysis is based on build-out of the approved Los Altos General Plan. In the case of traffic, a growth factor is applied to determine cumulative traffic impacts.

7.2.1 Cumulative Transportation and Traffic Impacts

This section is based upon a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) prepared for the proposed project by *AECOM* in September 2009, which is included as Appendix C of this EIR. The proposed Master Plan would be fully completed by the year 2028. Therefore, the LOS of all study intersections at this build-out year, including trips generated by the project, was calculated to evaluate cumulative conditions. The roadway volumes for 2028 were estimated by adding the net project trips to the forecasted 2028 volumes. The 2028 volumes were calculated by applying a growth rate of one percent per year to the current background volumes up to 2019 and one-half percent per year for the remaining nine years. These growth rates were used in the City of Los Altos Downtown Wide Traffic and Parking Impact Analysis (AECOM, January 2008). As a result, the total growth from 2009 to 2028 is approximately equivalent to 14.5 percent, with the project.

7.2.1.1 *Cumulative Intersection Levels of Service*

The thresholds of significance for a cumulative traffic impacts are the same as those for project traffic impacts (refer to Section 4.2.3.1, *Thresholds of Significance*). Under cumulative conditions, the unsignalized intersection of San Antonio Road/Hillview Avenue is expected to operate at LOS E during the PM peak hour. All other intersections are expected to operate at an acceptable LOS D or better. The results of the cumulative traffic analysis are shown in Table 7-1.

Table 7-1
Intersection Levels of Service

Intersection	Peak Hour	Existing Conditions		Background Conditions		Cumulative Conditions	
		Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]	LOS
San Antonio Road, West Edith Avenue, and Main Street	AM	21.4	C+	21.5	C+	33.3	C-
	PM	27.4	C	27.8	C	50.7	D-
San Antonio Road and Hillview Avenue	AM	22.4	C	23.0	C	26.4	D
	PM	27.0	D	28.8	D	39.4	E
San Antonio Road, First Street, and Cuesta Drive	AM	15.7	B	15.8	B	19.3	B-
	PM	14.7	B	14.7	B	16.7	B
San Antonio Road and Foothill Expressway	AM	12.9	B	12.9	B	14.3	B
	PM	18.0	B	19.2	B-	33.1	C-
Foothill Expressway and West Edith Avenue	AM	22.2	C+	22.3	C+	26.2	C
	PM	22.2	C+	22.2	C+	24	C
First Street, Los Altos Avenue, and West Edith Avenue	AM	18.7	B-	18.0	B	18.5	B-
	PM	19.9	B-	20.3	C+	22.8	C+

[1] Average Control Delay Per Vehicle (expressed in seconds)
Source: AECOM, April 2009

Although, the unsignalized intersection of San Antonio Road/Hillview Avenue would operate at an unacceptable level of service, a signal warrant is not met at this intersection. Therefore, the threshold

of significance is not met and a cumulative traffic impact would not occur.[57] **[Less than Significant Transportation Impact]**

7.2.2 Cumulative Noise Impacts

7.2.2.1 *Long-term Noise Impacts*

The project would result in a significant cumulative traffic noise impact if noise levels at existing sensitive receivers would substantially increase (i.e., five dBA CNEL above existing traffic noise levels where noise levels would remain at or below 60 dBA CNEL, or three dBA CNEL above existing traffic noise levels where noise levels would exceed 60 dBA CNEL) and if the project would make a cumulatively considerable contribution to the overall traffic noise level increase. A cumulatively considerable contribution would be defined as an increase of one dBA CNEL or more attributable solely to the proposed project.

Traffic noise levels in the project vicinity are calculated to not increase substantially over the long-term as the area is generally built-out. Cumulative traffic noise level increases resulting from the project were calculated by comparing cumulative plus project traffic volumes to cumulative no project volumes. Cumulative traffic noise levels are calculated to increase by two dBA CNEL or less over existing conditions along roadways serving the project site. Traffic volumes on Hillview Avenue, east of the main driveway, would decrease. Therefore, there is no cumulative long-term noise impact to which the project could make a contribution. This is consistent with the City's General Plan, which shows that noise levels in the project area will not increase substantially in the future. **[Less than Significant Cumulative Long-term Noise Impact]**

7.2.2.2 *Temporary Noise Impacts*

The proposed Master Plan would be fully completed by the year 2028. If this period of anticipated project construction were to coincide with the construction of another project in the vicinity, it is possible that the combined construction-noise could result in a cumulative construction-noise impact. However, there are no reasonably foreseeable projects in the vicinity whose construction schedule would coincide with the proposed project, the combination of which would result in a significant cumulative noise impact. For this reason, the proposed project would not result in a cumulative temporary noise impact. **[Less than Significant Cumulative Temporary Noise Impact]**

7.2.3 Cumulative Air Quality Impacts

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) guidance for CEQA documents provides that a project's cumulative impact is based on a project's consistency with the local General Plan and the local General Plan's consistency with the regional air quality plan (i.e., Clean Air Plan).

The proposed project is consistent with the City of Los Altos General Plan and the overall development proposed by the project is consistent with the goals of the Clean Air Plan (CAP). The proposed project is infill development that is well served by transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities. The swim center would incrementally improve the jobs/housing balance in the City of Los Altos. Providing jobs for more of the City's workers is expected to help reduce regional air pollution levels

[57] The actual delay experienced by a driver on Hillview Avenue at the intersection with San Antonio Road during the PM peak hour is likely to be less than the calculated 39.4 seconds shown in Table 7-1. The software used to analyze the intersection (TRAFFIX) assumes that the traffic on San Antonio Road uniformly travels on the roadway resulting in few or no gaps in traffic. The software does not take into account the gaps in traffic created by the traffic signals on San Antonio Road. The traffic signals along San Antonio Road, north and south of Hillview Avenue, create gaps between groups of vehicles allowing drivers on Hillview Avenue to enter San Antonio Road.

by reducing traffic congestion and commute times. In addition to being consistent with the goals of the CAP, the project would not result in substantial emissions of regional or localized pollutants (refer to Section 4.4, *Air Quality*).

The Clean Air Plan includes Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) that are intended to reduce vehicle miles traveled and associated air pollution impacts. Cities are not the only implementing agencies for these TCMs; other agencies include counties, BAAQMD, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Congestion Management Agencies, and school districts. The City's General Plan includes all of the measures that are consistent with a City's responsibility. The General Plan, therefore, demonstrates reasonable efforts to implement the Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) listed in the Clean Air Plan.

Because the development proposed by the project is consistent with the goals of the Clean Air Plan, does not result in project-specific air quality impacts, and the City's General Plan is generally consistent with the regional air quality policies, the project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative air quality impacts. **[Less than Significant Cumulative Air Quality Impact]**

7.2.4 Cumulative Global Climate Change Impacts

Given the overwhelming scope of global climate change, it is not anticipated that a single development project would have an individually discernable effect on global climate change (e.g., that any increase in global temperature or rise in sea level could be attributed to the emissions resulting from one single development project). Rather, it is more appropriate to conclude that the GHG emissions generated by the proposed project would combine with emissions across the state, nation, and globe to cumulatively contribute to global climate change.

As discussed in Section 4.12, *Global Climate Change*, it is the City's position that the proposed project would not increase vehicle miles travelled (VMT) per capita, result in excessive energy or water use, or otherwise impede the state's ability to reach the emission reduction limits/standards set forth by the State of California by Executive Order S-3-05 and AB 32. This conclusion is based on the nature and size of this redevelopment project, the site's location within an established urban area served by existing infrastructure (rather than a greenfield site) and is proximate to transit and a variety of other land uses, and project obtaining LEED certification and adhering to the City's Green Building Regulations.

The project would replace old energy inefficient buildings on the site would with new energy efficient buildings per the City's Green Building Regulations and also LEED certified. Although the proposed swim center and the larger library and theater would result in a net increase of vehicle trips to and from the site, it is likely that these trips are currently on the road and are longer in distance because a swim center is not provided in the project area and the library does not sufficiently meet existing community needs. For these reasons, this project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change associated with greenhouse gas emissions. **[Less than Significant Cumulative Global Climate Change Impact]**

7.2.5 Cumulative Cultural Resource Impacts

As discussed in Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources*, the proposed project would remove most of the five-acre remnant of the Smith orchard that remains on-site today. The five-acre orchard was designated a historic landmark by City Council resolution in 1987. Although the project would plant/transplant new apricot trees throughout the site to help retain the appearance of the existing orchard, removing the actively farmed apricot orchard would cause a substantial adverse change in

the significance of this historic resource. For this reason, the project would result in a significant cultural resource impact. The proposed project would not affect archaeological resources or other cultural resources.

The Smith orchard is actively farmed, and remains one of the last active orchards in Los Altos. For this reason, the proposed project combined with the effects of all past, existing, and pending development, results in a cumulatively significant impact on active orchards in Los Altos. Because there are few remaining active orchards in Los Altos and the proposed project would remove one of the last remaining, the proposed project would make a cumulatively considerable contribution to a loss of historic orchards. **[Significant Cumulative Cultural Resource Impact]**

SECTION 8 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

According to the *CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15126.2(d), a project is considered growth-inducing if it would:

- Directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth, or result in the construction of additional housing in the surrounding environment.
- Remove obstacles to population growth or tax existing community service facilities to the extent that the construction of new facilities would be necessary.
- Encourage or facilitate other activities that would cause significant environmental effects.

The proposed project would reconstruct and relocate on-site the City Hall, Police Station, community center, library, theater, soccer field, baseball field, bocce ball courts, and children's outdoor play areas. The proposed project would also construct one new community use on the site, a swim center. Since construction of these buildings (1940-1960), the population of Los Altos, and thus the demand for public services, has grown. The use of these buildings has resulted in physical deterioration overtime, and they no longer provide enough capacity to meet the current needs of employees and the community. Many of the structures are in need of repair, upgrade, and/or replacement in order to meet current codes and requirements, allow for technological upgrades, and to provide additional space. Some of the on-site recreational and park facilities are also in degraded condition.

The current deficiencies in community facilities and lack of a community pool in Los Altos are not obstacles to population growth (i.e., additional residential development could occur in the City if the proposed project was not implemented). Rather, the proposed Master Plan responds to an existing need for upgraded facilities. The project is intended to serve the existing population, accommodate anticipated growth as envisioned in the Los Altos General Plan, and meet future needs associated with changing demographics. Constructing new facilities that would serve residents of all ages reduces the long-term need to construct additional public service facilities at other locations. For these reasons, the project would not remove obstacles to population growth, or tax existing community service facilities to the extent that the construction of new facilities would be necessary.

The proposed community facilities are larger than the existing community facilities because the existing buildings are under-sized in relation to current spatial needs. The proposed City Hall, Police Station, community center, and library facilities would not provide capacity for additional employees. While the proposed swim center would likely require new employees, the increase in the total number of employees on the site would be minor. The project site is located in a developed area of Los Altos and is served by existing infrastructure. The proposed project does not include the construction of residences or any improvements that would facilitate subsequent growth, such as the extension of roads or other infrastructure to undeveloped or unserved areas. For these reasons, the proposed project would not foster economic or population growth, or result in the construction of additional housing in the surrounding area.

As described in Section 5, *Availability of Public Services*, the project would not generate additional demand that would necessitate the construction or expansion of new or existing public facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. The project is not expected to encourage or facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment. For these reasons and those stated above, the proposed Master Plan is not considered to be growth-inducing.

SECTION 9 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

This EIR has identified the following significant unavoidable environmental impact that would occur as a result of the proposed project. If the project is approved, a statement of overriding considerations would be required for the following significant unavoidable impact:

- The proposed project would remove the existing historic apricot orchard. Implementation of mitigation measure MM CUL-2.1 (i.e., planting/transplanting apricot trees throughout the site) would partially compensate the substantial change to the historic orchard; however, this measure would not reduce this impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, this impact is significant and unavoidable impact. Because there are few remaining active orchards in Los Altos and the proposed project would remove one of the last remaining, the proposed project would make a cumulatively considerable contribution to a loss of historic orchards. **[Significant Unavoidable Cultural Resources Impact] [Significant Unavoidable Cumulative Cultural Resources Impact]**

SECTION 10 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

This section was prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c), which requires a discussion of the significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from the implementation of a proposed project. Significant irreversible environmental changes include the use of nonrenewable resources, irretrievable commitments of resources, the commitment of future generations to similar uses, and irreversible damage resulting from environmental accidents associated with the project.

10.1 USE OF NONRENEWABLE RESOURCES

The proposed project will require the use and consumption of nonrenewable resources (e.g., fossil fuels, concrete, minerals, and metals). Renewable resources, such as lumber and other wood byproducts, will also be used during project construction. Unlike renewable resources, nonrenewable resources cannot be regenerated over time.

Energy, in the form of fossil fuels, will be used to fuel vehicles traveling to and from the project site during all phases of project implementation. Nonrenewable resources and energy would be consumed during the manufacturing and transportation of buildings materials, preparation of the site, and construction of the buildings. In California, electricity is generated through the burning of fossil fuels, in addition to nuclear power, hydroelectric power, and other sources. Therefore, the electricity consumed during the operational phase (for building cooling and heating, lighting, electronics, etc.) will involve the use of nonrenewable resources.

In accordance with LEED certification requirements, the proposed project will reduce the use of nonrenewable resources by providing storage and collection facilities for recycling on the site. During project construction, the project could reuse building materials from the existing buildings proposed for demolition and/or use recycled, rapidly renewable, or regional materials. New buildings will be built to current codes, which require insulation and design to minimize wasteful energy consumption. As described in Section 4.11, *Energy*, the project will comply with the Green Building Regulations, and is designed to exceed the state energy efficiency standards by at least 15 percent. In addition, the project is the redevelopment of an infill site in a mixed-use neighborhood served by alternative transportation modes, which reduces fossil fuel consumption by minimizing travel distances and providing opportunities for reduced vehicle trips. For these reasons, the proposed project will facilitate a more energy-efficient use of the project site over the long-term.

The proposed project will result in an irretrievable commitment of the nonrenewable resources used for energy purposes during project construction and operation. Although some of the building materials used to construct the project could potentially be reused for future construction, the project is committing the nonrenewable and renewable resources used for project construction to building material uses.

10.2 COMMITMENT OF FUTURE GENERATIONS TO SIMILAR USE

The proposed project is the redevelopment of the Civic Center/Hillview Park site with existing uses, most of which were constructed on the site over 40 years ago. The project does not extend roadway infrastructure to areas of the City that are not planned for development; and therefore, would not commit the City to unplanned growth. The project does not include any features that could result in significant contamination that would prevent other uses from existing on the site, and the site could

be redeveloped or returned to open space or agricultural uses, such as an orchard, in the future. However, the project is intended to provide civic, community, and recreational facilities that would serve the existing and future population of Los Altos, based on planned growth in the City's General Plan. Based on the limited amount of undeveloped land remaining in Los Altos and the site's history and proximity to downtown, it is unlikely the City will relocate the Police Station, City Hall, community center, and library to another site in the foreseeable future. Therefore, the project site will most likely be committed to these public service uses for several generations.

10.3 IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE RESULTING FROM ENVIRONMENTAL ACCIDENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROJECT

The implementation of the proposed Master Plan would not use any new or uniquely hazardous materials or result in any new or uniquely hazardous uses. Construction of the project is not expected to cause environmental accidents that would impact other areas. The City is located within a seismically active region and would be exposed to ground shaking during a seismic event. Conformance with standard engineering practices in the California Building Code would reduce impacts from seismic and seismically-related hazards to buildings and other features associated with the proposed project. For these reasons, the proposed project would not likely result in irreversible damage that may result from environmental accidents such as earthquakes.

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SECTION 12 EIR AUTHORS AND CONSULTANTS

AUTHORS

City of Los Altos

James Walgren, AICP, Assistant City Manager, Director of Planning, Building, and Engineering
David Kornfield, AICP, Planning Services Manager
Zachary Dahl, AICP, Associate Planner

CONSULTANTS

David J. Powers & Associates, Inc.
Environmental Consultants and Planners

Jodi Starbird, Principal Project Manager
Demetri Loukas, Project Manager
Lori Parks, Researcher
Stephanie Francis, Graphic Artist

Holman & Associates
Archaeological Consultants

Miley Holman

AECOM
Transportation Consultants

Dennis Belluomini

Concentric Ecologies
Arborist

John Steinbach

Illingworth & Rodkin
Noise Consultants

Michael Thill