

July 2022 | Draft Environmental Impact Report
State Clearinghouse No. 2022020128

NORWALK ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT-CIVIC CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT

for City of Norwalk

Prepared for:

City of Norwalk

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAQS	ambient air quality standards
AB	Assembly Bill
ACM	asbestos-containing materials
ADT	average daily traffic
amsl	above mean sea level
AQMP	air quality management plan
AST	aboveground storage tank
BAU	business as usual
bgs	below ground surface
BMP	best management practices
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAFE	corporate average fuel economy
CalARP	California Accidental Release Prevention Program
CalEMA	California Emergency Management Agency
Cal/EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CALGreen	California Green Building Standards Code
Cal/OSHA	California Occupational Safety and Health Administration
CalRecycle	California Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDE	California Department of Education
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
cfs	cubic feet per second
CGS	California Geologic Survey
CMP	congestion management program

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	community noise equivalent level
CO	carbon monoxide
CO ₂ e	carbon dioxide equivalent
Corps	US Army Corps of Engineers
CSO	combined sewer overflows
CUPA	Certified Unified Program Agency
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibel
dba	A-weighted decibel
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EIR	environmental impact report
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
EPCRA	Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GHG	greenhouse gases
GWP	global warming potential
HCM	Highway Capacity Manual
HQTA	high quality transit area
HVAC	heating, ventilating, and air conditioning system
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
L _{dn}	day-night noise level
L _{eq}	equivalent continuous noise level
LBP	lead-based paint
LCFS	low-carbon fuel standard
LOS	level of service
LST	localized significance thresholds
M _w	moment magnitude
MCL	maximum contaminant level
MEP	maximum extent practicable

Abbreviations and Acronyms

mgd	million gallons per day
MMT	million metric tons
MPO	metropolitan planning organization
MT	metric ton
MWD	Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NO _x	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
O ₃	ozone
OES	California Office of Emergency Services
PM	particulate matter
POTW	publicly owned treatment works
ppm	parts per million
PPV	peak particle velocity
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
REC	recognized environmental condition
RMP	risk management plan
RMS	root mean square
RPS	renewable portfolio standard
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SIP	state implementation plan
SLM	sound level meter
SoCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SO _x	sulfur oxides
SQMP	stormwater quality management plan
SRA	source receptor area [or state responsibility area]
SUSMP	standard urban stormwater mitigation plan
SWP	State Water Project
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board

Abbreviations and Acronyms

TAC	toxic air contaminants
TNM	transportation noise model
tpd	tons per day
TRI	toxic release inventory
TTCP	traditional tribal cultural places
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
UST	underground storage tank
UWMP	urban water management plan
V/C	volume-to-capacity ratio
VdB	velocity decibels
VHFHSZ	very high fire hazard severity zone
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
VOC	volatile organic compound
WQMP	water quality management plan
WSA	water supply assessment

1. Executive Summary

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) addresses the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the proposed Norwalk Entertainment District - Civic Center Specific Plan Project. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that local government agencies consider the environmental consequences before taking action on projects over which they have discretionary approval authority. An environmental impact report (EIR) analyzes potential environmental consequences in order to inform the public and support informed decisions by local and state governmental agency decision makers.

This DEIR has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of CEQA and the City of Norwalk's CEQA procedures. The City of Norwalk is the lead agency and has reviewed and revised all submitted chapters, technical studies, and reports as necessary to reflect its own independent judgment, including reliance on City technical personnel from other departments and review of all technical subconsultant reports.

Data for this DEIR derive from onsite field observations, discussions with public agencies that would serve the proposed project, analysis of adopted plans and policies, review of available studies, reports, data and similar literature, and specialized environmental assessments (air quality/greenhouse gas emission, biological resources, historic resources, archaeological and paleontological resources, geological conditions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise and vibration, and transportation).

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL PROCEDURES

This DEIR has been prepared pursuant to CEQA to assess the environmental effects associated with implementation of the proposed project, and any future discretionary actions and approvals. CEQA established six main objectives for an EIR:

1. Disclose to decision makers and the public the significant environmental effects of proposed activities.
2. Identify ways to avoid or reduce environmental damage.
3. Prevent environmental damage by requiring implementation of feasible alternatives or mitigation measures.
4. Disclose to the public reasons for agency approval of projects with significant environmental effects.
5. Foster interagency coordination in the review of projects.
6. Enhance public participation in the planning process.

1. Executive Summary

An EIR is the most comprehensive form of environmental documentation in CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines; it is intended to provide an objective, factually supported analysis and full disclosure of the environmental consequences of a proposed project with the potential to result in significant, adverse environmental impacts.

An EIR is one of various decision-making tools used by a lead agency to consider the merits and disadvantages of a project that is subject to its discretionary authority. Before approving a proposed project, the lead agency must consider the information in the EIR; determine whether the EIR was prepared in accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines; determine that it reflects the independent judgment of the lead agency; adopt findings concerning the project's significant environmental impacts and alternatives; and adopt a statement of overriding considerations if significant impacts cannot be avoided.

1.2.1 EIR Format

Chapter 1. Executive Summary: Summarizes the background and description of the proposed project, the format of this EIR, project alternatives, any critical issues remaining to be resolved, and the potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures identified for the proposed project.

Chapter 2. Introduction: Describes the purpose of this EIR, background on the proposed project, the notice of preparation, the use of incorporation by reference, and Final EIR certification.

Chapter 3. Project Description: A detailed description of the proposed project, including its objectives, its area and location, approvals anticipated to be required as part of the proposed project, necessary environmental clearances, and the intended uses of this EIR.

Chapter 4. Environmental Setting: A description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the proposed project as they existed at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) was published, from local and regional perspectives. These provide the baseline physical conditions from which the lead agency determines the significance of the project's environmental impacts.

Chapter 5. Environmental Analysis: Each environmental topic is analyzed in a separate section that discusses: the existing environmental setting and regulatory setting; the thresholds used to determine if a significant impact would occur; the methodology to identify and evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed project (where applicable); an analysis for each applicable threshold; the level of impact significance before mitigation; the mitigation measures for the proposed project; the level of significance after mitigation is incorporated; and the potential cumulative impacts of the proposed project and other existing, approved, and proposed development in the area.

Chapter 6. Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: Describes the significant unavoidable adverse impacts of the proposed project.

Chapter 7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project: Describes the alternatives and compares their impacts to the impacts of the proposed project. Alternatives include the No Project Alternative, Residential Only Alternative, and a Reduced Commercial Alternative.

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Chapter 8. Impacts Found Not to Be Significant: Describes potential impacts that were determined not to be significant and the reasons that determination was made.

Chapter 9. Significant Irreversible Changes Due to the Proposed Project: Describes the significant irreversible environmental changes associated with the proposed project.

Chapter 10. Growth-Inducing Impacts of the Project: Describes the ways in which the proposed project would cause increases in employment or population that could result in new physical or environmental impacts.

Chapter 11. Organizations and Persons Consulted: Lists the people and organizations that were contacted during the preparation of this EIR.

Chapter 12. List of EIR Preparers: Lists the people who prepared this EIR for the proposed project.

Appendices: The appendices for this document comprise these supporting documents:

- Appendix A: NOP and NOP Comment Letters
- Appendix B: Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Analysis
- Appendix C: Construction Health Risk Assessment
- Appendix D: Biological Resources Memorandum
- Appendix E: Historic Resources Technical Report
- Appendix F: Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Report
- Appendix G: Tribal Noticing
- Appendix H: Preliminary Geotechnical Report
- Appendix I: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
- Appendix J: Water Supply and Demand Analysis
- Appendix K: Noise and Vibration Analysis
- Appendix L: Service Letter Responses
- Appendix M: Transportation Impact Analysis
 - Appendix M.1: Transportation Study
 - Appendix M.2: Parking Study

1.2.2 Type and Purpose of This DEIR

This DEIR has been prepared as a “Project EIR,” defined by Section 15161 of the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3). This type of EIR examines the environmental impacts of a specific development project and should focus primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the buildout of the proposed project. This EIR shall examine all phases of the proposed project including planning, construction, and operation.

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1.3 PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project site comprises approximately 13.2-acres located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard in the City of Norwalk. The address for Norwalk City Hall is 12700 Norwalk Boulevard. The project site consists of three assessor parcels (Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) 8047-006-922, -924, and -925) owned by the City of Norwalk and a portion of one parcel (APN 8047-006-927) owned by the County of Los Angeles. (see Figures 3-2, *Local Vicinity*, and 3-3, *Assessor Parcel Numbers with Ownership*). The project site is currently developed with Norwalk City Hall, City Hall Lawn, a portion of the County accessory building, a surface parking lot, and a three-level parking structure. The project site includes a monument sign and fountain on the northeast corner of the project site, near the intersection of Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway, and two memorials—a tribute to Norwalk emergency professionals on the northeast side of the project site and the “Freedom Memorial,” in the surface parking lot near the entrance to City Hall. In addition, the project site has an underground time capsule just north of City Hall and a plaque to Manuel Salinas on the west side of the project site. The project site includes a total of 160 landscaped trees throughout the surface parking lot, landscaping around City Hall and City Hall Lawn, and landscaping near the monument sign on the northwest corner of the project site. City Hall Lawn is mainly grass with dispersed mature trees and walking paths. Figure 3-4 is an aerial photograph showing the current site conditions. The building for the Los Angeles County Superior Court–Norwalk borders the project site to the south.

1.4 PROJECT SUMMARY

The proposed project would establish a specific plan that would allow for a mixed-use development of residential and commercial uses, open space, and parking. New development would occur on the project site of the existing City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot. The existing Norwalk City Hall building, and the portion of the County accessory building would remain, with no changes proposed. The project proposes the development of up to 350 multifamily residential units and up to 110,000 square feet of commercial uses. The commercial component would include a mix of retail, food and beverage, health and wellness, and/or grocery/market uses. The existing parking structure on the south side of the project site would remain, and up to two additional levels could be added as needed to accommodate future parking demand within the civic center/entertainment district area. The proposed specific plan identifies a conceptual site plan that demonstrates one way in which the specific plan's development standards and regulations could be implemented and consists of two mixed-use buildings on the project site. See Figure 3-8, *Conceptual Site Plan*, for the proposed conceptual site plan, and Figure 3-9, *Conceptual Ground-Floor Plan*. Refer to Figures 3-10a and 3-10b, *Conceptual Volumetrics* for a conceptual massing and layout of the proposed project.

1.5 SUMMARY OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

CEQA Guidelines state that an EIR must address “a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the

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alternatives” (14 Cal. Code of Reg. 15126.6[a]). As described in Chapter 7 of this EIR, three project alternatives were identified and analyzed for their impacts compared to the proposed project:

- No Project Alternative
- All Residential Alternative
- Reduced Commercial Alternative

The following presents a summary of each of the alternatives analyzed in the EIR. Please refer to Chapter 7 of this DEIR for a complete discussion of how the alternatives were selected and the relative impacts associated with each alternative.

1.5.1 No Project Alternative

Under the No Project Alternative, no specific plan governing proposed uses and development standards applicable to the project site would be implemented and no public private partnership between the City and the applicant would occur. No development would occur under the No Project Alternative, and the existing uses on the project site would continue as in current conditions. Under the No Project Alternative, it is assumed that the reasonably foreseeable future at the project site would continue its current uses of the existing City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot and maintain its current conditions. No mixed-use development would occur, and the project site would continue to operate under its current conditions with no changes occurring.

1.5.2 All Residential Alternative

Under the All Residential Alternative, the specific plan governing uses and development on the project site would limit new development to up to 425 dwelling units and associated open space. No commercial or retail uses would be included. Under this alternative, the same general development standards applicable to new buildings under the proposed project would apply (including a maximum height of up to seven stories), and the layout of the proposed uses could be similar to that shown in the proposed project’s conceptual site plan (potentially two buildings separated by open space areas). Parking would be provided onsite within the new development (no use of the existing parking garage). This alternative would still allow for the addition of two levels to the existing parking structure, which is permitted under existing zoning. It is assumed that similar types, durations, and intensity of ground disturbance/construction activity to that of the proposed project would occur under the All Residential Alternative.

1.5.3 Reduced Commercial Alternative

Under the Reduced Commercial Alternative, the specific plan governing uses and development on the project site would limit new development to up to 405 dwelling units, 10,000 square feet of commercial space, and associated open space. Under this alternative, the same general development standards applicable to new buildings under the proposed project would apply (including a maximum height of up to seven stories), and the layout of the proposed uses could be similar to that shown in the proposed project’s conceptual site plan (potentially two buildings separated by open space areas). Parking would be provided onsite in the new development (no use of the existing parking garage). This alternative would still allow for the addition of two

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levels to the existing parking structure, which is permitted under existing zoning. It is assumed that similar types, durations, and intensity of ground disturbance/construction activity to that of the proposed project would occur under the Reduced Commercial Alternative.

1.6 ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

Section 15123(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR contain issues to be resolved, including the choice among alternatives and whether or how to mitigate significant impacts. With regard to the proposed project, the major issues to be resolved include decisions by the lead agency as to:

1. Whether this DEIR adequately describes the environmental impacts of the proposed project.
2. Whether the benefits of the proposed project override those environmental impacts which cannot be feasibly avoided or mitigated to a level of insignificance.
3. Whether the identified mitigation measures should be adopted or modified.
4. Whether there are other mitigation measures that should be applied to the proposed project other than the mitigation measures identified in the DEIR.
5. Whether there are any alternatives to the project that would substantially lessen any of the significant impacts of the proposed project and achieve most of the basic project objectives.

1.7 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

In accordance with Section 15123(b)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines, the DEIR must identify areas of controversy known to the lead agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public. No areas of controversy concerning the proposed project have been identified. This DEIR has taken into consideration the comments received from the various agencies and jurisdictions and the public in response to the NOP. Written comments received during the NOP period, which extended from February 7, 2022 to March 9, 2022, are contained in Appendix A of this DEIR.

1.8 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, MITIGATION MEASURES, AND LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Table 1-1 summarizes the conclusions of the environmental analysis contained in this EIR. Impacts are identified as significant or less than significant, and mitigation measures are identified for all significant impacts. The level of significance after imposition of the mitigation measures is also presented.

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
5.1 AESTHETICS			
Impact 5.1-1: The proposed project would not create a substantial adverse impact on a scenic vista.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.1-2: The proposed project would not alter scenic resources within a state scenic highway.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.1-3: The proposed project is within an urbanized area and would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.1-4: The proposed project would not generate new sources of substantial light and glare.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
5.2 AIR QUALITY			
Impact 5.2-1: The proposed project would not conflict nor obstruct the implementation of the applicable air quality management plan.	Less than Significant.	No mitigation required.	Less than significant.
Impact 5.2-2: Construction activities associated with the proposed project would not generate short-term emissions in exceedance of South Coast Air Quality Management District's Air Quality Management Plan threshold criteria and would not cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations of the South Coast Air Basin.	Less than Significant.	No mitigation required.	Less than significant.
Impact 5.2-3: Long-term operation of the proposed project would generate additional vehicle trips and associated emissions compared to existing conditions but would not result in a cumulatively considerable net	Less than Significant.	No mitigation required.	Less than significant.

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
increase of any criteria pollutant in exceedance of South Coast AQMD's threshold criteria.			
<p>Impact 5.2-4: The proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations during construction.</p>	Potentially Significant.	<p>AQ-1 Construction contractors shall, at minimum, use equipment that meet the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Tier 4 Interim emissions standards for off-road diesel-powered construction equipment of 50 horsepower or more in use a total of 20 hours or more, unless it can be demonstrated to the City of Norwalk Community Development Department that such equipment is not commercially available. For purposes of this mitigation measure, "commercially available" shall mean the availability of Tier 4 Interim engines similar to the availability for other large-scale construction projects in the city occurring at the same time and taking into consideration factors such as (i) potential significant delays to critical-path timing of construction and (ii) geographic proximity to the project site of Tier 4 Interim equipment. Where such equipment is not commercially available, as demonstrated by the construction contractor, Tier 3 equipment retrofitted with a California Air Resources Board's Level 3 Verified Diesel Emissions Control Strategy (VDECS) shall be used. This requirement shall apply to all activities (e.g., foundation, pile driving, vertical construction, etc.) related to construction of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Existing Commercial Parking Garage Improvements (e.g., additional parking levels) b) Proposed Buildings and Structures (e.g. proposed mixed-use buildings) <p>In addition, the following shall also be completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to construction, the project engineer shall ensure that all construction (e.g., grading and building) plans clearly show the requirement for EPA Tier 4 Interim emissions standards for construction equipment of 50 horsepower or more and in use a total of 20 hours or more for the activities stated above. • During construction, the construction contractor shall maintain a list of all operating equipment in use on the construction site for a total of 20 hours or more for verification by the City of Norwalk. • The construction equipment list shall state the makes, models, Equipment Identification Numbers, Engine Family Numbers, and number of construction equipment on-site. Equipment shall be properly serviced and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. 	With implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1, impacts related to construction would be less than significant.

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the extent that equipment is available and cost-effective, contractors shall use electric, hybrid, or alternate-fueled off-road construction equipment. Contractors shall use electric construction tools, such as saws, drills, and compressors, where grid electricity is available. Construction contractors shall ensure that all nonessential idling of construction equipment is restricted to five minutes or less in compliance with Section 2449 of the California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Article 4.8, Chapter 9. 	
Impact 5.2-5: The proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations during operation.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required.	Less than significant.
Impact 5.2-6: The proposed project would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) that would adversely affect a substantial number of people.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required.	Less than significant.
5.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Impact 5.3-1: The proposed project would not result in a substantial 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 with the implementation of BIO-1.	Potentially Significant.	<p>BIO-1 If possible, ground-disturbing activities and vegetation removal (including tree trimming) should be timed to occur outside the bird nesting season (September 1–January 31).</p> <p>If ground disturbing activities or vegetation removal (including tree trimming) are scheduled during the bird nesting season (February 1–August 31) a preconstruction survey for nesting birds shall be conducted within 72 hours prior to initiation of construction activities. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist with prior experience conducting nesting bird surveys for construction projects. The survey area shall include the project site and suitable habitat within a 100-foot buffer, or a buffer size determined by the qualified biologist based on level of proposed disturbance and access. If no active nests are found, no additional measures are required.</p>	After implementation of BIO-1, impacts to nesting birds would be reduced to less than significant.

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		If active nests are found the biologist will map the location and document the species and nesting stage. A no-work buffer will be established around the active nest as determined by the qualified biologist and based on the species sensitivity to disturbance and the type and duration of the disturbance. No construction activities shall occur within the no-work buffer until the biologist has determined the nest is no longer active.	
Impact 5.3-2: Development of the proposed project would not result in the loss of riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.3-3: The proposed project would not have substantial impact on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.3-4: The proposed project would not affect 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.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.3-5: The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.3-6: The proposed project would not conflict with an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, National Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
5.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Impact 5.4-1: The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.4-2: Development of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.	Potentially significant.	<p>CUL-1 If unanticipated cultural resources discoveries are made, all work must halt within 50 feet until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the significance of the find. Work may resume immediately outside of the 50-foot radius.</p> <p>CUL-2 If the qualified archaeologist determines that the find is significant, an archaeological treatment plan must be developed to mitigate harm to the resource and will include procedures for data recovery in the event that the resource cannot be avoided.</p>	Less than significant with incorporation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2.
Impact 5.4-3: Grading activities could potentially disturb human remains.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
5.5 ENERGY			
Impact 5.5-1: The project would not result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.5-2: The project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
5.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS			
Impact 5.6-1: Project residents (or occupants, visitors, etc.) would be subject to potential seismic-related hazards.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact 5.6-2: Substantial erosion and the loss of topsoil would not result from development of the project.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.6-3: Unstable geologic unit or soils conditions would not result from development of the project.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.6-4: Soil conditions would not result in risks to life or property.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.6-5: The proposed project would not require the use of septic tanks.	No impact.	No mitigation required	No impact.
Impact 5.6-6: The project could destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.	Potentially significant	<p>GEO-1 If unanticipated fossil discoveries are made, all work must halt within 50 feet until a qualified paleontologist can evaluate the find. Work may resume immediately outside of the 50-foot radius. Mitigation Measures GEO-2 and GEO-3 shall be implemented.</p> <p>GEO-2 If the discoveries are determined to be significant, full-time paleontological monitoring will be recommended for the remainder of ground disturbance for the project. Paleontological monitoring shall entail the visual inspection of excavated or graded areas and trench sidewalls. In the event that a paleontological resource is discovered, the monitor shall have the authority to temporarily divert the construction equipment around the find until it is assessed for scientific significance and collected, if warranted. Monitoring efforts can be reduced or eliminated at the discretion of the project paleontologist.</p> <p>GEO-3 Upon completion of fieldwork, all significant fossils collected shall be prepared in a properly equipped paleontology laboratory to a point ready for curation. Following laboratory work, all fossil specimens shall be identified to the most specific taxonomic level possible, cataloged, analyzed, and offered to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County for permanent curation and storage. At the conclusion of laboratory work and museum curation, a final Paleontological Monitoring Report (PMR) shall be prepared describing the results of the paleontological mitigation monitoring efforts associated with the project. The report shall include a summary of the field and laboratory methods, an overview</p>	Less than significant with incorporation of Mitigation Measures Geo-1, Geo-2, and Geo-3

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		of the project area geology and paleontology, a list of taxa recovered, an analysis of fossils recovered and their scientific significance, and recommendations. A copy of the report shall also be submitted to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.	
5.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS			
<p>Impact 5.7-1: Implementation of the proposed project would generate a net increase in GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that would have a significant impact on the environment.</p>	Potentially Significant	<p>GHG-1 The project developer(s) shall design and build all multifamily residential units to meet/include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tier 2 requirements for Division A5.1, Planning and Design, as outlined under Sections A5.106.5.1.2 and A5.106.5.1.3 of Appendix A5, Nonresidential Voluntary Measures, of the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code for Designated Parking for Clean Air Vehicles. b. Tier 2 requirements for Division A5.1, Planning and Design, as outlined under Sections A5.106.5.3.2, A5.106.5.3.3, and A5.106.5.3.4 of Appendix A5, Nonresidential Voluntary Measures, of the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code for Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging. c. Tier 2 requirements for Division A5.2, Energy Efficiency, as outlined under Section A5.203.1.1.2.2 of Appendix A5, Nonresidential Voluntary Measures, of the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code. d. Tier 2 requirements for Division A5.211, Renewable Energy, of Appendix A5, Nonresidential Voluntary Measures, of the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code. e. Tier 2 requirements for Division A5.3, Water Efficiency and Conservation, as outlined under Section A5.303.2.3.2 of Appendix A5, Nonresidential Voluntary Measures, of the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code. f. No wood-burning or gas-powered fireplaces shall be installed in any of the dwelling units. g. All buildings shall be electric, meaning that electricity is the primary source of energy for water heating; mechanical; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) (i.e., space-heating and space cooling); cooking; and clothes-drying. 	Significant and Unavoidable.

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<p>h. All major appliances provided/installed (e.g., dishwashers, refrigerators, clothes washers and dryers, and water heaters) shall be electric-powered EnergyStar-certified or of equivalent energy efficiency, where applicable. Prior to the issuance of building permits for new development projects within the project site, the project developer(s) shall provide documentation (e.g., building plans, site plans) to the City of Norwalk Planning Division to verify implementation of the design requirements specified in this mitigation measure. Prior to the issuance of the certificate of occupancy, the City shall verify implementation of these design requirements.</p> <p>GHG-2 The project developer(s) shall design the public-use parking garage for the non-residential portion of the project (not within the existing parking structure that would also be used for parking) to:</p> <p>a. Provide electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. At minimum, the number of EV charging stations shall equal the Tier 2 Nonresidential Voluntary Measures of the California Green Building Standards Code.</p> <p>b. Provide parking for low-emitting, fuel-efficient, and carpool/van vehicles. At minimum, the number of preferential parking spaces shall equal the Tier 2 Nonresidential Voluntary Measures of the California Green Building Standards.</p> <p>Prior to the issuance of building permits for new development projects on the project site, the project developer(s) shall provide documentation (e.g., site plans) to the City of Norwalk Planning Division to verify implementation of the of the design requirements specified in this mitigation measure. Prior to the issuance of the certificate of occupancy, the City shall verify implementation of these design requirements.</p>	
<p>Impact 5.7-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs.</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation required.</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>
<p>Cumulative Impacts.</p>	<p>--</p>	<p>Mitigation Measures GHG-1 through GHG-3 described above.</p>	<p>Significant and Unavoidable.</p>

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
5.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS			
Impact 5.8-1: Project construction and operations would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment involving the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.8-2: The proposed project would not 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.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.8-3: The proposed project would not emit emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substance, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.8-4: The project site is not on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.8-5: The proposed project site is not within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.8-6: Project development would not impair or physically interfere with implementing an emergency response or evacuation plan.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.8-7: The proposed project site is not in a designated fire hazard zone and would not	No impact.	No mitigation required	No impact.

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
expose structures and/or residences to danger from wildland fires.			
5.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY			
Impact 5.9-1: Construction and operation of the proposed project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.9-2: Construction and operation of the proposed project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the proposed project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.9-3: Construction and/or operation of the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, flooding on- or offsite, or create or contribute runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.9-4: Construction and/or operation of the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would impede or redirect flood flows.			
Impact 5.9-5: Construction and/or operation of the proposed project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.9-6: Construction and/or operation of the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
5.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING			
Impact 5.10-1: Project implementation would not divide an established community	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.10-2: Project Implementation would not conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted to avoid or mitigate an environmental effect.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
5.11 NOISE			
Impact 5.11-1: Construction activities would result in temporary noise increases in the vicinity of the proposed project in excess of established standards.	Potentially significant.	NOI-1 The Applicant will implement the following measures during pile driving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With approval of the project structural engineer, pile holes shall be predrilled to minimize the number of pile hammer blows necessary to seat the pile, where feasible. • Alternatives to impact hammers, such as oscillating or rotating pile installation systems, shall be used where feasible. • Pile drivers with the best available noise control technology, such as shrouding, shall be used. Pile driving noise control may be achieved by shrouding the pile hammer point of impact, placing resilient padding directly on top of the pile cap, and/or by reducing exhaust noise with a sound-absorbing muffler. The shrouding of pile-driving equipment would attenuate 	Less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures NOI-1.

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Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		pile-driving noise levels by 10 dBA (FHWA 2016), resulting in mitigated construction noise levels of 77 dBA Leq or less.	
Impact 5.11-2: Project implementation would not result in long-term operation-related noise that would exceed local standards.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.11-3: The proposed project would generate excessive short-term groundborne vibration or groundborne noise.	Potentially significant.	NOI-2 In the event that demolition, grading, building construction, and pile driving is necessary within the screening distances for historical structures shown in Table 5.11-11, construction vibration monitoring shall be conducted to document conditions at the Norwalk City Hall prior to, during, and after vibration-generating demolition, grading, building construction, and pile driving. The construction vibration monitoring shall be implemented by a historic architect meeting the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards to include the following tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance of a photo survey, elevation survey, and tile/crack monitoring survey for the City Hall. Surveys shall be performed prior to and in regular intervals during of all vibration-generating activities within the screening distances shown in Table 5.11-11 of the City Hall building (the FTA Historical Structures Screening Distance to 0.12 in/sec PPV). • Conduct a post-construction survey on the structure following the completion of vibration-generating activities and applicant to make appropriate repairs in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards where damage has occurred as a result of construction activities. 	Less than significant with incorporation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2.
Impact 5.11-4: The proposed project is not within an airport land use plan nor within two miles of public airport or public use airport. The proximity of the project site to an airport would not result in exposure of future resident and workers to excessive airport-related noise levels.	No impact	No mitigation required	No impact.

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
5.12 POPULATION AND HOUSING			
Impact 5.12-1: The proposed project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the project area, either directly or indirectly.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.12-2: Project implementation would not displace people and housing.	No impact.	No mitigation required	No impact.
5.13 PUBLIC SERVICES			
FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES			
Impact 5.13-1: The proposed project would introduce new structures and residents into the LACFD service boundaries but would not result in the need for new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
POLICE PROTECTION			
Impact 5.13-2: The proposed project would introduce new structures and residents into the LASD service boundaries but would not result in the need for new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
SCHOOL SERVICES			
Impact 5.13-3: The proposed project would introduce new residents to the project site, including school-aged children, that could attend NLMUSD schools, but the proposed project would not result in the need for new or physically altered facilities that cause significant environmental impacts.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
PARKS			
Impact 5.13-4: The proposed project would introduce new structures and residents that would require park service but would not require new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
LIBRARY SERVICES			
Impact 5.13-5: The proposed project would introduce new residents into the LACL service boundaries but would not require new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
5.14 RECREATION			
Impact 5.14-1: The proposed project would not increase the use of existing park and recreational facilities such that a substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.14-2: Project implementation would not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
5.15 TRANSPORTATION			
Impact 5.15-1: The proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
<p>Impact 5.15-2: The proposed project could conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).</p>	<p>Potentially significant</p>	<p>TRA-1 A comprehensive transportation demand management (TDM) program shall be implemented as part of the proposed project’s mitigation program aimed at reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and vehicular trips to the project site and the project area through transportation services, education programs, and incentive programs intended to promote non-auto travel and the reduction of single occupancy vehicle trips. This mitigation measure identifies a menu of available TDM strategies that the proposed project could implement to result in a quantitative reduction in VMT and vehicular trips.</p> <p>The proposed project would be subject to annual monitoring to provide a reasonable sample period of travel characteristics, including but not limited to the percentage of modes of travel to and from the project site, parking hour utilization, and/or peak hour trips, to ensure that the consistency with the TDM target. The monitoring program would continue until the project has shown that achievement of the target has been met for five consecutive years following full operations of the proposed project. Should the proposed project fail to meet the target after a given monitoring year, the proposed project would be required to review and implement enhancements to the components of the TDM Program, subject to review and monitoring by the City, to increase the effectiveness of TDM in meeting the VMT and trip reduction goals the following year.</p> <p>The proposed project’s TDM program shall include, but is not limited to, the following measures, which are further described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Programs/On-Site TDM Coordinator. A key component of a successful TDM program is to make residents, employees, and visitors at the project site aware of the various programs offered. To this end, a TDM coordinator would reach out to residents, employers, and employees directly to promote the benefits of TDM. • Transportation Information Center/Kiosks. In compliance with the Norwalk Municipal Code Chapter 17.03.080, Transportation Demand Management, the proposed project would provide a Transportation Information Center, where project residents, employees and visitors can obtain information regarding commute programs, and individuals can obtain real-time 	<p>The Project’s daily residential VMT per capita would be reduced to less than significant with the incorporation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1</p>

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<p>information for planning travel without using an automobile. A Transportation Information Center would be centrally-located and would provide information about transit schedules, commute planning, rideshare, and bicycle and pedestrian plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Design Features to Promote Bicycling and Walking. The proposed project would incorporate features for bicyclists and pedestrians, such as exclusive access points, upgraded pedestrian facilities, and bicycle parking. Additionally, the project site would be designed to be a friendly and convenient environment for pedestrians through publicly accessible open space and walkways. • Bikeway Improvements. The proposed project would contribute funding toward the implementation of bicycle facility improvements within the project site area. • Promotion and support of carpools and rideshare. The TDM program would provide services to match residents and employees to establish carpools and vanpools. Carpools/vanpools provide the potential for residents to go to work relaxed and/or work during the commute and reduce the number of vehicle trips to and from the project site. • Incentives for using alternative travel modes. The TDM program would incorporate various incentives for use of its programs. In accordance with the City's TDM Ordinance, carpool and vanpool users could be offered preferential load/unload areas or convenient designated parking spaces. Employees who choose not to drive their own cars and park them at the project site could receive a "parking cash-out" subsidy. For example, discounted transit passes could be offered to eligible residents and employees. Project employees who purchase transit passes from the project's Transportation Coordinator would automatically be registered in a Guaranteed Ride Home Program by which, upon request to the Transportation Coordinator, the employee will be given a voucher to travel home on transit or Uber/Lyft (or similar shared ride service) in case of illness or emergency. Each employee would receive a limited number of Guaranteed Ride Home passes per year. • Parking incentives. The proposed project would provide a reduced parking supply as compared to the City's Municipal Code requirements. Limiting 	

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<p>the amount of parking available would limit the convenience of driving and disincentivize driving as a preferred mode of travel, and thus would decrease VMT. Unbundled parking is a program wherein parking spaces are rented or sold separately from the building space, which allows for a separate charge for parking and the flexibility to vary the number of spaces rented. Unbundling parking is an essential first step toward getting people to understand the economic cost of parking. Without unbundled parking, tenants often assume that parking is free.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility hub support. The proposed project would support existing and/or future efforts by the City to provide first-mile and last-mile service for transit users. Mobility hubs, typically located at or near public transit centers, would provide amenities such as, but not limited to, bicycle parking and transit information. The proposed project could provide space for similar amenities at the project site to complement future mobility hubs in the surrounding entertainment district and civic center areas. • Community-wide transportation management organization. The project area is a candidate for alternative modes of transportation, including convenient walking and bicycling, carpooling and vanpooling, use of public transit, short-term automobile rentals, etc., due to the proximity of existing employment, residential, and commercial uses, as well as the Metrolink Norwalk Station, the Metro C (Green) Line Norwalk Station, and numerous bus stops. At present, there is no organization to administer these options to the public. A Communitywide Transportation Management Organization would help promote these services to a community by providing information about available public transportation options and ridesharing services. Many of the strategies described above could be enhanced through participation in the Communitywide Transportation Management Organization. 	
<p>Impact 5.15-3: The proposed project would not increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation required</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
<p>Impact 5.15-4: The proposed project may result in inadequate emergency access during construction</p>	<p>Potentially significant.</p>	<p>TRA-2 Construction Management Plan A detailed Construction Management Plan, including haul routes and a staging plan, shall be prepared and submitted to the City of Norwalk, Los Angeles County Fire Departments, and Los Angeles County Sheriff Department for review and approval, prior to commencing construction. The Construction Management Plan shall formalize how construction would be carried out and identify specific actions that would be required to reduce effects on the surrounding community. The Construction Management Plan shall be based on the nature and timing of the specific construction activities and other development projects in the vicinity of the project site, and shall include, but not be limited to, the following elements, as appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance, bilingual notification of adjacent property owners and occupants of upcoming construction activities, including durations and daily hours of operation • Prohibition of construction worker or equipment parking on adjacent streets • Prohibition of haul truck staging on any streets adjacent to the Project, unless specifically approved as a condition of an approved haul route • Scheduling of construction related traffic restricted to off-peak hours and in consideration of any other traffic-causing events or overlapping nearby construction activities, to the extent feasible. • Containment of construction activity within the Project Site boundaries except where access and/or right of way improvements may be necessary • Implementation of safety precautions for pedestrians and bicyclists through such measures as alternate routing and protection barriers • Scheduling of construction-related deliveries, haul trips, etc., to occur outside the commuter peak hours to the extent feasible • Provision of flagging or other directional signage to direct traffic as needed. • Spacing of trucks so as to discourage a convoy effect 	<p>The proposed project's transportation impacts during construction would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure TRA-2. The operation of the proposed project is less than significant prior to mitigation</p>

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient dampening of the construction area to control dust caused by grading and hauling and reasonable control at all times of dust caused by wind • Maintenance of a log, available on the job site at all times, documenting the dates of hauling and the number of trips (i.e., trucks) per day • Identification of a construction manager and provision of a telephone number for any inquiries or complaints from residents regarding construction activities posted at the site readily visible to any interested party during site preparation, grading, and construction 	
5.16 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES			
<p>Impact 5.16-1: The proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or that has been determined to be significant by the lead agency pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5024.1.</p>	Potentially significant.	<p>TCR-1 Retain a Native American Monitor Prior to Commencement of Ground-Disturbing Activities</p> <p>A. The project applicant/lead agency shall retain a Native American Monitor from or approved by the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation (Tribe or Kizh). The monitor shall be retained prior to the commencement of any “ground-disturbing activity” for the proposed project at all project locations (i.e., both on-site and any off-site locations that are included in the project description/definition and/or required in connection with the project, such as public improvement work). “Ground-disturbing activity” shall include, but is not limited to, demolition, pavement removal, potholing, auguring, grubbing, tree removal, boring, grading, excavation, drilling, and trenching.</p> <p>B. A copy of the executed monitoring agreement shall be submitted to the Norwalk Planning Division prior to the commencement of any ground-disturbing activity, or the issuance of any permit necessary to commence a ground-disturbing activity.</p> <p>C. The Native American Monitor will complete daily monitoring logs that will provide descriptions of the relevant ground-disturbing activities, the type of construction activities performed, locations of ground- disturbing activities, soil types, cultural-related materials, and any other facts, conditions, materials, or discoveries of significance to the Tribe. Monitor logs will identify and describe any discovered TCRs, including but not limited to, Native American cultural and historical artifacts, remains, places of significance, etc., (collectively, tribal cultural resources, or “TCR”), as well as any discovered Native American (ancestral) human remains</p>	Less than significant with incorporation of Mitigation Measures TCR-1, TCR-2, and TCR-3

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<p>and burial goods. Copies of monitor logs will be provided to the project applicant/lead agency upon written request to the Tribe.</p> <p>D. On-site tribal monitoring shall conclude upon either of the following, whichever occurs later, (1) written confirmation to the Kizh from a designated point of contact for the project applicant/lead agency that all ground-disturbing activities and phases that may involve ground-disturbing activities on the project site or in connection with the project are complete; or (2) a determination and written notification by the Kizh to the project applicant/lead agency that no future, planned construction activity and/or development/construction phase at the project site possesses the potential to impact Kizh TCRs.</p> <p>E. Upon discovery of any TCRs, all construction activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery shall cease (i.e., not less than the surrounding 50 feet) and shall not resume until the discovered TCR has been fully assessed by the Kizh-approved Native American Monitor and/or Kizh-approved archaeologist. The Kizh will recover and retain all discovered TCRs in the form and/or manner the Tribe deems appropriate, in the Tribe's sole discretion, and for any purpose the Tribe deems appropriate, including for educational, cultural and/or historic purposes.</p> <p>TCR-2: Unanticipated Discovery of Human Remains and Associated Funerary Objects</p> <p>A. Native American human remains are defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.98 (d)(1) as an inhumation or cremation, and in any state of decomposition or skeletal completeness. Funerary objects, called associated grave goods in PRC Section 5097.98, are also to be treated according to this statute.</p> <p>B. If Native American human remains and/or grave goods are discovered or recognized on the project site, then all ground-disturbing activities shall immediately cease. Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 dictates that any discoveries of human skeletal material shall be immediately reported to the County Coroner and all ground-disturbing activities shall immediately halt and shall remain halted until the coroner has determined the nature of the remains. If the coroner recognizes the human remains to be those of a Native American or has reason to believe they are Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission, and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 shall be followed.</p>	

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<p>C. Human remains and grave/burial goods shall be treated alike per California Public Resources Code section 5097.98(d)(1) and (2).</p> <p>D. Construction activities may resume in other parts of the project site at a minimum of 200 feet away from discovered human remains and/or burial goods, if the Kizh-approved Native American Monitor determines in its sole discretion that resuming construction activities at that distance is acceptable and provides the project manager express consent of that determination (along with any other measures the Kizh-approved monitor and/or archaeologist deems necessary). (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(f).)</p> <p>E. Preservation in place (i.e., avoidance) is the preferred manner of treatment for discovered human remains and/or burial goods.</p> <p>F. Any discovery of human remains/burial goods shall be kept confidential to prevent further disturbance.</p> <p>TCR-3: Procedures for Burials and Funerary Remains</p> <p>A. As the Most Likely Descendant (“MLD”), the Koo-nas-gna Burial Policy shall be implemented. To the Tribe, the term “human remains” encompasses more than human bones. In ancient as well as historic times, Tribal Traditions included, but were not limited to, the preparation of the soil for burial, the burial of funerary objects with the deceased, and the ceremonial burning of human remains.</p> <p>B. If the discovery of human remains includes four or more burials, the discovery location shall be treated as a cemetery, and the Tribe shall create a separate treatment plan.</p> <p>C. The prepared soil and cremation soils are to be treated in the same manner as bone fragments that remain intact. Associated funerary objects are objects that, as part of the death rite or ceremony of a culture, are reasonably believed to have been placed with individual human remains either at the time of death or later; other items made exclusively for burial purposes or to contain human remains can also be considered as associated funerary objects. Cremations will either be removed in bulk or by means as necessary to ensure complete recovery of all sacred materials.</p> <p>D. In the case where discovered human remains cannot be fully documented and recovered on the same day, the remains will be covered with muslin cloth and a steel plate (that can be moved by heavy equipment) to protect the remains. If this</p>	

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<p>type of steel plate is not available, a 24-hour guard should be posted outside of working hours. The Tribe will make every effort to recommend diverting the project and keeping the remains in situ and protected. If the project cannot be diverted, it may be determined that burials will be removed.</p> <p>E. In the event preservation in place is not possible despite good faith efforts by the project applicant/developer and/or landowner, before ground-disturbing activities may resume on the project site, the landowner shall arrange a designated site location within the project site for the respectful reburial of the human remains and/or ceremonial objects.</p> <p>F. Each occurrence of human remains and associated funerary objects will be stored using opaque cloth bags. All human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony will be removed to a secure container on site if possible. These items should be retained and reburied within six months of recovery. The location of reburial/repatriation shall be on the project site but at a location agreed upon between the Tribe, lead agency, and the landowner at a location to be protected in perpetuity. There shall be no publicity regarding any cultural materials recovered.</p> <p>G. The Tribe will work closely with the Kizh-approved archaeologist to ensure that the excavation is treated carefully, ethically and respectfully. If data recovery is approved by the Tribe, documentation shall be prepared and shall include (at a minimum) detailed descriptive notes and sketches. All data recovery and data recovery-related forms of documentation shall be approved in advance by the Tribe prior to starting data recovery and documentation activities. If any data recovery is performed, once complete, a final report shall be submitted to the Tribe and the NAHC. The Tribe does NOT authorize any scientific study or the utilization of any invasive and/or destructive diagnostics on human remains</p>	
5.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS			
<p>Impact 5.17-1: Existing wastewater infrastructure and treatment facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated wastewater demands and therefore would not require new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities.</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation required</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact 5.17-2: Project-generated wastewater would be adequately treated by the wastewater service provider for the project, which has adequate capacity to serve the project's project demand in addition to existing commitments.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.17-3: Existing water facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated water demand and would not require nor result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water facilities the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.17-4: Available water supplies are sufficient to serve the proposed project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.17-5: Existing storm drain facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated storm water flows and would not require nor result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded stormwater drainage systems.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.17-6: Project-generated solid waste would not be in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.
Impact 5.17-7: Project-generated solid waste would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact 5.17-8: Existing facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated electricity and gas demands and would not require the relocation or construction of new or expanded electricity, natural gas or telecommunication facilities.	Less than significant.	No mitigation required	Less than significant.

2. Introduction

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that all state and local governmental agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on those projects. This Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) has been prepared to satisfy CEQA requirements and the CEQA Guidelines. The environmental impact report (EIR) is the public document designed to provide decision makers and the public with an analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed project, to indicate possible ways to reduce or avoid environmental damage, and to identify alternatives to the project. The EIR must also disclose significant environmental impacts that cannot be avoided; growth inducing impacts; effects not found to be significant; and significant cumulative impacts of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

The lead agency means “the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment” (Public Resources Code Section 21067). The City of Norwalk has the principal responsibility for approval of the Norwalk Entertainment District–Civic Center Specific Plan project (proposed project). For this reason, the City of Norwalk is the CEQA lead agency for this project.

The intent of the DEIR is to provide sufficient information regarding the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project to allow the City of Norwalk to make an informed decision regarding approval of the project. Specific discretionary actions to be reviewed by the City are described in Section 3.4, *Intended Uses of the EIR*.

This DEIR has been prepared in accordance with requirements of the:

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.)
- State Guidelines for the Implementation of the CEQA of 1970 (CEQA Guidelines), as amended (California Code of Regulations, Section 15000 et seq.)

The overall purpose of this DEIR is to inform the lead agency, responsible agencies, decision makers, and the general public about the environmental effects associated with implementation of the proposed project. This DEIR identifies effects that may be significant and adverse, identifies mitigation measures to reduce or avoid those identified adverse effects and evaluates alternatives to the proposed project.

2. Introduction

2.2 SCOPING PROCESS

The City of Norwalk determined that the proposed project could result in potentially significant environmental effects, and therefore an EIR would be required. Accordingly, as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15375, the City, as lead agency, sent a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to notify the responsible agencies, trustee agencies, the Office of Planning and Research, and involved federal agencies that the lead agency plans to prepare an EIR for the proposed project. The purpose of the notice is to solicit information, guidance, and recommendations regarding the scope, focus, and content of the DEIR.

The NOP was issued on February 7, 2022 (see Appendix A). The NOP identified the project site, provided a summary of the proposed project¹, and identified the probable environmental effects of the proposed project. The NOP was circulated in both English and Spanish to responsible and trustee agencies; federal, state, and local agencies; Native American tribes; residents and business within a 500-foot radius surrounding the project site; and interested members of the public. The NOP was also made available for public review at multiple locations, including the City's website (<https://www.norwalk.org/city-hall/departments/community-development/planning>), online at the Los Angeles County Recorder-County Clerk, and online at the Governor's Office of Planning and Research prior to the start of the public review period for the NOP. In addition, the NOP was published in the *Long Beach Press-Telegram* and *Norwalk Patriot* on February 7, 2022 and February 4, 2022, respectively.

The NOP public comment period began on February 7, 2022, and concluded on March 9, 2022. A public scoping meeting was also advertised in the NOP and was held on February 17, 2022, from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at Norwalk City Hall (City Council Chambers) to solicit input from any interested parties on the scope and content of the EIR in conformance with Section 21083.9 of the California Public Resources Code.

The City received 10 comments in response to the NOP, including 6 written letters/emails and 4 verbal comments during the public scoping meeting. Comments generally requested information regarding traffic, parking impacts, overall increased density of development, loss of the City Hall Lawn, and the scope of the project description (see Appendix A). Information received during the scoping process has been incorporated into this DEIR and considered accordingly within each technical analysis.

2.3 SCOPE OF THIS DEIR

The content and scope of the environmental analysis in this DEIR were determined based on an understanding of site conditions and resources as well as comments received during the public scoping period. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 and 15126.4, the DEIR should identify any potentially significant adverse impacts and recommend mitigation that would reduce or eliminate these impacts to levels of insignificance.

¹ The NOP described a project that included up to 400 residential units and up to 150,000 square feet of commercial uses. Following the scoping period, the proposed project was refined and reduced to include up to 350 residential units and up to 110,000 square feet of commercial units. See Chapter 3, *Project Description*, for a detailed description of what is included in the proposed project and evaluated in this EIR.

2. Introduction

The information in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, establishes the basis for analyzing future, project-related environmental impacts.

2.3.1 Impacts Considered Less Than Significant

Based on the conditions of the project site and nature of the proposed project, it was determined in the scoping process that the following three environmental impact categories would not be significantly affected by the proposed project and would not require detailed discussion in the EIR:

- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Wildfire

These three categories are discussed in in Chapter 8, *Impacts Found Not to Be Significant*.

2.3.2 Potentially Significant Adverse Impacts

The City determined that the proposed project could result in potentially significant impacts to 17 environmental impact categories. Detailed analyses for these topics, including supporting technical studies where appropriate, are addressed in Chapter 5, *Environmental Impact Analysis*.

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

2. Introduction

2.3.3 Unavoidable Significant Adverse Impacts

This DEIR identifies significant and unavoidable adverse impacts related to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as defined by CEQA, that would result from implementation of the proposed project. Unavoidable adverse impacts may be considered significant on a project-specific basis, cumulatively significant, and/or potentially significant. The City must prepare a “statement of overriding considerations” before it can approve the project, attesting that the decision-making body has balanced the benefits of the proposed project against its unavoidable significant environmental effects and has determined that the benefits outweigh the adverse effects, and therefore the adverse effects are considered acceptable. The impacts that were found in the DEIR to be significant and unavoidable are:

- **Impact 5.8-1.** Operation of the proposed project following buildout would generate a net increase in GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. Implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-1, GHG-2, and TRA-1, would reduce GHG emissions to the extent feasible; however, impacts would remain significant.

2.4 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Some documents are incorporated by reference into this DEIR, consistent with Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines, and they are available for review at the City of Norwalk Community Development, Room 12, 12700 Norwalk Boulevard, CA 90650.

- *Norwalk General Plan:* The Norwalk General Plan serves as the major blueprint for directing growth in Norwalk and regulates the existing land uses in the project site. The general plan addresses existing conditions in the city, including physical, social, cultural, and environmental resources and opportunities. The general plan also looks at trends, issues, and concerns that affect the region, includes City goals and objectives, and provides policies to guide development and change.
- *Norwalk Municipal Code:* The Norwalk Municipal Code is a set of laws governing the City of Norwalk and covering all aspects of City regulations, including zoning, permitted uses and standards, and various development requirements. Where applicable, code sections are referenced throughout the DEIR.

2.5 FINAL EIR PROCESS

This DEIR is being circulated for public review for 45 days, from July 1, 2022, to August 15, 2022. Interested agencies and members of the public are invited to provide written comments on the DEIR to the City address shown on the title page of this document and below. Upon completion of the 45-day review period, the City will review all written comments received and prepare written responses for each. A Final EIR (FEIR) will incorporate the received comments, responses to the comments, and any changes or additions to the DEIR. The FEIR will be presented to the City of Norwalk for potential certification as the environmental document for the project. All persons who comment on the DEIR will be notified of the availability of the FEIR and the date of the public hearings before the City.

2. Introduction

The DEIR is available to the general public for review at various locations:

- City of Norwalk, Community Development, Room 12
12700 Norwalk Boulevard
Norwalk, CA 90650
- Norwalk Library
12350 Imperial Highway
Norwalk, CA 90650
- <https://www.norwalk.org/city-hall/departments/community-development/planning/norwalk-entertainment-district>

2.6 MITIGATION MONITORING

Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 requires that agencies adopt a Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program (MMRP) for any project for which it has made findings pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081. Such a program is intended to ensure the implementation of all mitigation measures adopted through the preparation of an EIR.

The MMRP for the proposed project will be completed as part of the FEIR, prior to consideration of the project by the City of Norwalk Planning Commission and City Council.

2. Introduction

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3. Project Description

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to describe the proposed Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Project (proposed project) to the public, reviewing agencies, and decision makers. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15124), an environmental impact report (EIR) should contain a description of the proposed project that includes:

- (a) the precise location and boundaries of the proposed project;
- (b) a statement of the objectives sought by the proposed project, including the underlying purpose of the project;
- (c) a general description of the proposed project’s technical, economic, and environmental characteristics; and
- (d) a statement briefly describing the intended uses of the EIR, including a list of the agencies that are expected to use the EIR in their decision making, a list of permits and other approvals required to implement the proposed project, and a list of related environmental review and consultation requirements required by federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or policies.

An adequate project description should not supply extensive detail beyond that needed for evaluation and review of environmental impacts. Accordingly, this chapter describes the necessary details of the proposed project that are critical in assessing the direct, indirect, long-term, and temporary impacts associated with project implementation. This project description is organized in the following manner:

- **Introduction.** An overview of the proposed project description chapter and its organization.
- **Project Background.** A summary of background information regarding the history of the project.
- **Project Location.** A written description and graphic portrayal of the project location, boundaries, and site characteristics.
- **Statement of Objectives.** A statement of the proposed project objectives and underlying purpose of the project.
- **Description of Project Components.** A comprehensive description of the proposed project, organized by the various project characteristics and features, including construction.

3. Project Description

- **Intended Uses of the EIR.** Identification of the anticipated approvals required for project implementation, and identification of the proposed project’s Lead Agency as well as any known Responsible Agencies.
- **References.** Listing of the references used in the development of this section.

3.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of Norwalk adopted an Economic Development Opportunities Plan (EDO Plan) on October 2, 2018. The purpose of the EDO Plan was to identify and prioritize strategic areas to promote economic development within the City based on demographic and retail market information. The EDO Plan identified 10 strategic areas, including the Civic Center/Entertainment District (identified by the EDO Plan as strategic area 1). Strategic area 1 is an approximately 26 acres area bound by Imperial Highway to the north, Volunteer Avenue to the east, Civic Center Drive to the south, and Norwalk Boulevard to the west. The project site is located entirely within the strategic area 1.

The Civic Center/Entertainment District strategic area is described as “[u]rban infill, civic center bordered by major arterials Imperial Hwy and Norwalk Boulevard with connectivity to transit hub.” It is identified as a “[s]trong location for enhanced entertainment district with blend of retail, restaurant, entertainment, hotel, and cultural uses,” that can “[c]apitalize on traffic counts and daytime population.” The EDO Plan also identified the “[p]otential to create a Specific Plan or Special District to support redevelopment of priority opportunity site” (Kosmont 2018). The vision for this strategic area includes attracting entertainment, hotel and restaurant uses, and other entertainment uses that can accommodate supporting retail, theater, service, hospitality, and other office uses (Kosmont 2018).

The proposed project seeks to further the objective of the EDO Plan to promote economic development on the project site.

3.3 PROJECT LOCATION

3.3.1 Regional Location and Access

Norwalk is in the southeast portion of Los Angeles County, approximately 17 miles southeast of downtown Los Angeles. It is bordered by the cities of Bellflower and Downey to the west, Santa Fe Springs to the north and east, and Cerritos and Artesia to the south (see Figure 3-1, *Regional Location*).

The project site is in the northeast part of Norwalk and is part of the City Civic Center. Regional and local access are shown in Figure 3-2, *Local Vicinity*. Regional access to the project site is provided by Interstate 605 (I-605), Interstate 5 (I-5), Interstate 105 (I-105), and U.S. Route 91 (US-91). In the vicinity of the project site, I-605 and I-5 run north-south and are approximately 1.9 miles and 0.5 mile west of the project site, respectively. SR-91 and I-105 run east-west and are approximately 1.6 miles west and 2.7 miles south of the project site, respectively. Local access is provided by Imperial Highway, Norwalk Boulevard, and Avenida Manuel Salinas, which border the project site to the north, west, and east, respectively. Avenida Manuel Salinas and Civic Center Drive (which is to the south of the project site) provide direct vehicle access to the project site.

3. Project Description

The Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center (Metrolink Station) is approximately 0.61 mile east of the project site on Imperial Highway. The Norwalk Los Angeles County Metro Station is approximately 1.7 miles west of the project site on Hoxie Avenue. Local bus service is provided along Imperial Highway via the Norwalk Transit System Route 4 and along Norwalk Boulevard via Routes 1, 2, and 3 and Los Angeles County Metro Route 62. The closest bus stop along Imperial Highway is on the northern boundary of the project site. The closest bus stop along Norwalk Boulevard is at the southwest corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard.

3.3.2 Project Site

The project site consists of approximately 13.2 acres at the southeast corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard in the City of Norwalk. See Figure 3-2, *Local Vicinity*. The project site consists of three assessor parcels (Assessor’s Parcel Numbers (APN) 8047-006-922, -924, and -925) owned by the City of Norwalk and a portion of one assessor parcel (APN 8047-006-927) owned by the County of Los Angeles. See Figure 3-3, *Assessor’s Parcel Numbers with Ownership*. The project site also includes the sidewalks along Norwalk Boulevard, Imperial Highway, and Avenida Manuel Salinas and the bus turnout on Imperial Highway.

The project site is bordered by Imperial Highway to the north, Avenida Manuel Salinas to the east, the Los Angeles County Superior Court–Norwalk and a surface parking lot to the south, and Norwalk Boulevard to the west (see Figure 3-4, *Aerial View with Photograph Locations*).

As shown in Table 3-1, *Existing Development Onsite*, on Figure 3-4, and on Figure 3-5, *Project Site Photographs*, the project site is currently developed with the approximately 39,000-square-foot Norwalk City Hall building, the approximately 4.3-acre City Hall Lawn, a portion of an accessory building associated with the County Superior Court property (the County accessory building), a surface parking lot, and a three-level parking structure (approximately 25 feet above grade).

Table 3-1 Existing Development Onsite

Land Uses	Size
City Hall Lawn	4.3 acres
City Hall	39,000 square feet
Surface Parking Lot	121,968 square feet (269 parking spaces)
County Accessory Building	Approximately 4,232 square feet
Parking Structure	3 above ground levels (approximately 1,050 parking spaces)

The project site includes a monument sign and fountain on the northwest corner of the project site, near the intersection of Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway, and a monument sign for the AMC Theatre on the northeast corner of the site. The project site has two memorials—a tribute to Norwalk emergency professionals on the northeast side of the project site and the “Freedom Memorial,” in the surface parking lot near the entrance to City Hall. In addition, the project site has an underground time capsule just north of City Hall and a plaque to Manuel Salinas on the east side of the project site. The project site includes landscaped medians with a total of 160 landscaped trees throughout the surface parking lot, landscaping around City Hall and City

3. Project Description

Hall Lawn, and landscaping near the monument sign on the northwest corner of the project site. City Hall Lawn is mainly grass with dispersed mature trees and walking paths.

3.3.2.1 EXISTING CITY HALL LAWN USES

A portion of the project site is currently developed with the approximately 4.3-acre City Hall Lawn. The City Hall Lawn is not designated as a City park or recreational facility. However, it does contain an open landscaped area and walking paths that are publicly accessible and used primarily for passive recreational uses (walking/jogging, informal small gatherings, employee lunch breaks, etc.). The City Hall Lawn and/or the surface parking lot have also been utilized periodically for City sponsored special events, organization-led special events and activities sponsored by organizations and/or the City, and various regularly scheduled activities.

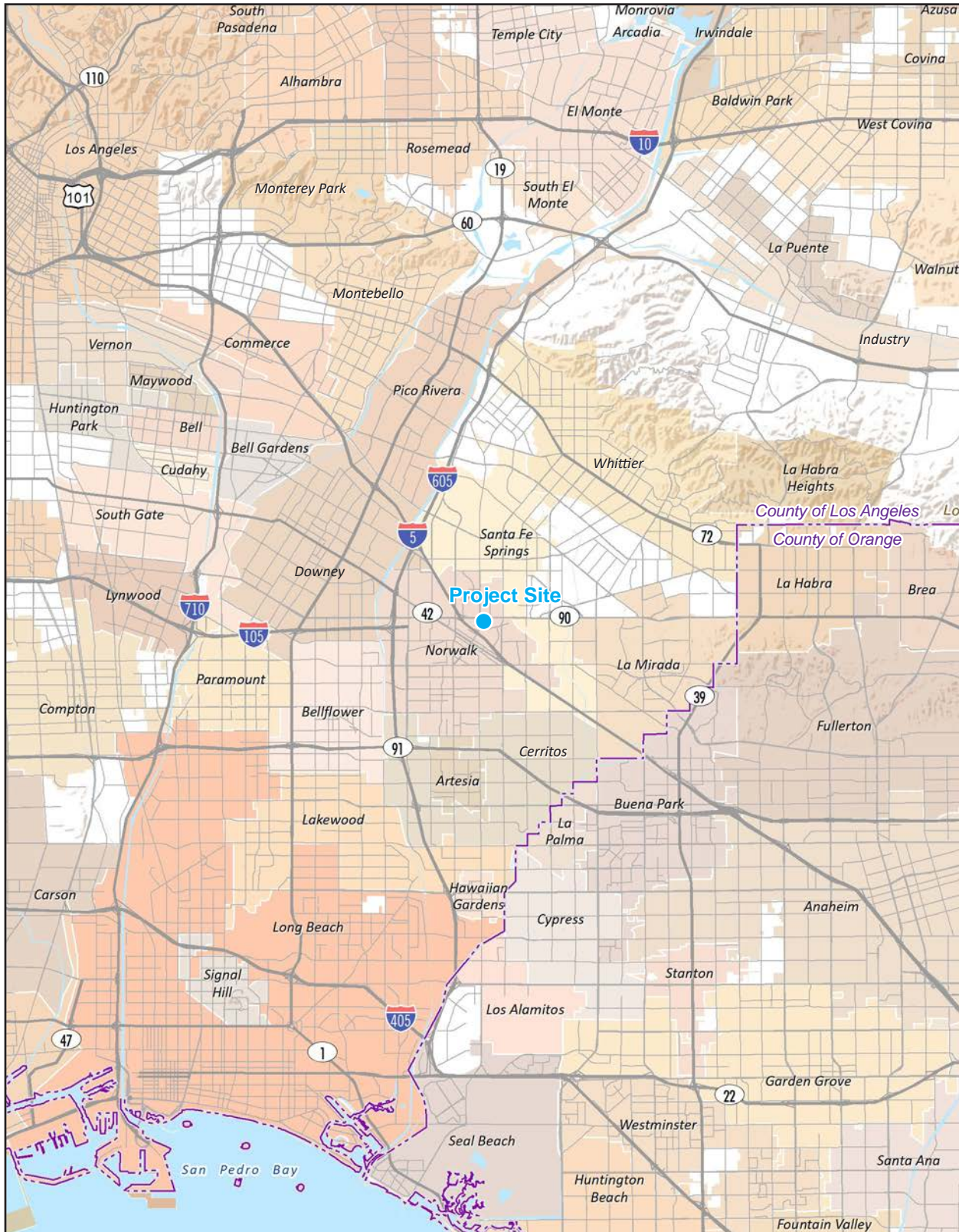
City sponsored special events on the City Hall Lawn have included seasonal and holiday events, some of which have occurred on an annual basis. Examples of past annual City-sponsored special events include New Year's Celebration, Lunar New Year, Easter Festival, Cinco de Mayo, Fourth of July, Summer Concert Series, Labor Day, Halloween, and holiday Tree Lighting. These events generally range in size from 2,000 to 4,000 attendees. The City's largest event is Fourth of July, which has typical attendance of approximately 8,000 people. These events have typically included amplified music or sound.

Organization-led special events include fundraiser and non-profit events. The City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot have also been used for regularly scheduled activities, such as the Norwalk Farmers Market (which occurs weekly on Tuesday and Saturday). The City Hall Lawn is also utilized for recruit training. These events and activities may also include amplified music or sound in coordination with the City. The number, size, and duration of events and activities varies and is determined by the City. The size of these events can include up to a few hundred attendees.

Independent of the proposed project, the City of Norwalk is in the process of identifying alternate locations for many larger City sponsored seasonal and holiday special events. Prior to release of the Notice of Preparation for this EIR, the City began investigating opportunities to relocate larger special events from the City Hall Lawn to other locations throughout the City to better accommodate larger events, and activate different areas of the City. To date, the City has identified three other locations for City sponsored special events, in addition to the City Hall Lawn:

- Expanded Holifield Park. The City is independently pursuing the expansion of Holifield Park to include an additional 15 acres currently owned by the City and adjacent to the existing Holifield Park, and has identified the expanded park as a potential location for City sponsored special events. This expansion of Holifield Park, which would include a lawn and parking area that could accommodate events, is included as a cumulative project in this Draft EIR (see Chapter 4, *Environmental Setting*).
- Front Street (temporary street closure). Front Street is a residential street and this location is generally bound by San Antonio Drive, Clarkdale Avenue, Funston Avenue, and Firestone Boulevard. This area is currently used for periodic special events.
- Norwalk Park. Norwalk Park contains a large grass area that could accommodate special events.

Figure 3-1 - Regional Location
3. Project Description



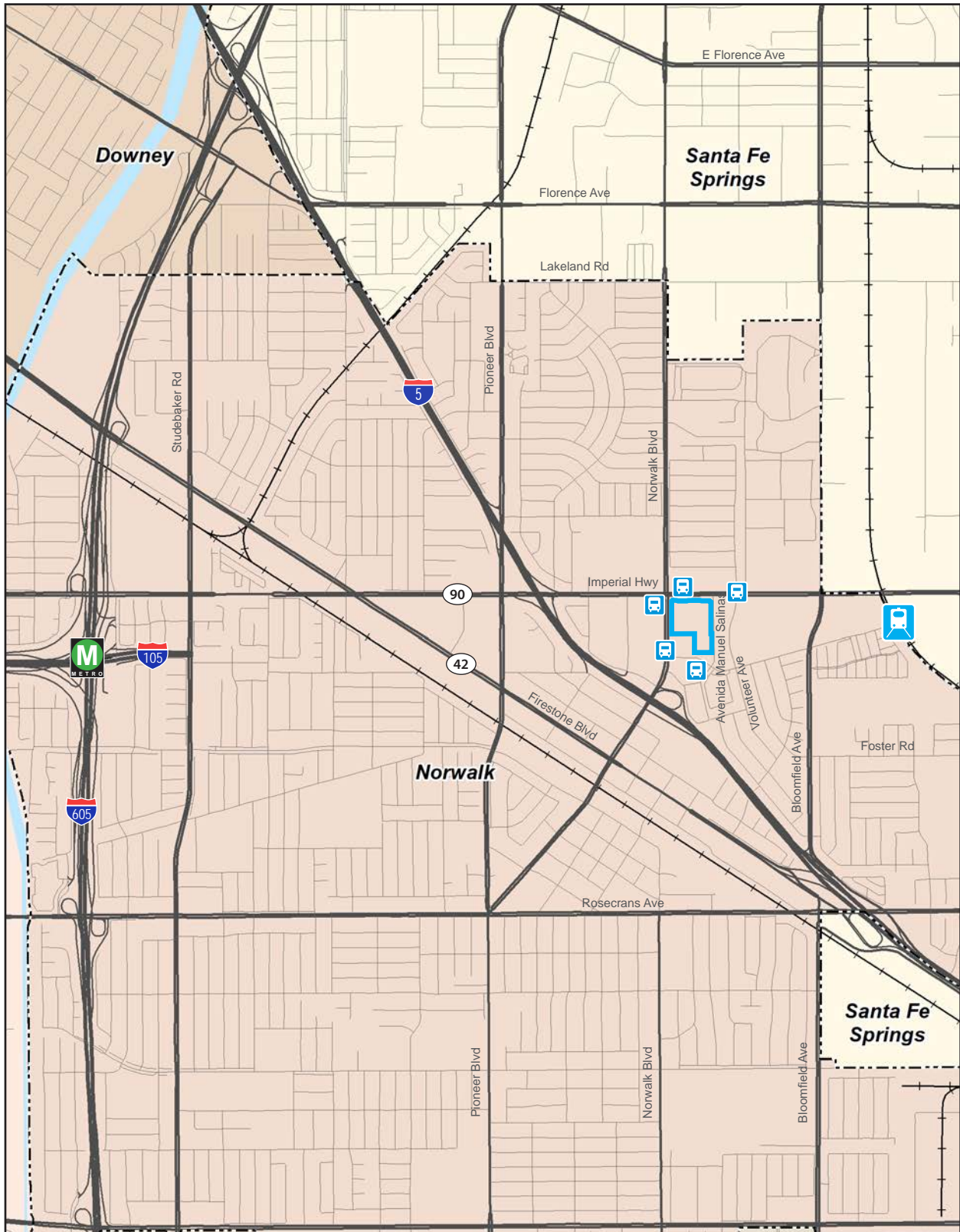
Note: Unincorporated county areas are shown in white.
Source: ESRI, 2022



3. Project Description

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Figure 3-2 - Local Vicinity
3. Project Description



— Project Boundary

--- City Boundary

Source: ESRI, 2022

LA County Metro Greenline Station

Bus Stops

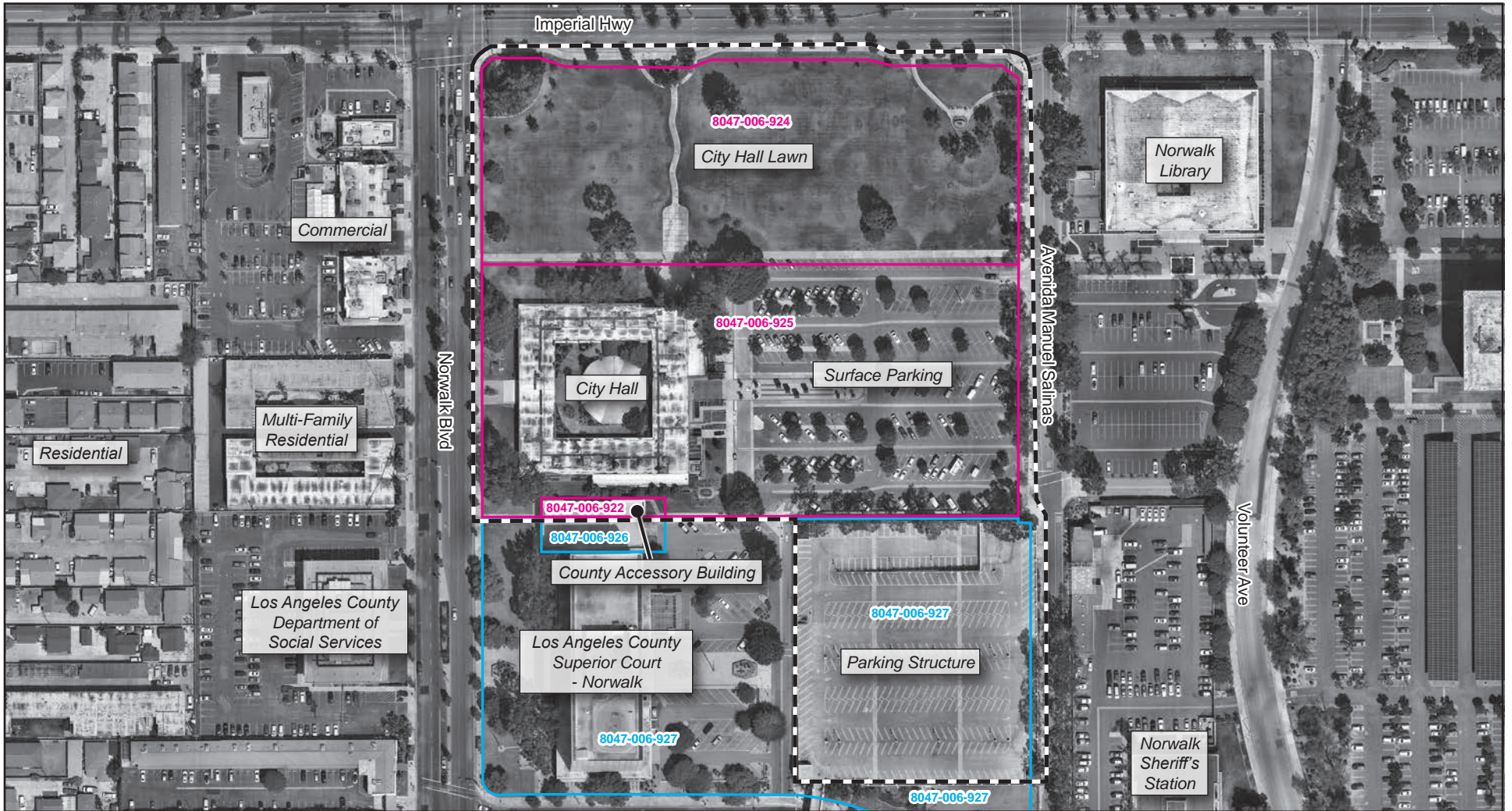
Norwalk Metrolink Station

0 2,000
Scale (Feet)

3. Project Description

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Figure 3-3 - Assessor Parcel Numbers with Ownership
3. Project Description

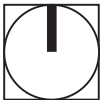


--- Project Boundary

APN APN (City Owned)

APN APN (County Owned)

0 250
Scale (Feet)

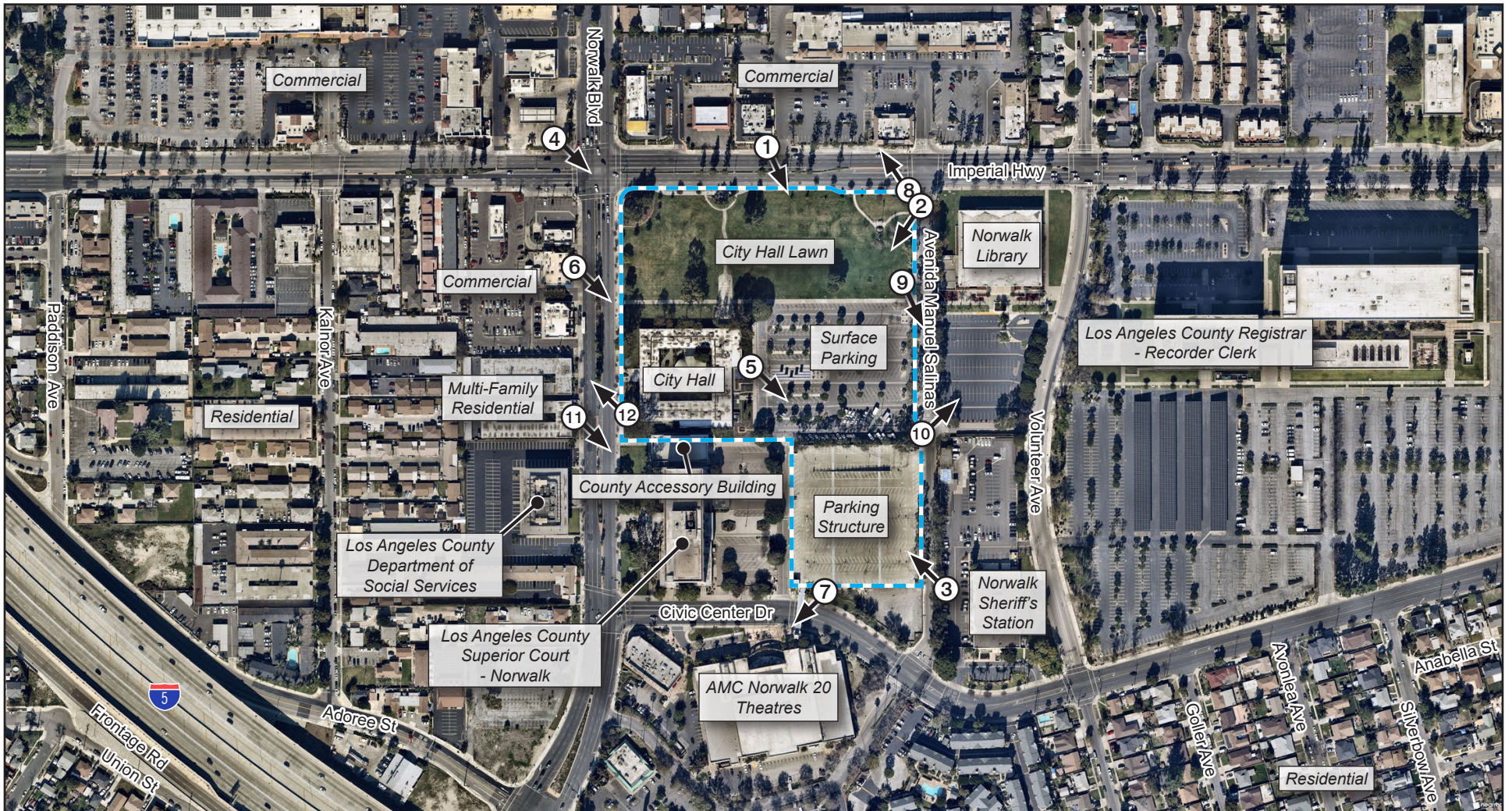


Source: Nearmap, 2022; ESRI, 2022

3. Project Description

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Figure 3-4 - Aerial View with Photograph Locations
3. Project Description



--- Project Boundary
Site Photographs (1-6); Surrounding Uses (7-12)

0 360
Scale (Feet)



Source: Nearmap, 2022

3. Project Description

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Figure 3-5 - Project Site Photographs
3. Project Description



Photo 1. View from north side of Imperial Highway, looking south at the project site.



Photo 2. View from the south side of Imperial Highway looking southwest across the City Hall Lawn.



Photo 3. View from east side of Avenida Manuel Salinas looking northwest towards Parking Structure.



Photo 4. View from the northwest corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard, looking southeast at the project site.



Photo 5. View from the east side of City Hall looking southeast across the surface parking.



Photo 6. View from the west side of Norwalk Boulevard looking southeast across the project site and towards City Hall.

3. Project Description

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3. Project Description

3.3.2.2 EXISTING PARKING USES

The existing surface parking lot is used by City employees and visitors to City Hall, as well as other members of the public including AMC Theatre and commercial patrons. The existing three-story parking structure is used by City and County employees and visitors to City Hall and the County Courthouse. The parking structure is also one of several parking options available to movie goers for the AMC Theatre to the south. The existing parking structure has 1,050 parking spaces, and the surface parking lot has 269 parking spaces. Both the surface parking lot and the parking structure are underutilized, as discussed further in the Parking Study prepared for proposed project and included as Appendix M.2.

3.3.3 Existing Zoning and Land Uses

The project site is currently zoned Institutional and has a corresponding general plan land use designation of Institutional. The Institutional zone allows for government facilities and offices (City Hall, corporate yard, courthouse, fire station, fueling station, hospital, police or sheriff station public library, or other similar) or uses that provide economic development opportunities promoting employment, education, and business training resources or services to the public (Norwalk Municipal Code Section 17.08.190). The project site is also within a Public Facilities Overlay Zone (Norwalk 2020a, 2020b). The purpose of the Public Facilities Overlay Zone is to promote the orderly and harmonious development of areas in the vicinity of the Civic Center and of major public buildings to ensure that the appearance of the surrounding area is not detrimental to the dignity and beauty of public facilities or the surrounding area. See Figure 3-7, *Existing Zoning and Land Use Designations*.

3.3.4 Surrounding Land Uses

The project site is primarily surrounded by commercial, multiple-family residential, and institutional uses (see Figure 3-4). Surrounding uses include commercial uses and accompanying surface parking lots across Imperial Highway to the north; the Norwalk Library, Norwalk Sheriff's Station, and accompanying surface parking lots across Avenida Manuel Salinas to the east; and commercial, multiple-family residential uses, and the Los Angeles County Department of Social Services building across Norwalk Boulevard to the west. The Los Angeles County Superior Courthouse–Norwalk is southwest of the project site. Commercial uses (including the AMC Theatre), a hotel, and multifamily residential uses are south of the project site across Civic Center Drive. Single-family and multiple-family residential neighborhoods are to the northeast and southeast of the project site.

Specific Plan Area 1 (SPA 1) (known as the Norwalk Entertainment District) is to the south of the project site. SPA 1 has a land use designation of Specific Plan and includes the AMC Theatre, DoubleTree Hotel, commercial uses, and multiple-family residential uses. Some surrounding uses are also within the public facilities overlay, but uses in SPA 1 to the south, SPA 8 to the north, and single-family residential neighborhood are not within the public facilities overlay (Norwalk 2020a, 2020b). The commercial properties to the northwest of the project site are zoned Restricted Commercial (C1) and General Commercial (C3) with a General Plan Land Use designation of neighborhood commercial and general commercial, respectively. The commercial, civic, and multifamily residential properties that front Norwalk Boulevard west of the project site are zoned Commercial and Office (CO) and have a land use designation of Professional Office. Commercial properties to the north of the project site are zoned Specific Plan Area (SPA) 8 and have a land use designation of Specific Plan.

3. Project Description

Institutional uses to the east are zoned Institutional with a land use designation of Institutional. See Figure 3-6, *Surrounding Uses Photographs*, and Figure 3-7, *Existing and Surrounding Zoning and Land Use Designations*.

3.4 STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Section 15124 of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to include a statement of objectives sought by the proposed project. The objectives assist in developing the range of project alternatives to be evaluated in the EIR. Identified below are objectives of the proposed project.

- Implement the City's Economic Development Opportunities Plan by revitalizing the project site with a vibrant, community-focused, mixed-use development that contributes to the City's economic base.
- Provide for the comprehensive planning of the project site through the preparation of a specific plan.
- Utilize a public/private partnership between the City of Norwalk and a developer to redevelop the site consistent with the specific plan established for the project site.
- Allow for the construction of new mixed-use buildings on the City Hall Lawn and existing surface parking lot, while preserving and respecting the existing City Hall building.
- Provide activated and engaging publicly accessible plaza and landscaped spaces for community gatherings, socializing and programming that strengthen the north-south connection between the existing Entertainment District (Specific Plan Area 1) to the south and the retail and housing to the north, and encourage pedestrian and multi-modal access and use of the project site and surrounding uses.
- Diversify and expand the City's housing stock with multiple-family residential units, including affordable units.
- Provide retail and commercial uses in a central location that creates a sense of place, supports and enhances the existing commercial and institutional uses in the City's Civic Center and Entertainment District, and serves as an attractive destination for residents, employees and visitors in the City.
- Encourage and support current and future transit use and other alternative forms of transportation while providing sufficient parking to meet the evolving needs of the City's existing and future entertainment/civic uses.

Figure 3-6 - Surrounding Uses Photographs
3. Project Description



Photo 7. View from the south side of Civic Center Drive looking southwest.



Photo 8. View from the south side of Imperial Highway looking northwest towards commercial uses.



Photo 9. View from the west side of Avenida Manuel Salinas looking north.



Photo 10. View from northeast corner of parking garage looking northeast towards the Norwalk Library.



Photo 11. View from west side of Norwalk Boulevard looking southeast across the project site and towards the County Superior Court Building and Judges' Parking Garage.

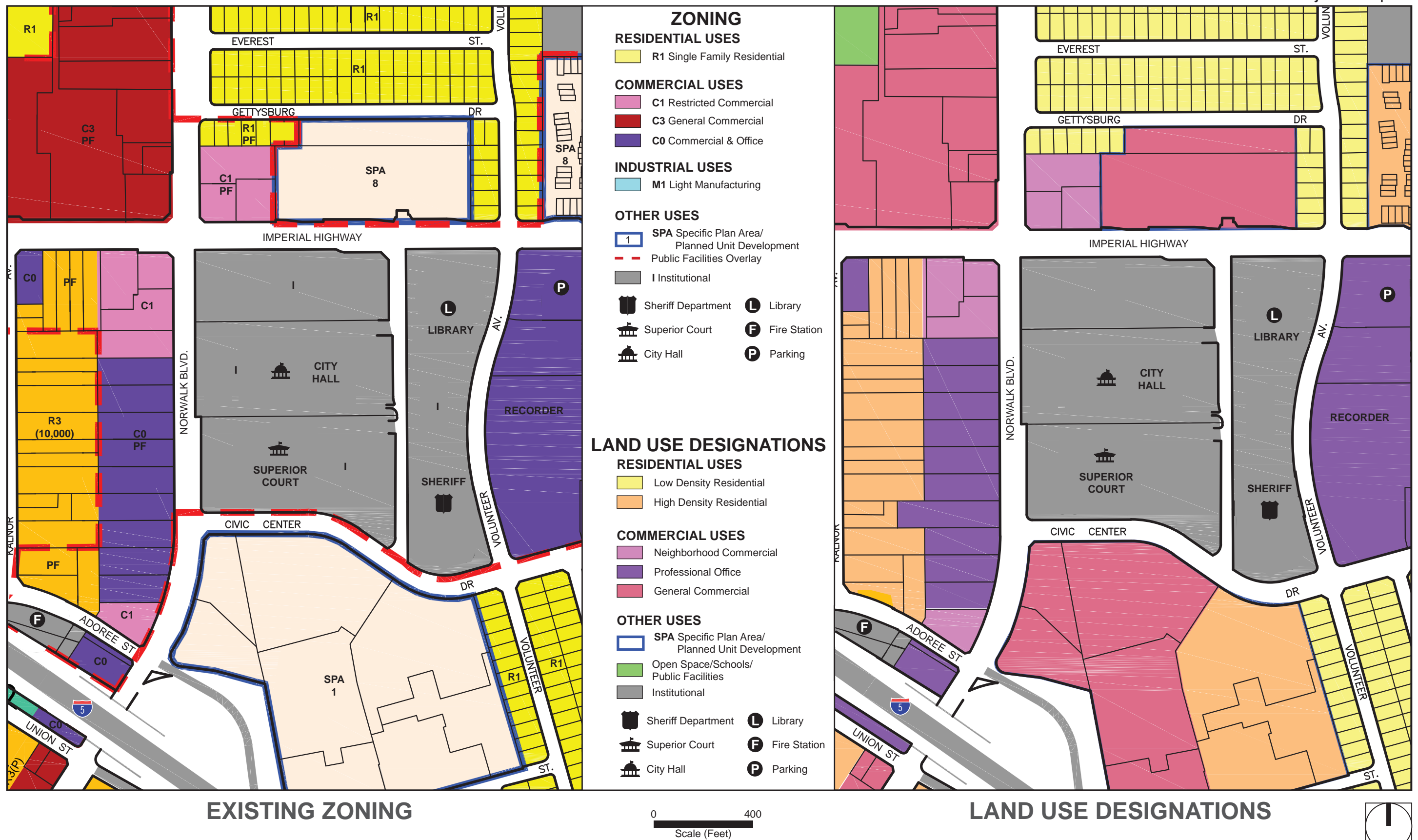


Photo 12. View from east side of Norwalk Boulevard looking northwest towards commercial and residential uses.

3. Project Description

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Figure 3-7 - Existing Zoning and Land Use Designations
3. Project Description



Source: City of Norwalk, 2020



3. Project Description

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3. Project Description

3.5 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT COMPONENTS

“Project,” as defined by the CEQA Guidelines, means:

... the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and that is any of the following: (1)...enactment and amendment of zoning ordinances, and the adoption and amendment of local General Plans or elements thereof pursuant to Government Code Sections 65100–65700. (14 Cal. Code of Reg. Section 15378[a])

The proposed project includes the establishment, implementation, and buildout of the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan. Note that since the preparation of the Notice of Preparation, the proposed project has been refined, including adjustments to the project site acreage and residential, commercial, and parking components, as discussed below.

3.5.1 Public Private Partnership

The City owns the land underlying the project site, with the exception of the land underlying the parking structure, which land is owned by the County of Los Angeles (see Figure 3-3, *Assessor's Parcel Numbers with Ownership*). It is contemplated that the use and development authorized by the specific plan (implementation of the proposed project) would be implemented primarily through a public/private partnership between the City and Primestor Development Inc. (Primestor), which is anticipated to include proposed ground leases of the City-owned land from the City to Primestor. The proposed ground leases would not include the existing City Hall building or the portion of the County accessory building on City-owned land directly south of City Hall, and no changes to these structures are proposed. The anticipated ground leases are also proposed to provide Primestor with an option to make the first offer to acquire additional rights in all or portions of the City-owned land within the project site (beyond those conveyed in the ground leases), in the event the City elects to convey such additional rights.

The public/private partnership between the City and Primestor is also anticipated to include one or more agreements between Primestor, the City, and/or the County regarding the use and expansion of the existing parking structure, consistent with the proposed specific plan. See also Section 3.4.8, *Discretionary Actions*, regarding necessary approvals.

3.5.2 Proposed Land Uses

The proposed project consists of a mixed-use development with residential and commercial uses and open spaces. New development would occur on the site of the existing City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot. The existing Norwalk City Hall building and the portion of the County accessory building would remain, with no changes proposed. Permitted uses, densities, setbacks, and other development standards are established in the proposed specific plan. The proposed specific plan identifies a conceptual plan that consists of two mixed-use buildings on the project site. The existing County parking structure on the south side of the project site would remain, and up to two additional levels could be added as needed to accommodate future parking demand in the civic center/entertainment district area. See Figure 3-8, *Conceptual Site Plan*, for the proposed conceptual site

3. Project Description

plan, and Figure 3-9, *Conceptual Ground-Floor Plan*. Refer to Figure 3-10a and 3-10b, *Conceptual Volumetrics*, for a conceptual massing and layout of the proposed project.

The conceptual site plan shown in the specific plan provides a connected and interactive experience through various land uses design elements and open space features. Commercial and residential uses would be primarily inward facing towards a central spine of open space, connecting uses on-site and facilitating connection to commercial and civic uses in the area. The proposed project encourages the retention and relocation or integration of existing monuments in the project site, including the memorial on the corner of Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway, the Freedom Memorial, the Manuel Salinas plaque, and the time capsule north of City Hall. Building frontages along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard would include design elements to engage the street. Although the City Hall Lawn would not remain as such, the specific plan provides for activated, publicly accessible open spaces with a north-south orientation to facilitate a walkable and engaging environment. Each of the proposed uses as well as the development standards set forth in the specific plan are described in more detail below.

3.5.2.1 RESIDENTIAL USES

The proposed project would allow for the development of up to 350 multifamily residential units within the project site. The dwelling units would range from studio to 3-bedroom units. A minimum of 15 percent of the dwelling units would be reserved as affordable. Residential uses would also include related amenities, such as a lobby, as well as residential open space reserved for residents and their guests. Residents would also have access to the publicly accessible open space to be incorporated in the proposed project, as discussed below.

3.5.2.2 COMMERCIAL USES

The proposed project includes up to 110,000 square feet of commercial uses, consisting of a mix of retail, food and beverage, health and wellness, and/or grocery/market uses. The size of individual commercial tenants would vary but it is anticipated that no single commercial use would exceed 50,000 square feet in size. The commercial space is anticipated to be on the ground level of the mixed-use buildings and would front Imperial Highway, Norwalk Boulevard, the project's internal open space, and City Hall. Commercial kiosks, pavilions and vendor carts would also be located in the open space areas through the center of the project site. The conceptual plan proposes to locate a grocery/market use in the northeast corner of the project site. See Figure 3-8, *Conceptual Site Plan*, and Figure 3-9, *Conceptual Ground-Floor Plan*.

3.5.2.3 OPEN SPACE

The proposed project's open space would include ground floor open space that would be publicly accessible but privately maintained, and residential open space for residents and their guests. Landscaping would also be incorporated throughout the project site; landscaping would include water-efficient or drought-tolerant plants.

Figure 3-8 - Conceptual Site Plan
3. Project Description



--- Project Boundary

0 160
Scale (Feet)



Source: Jerde, 2022

3. Project Description

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Figure 3-9 - Conceptual Ground Floor Plan
3. Project Description



--- Project Boundary

Parking

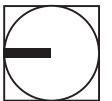
Anchor Commercial Tenant

Residential Lobby

Retail

Landscaped Area

0 160
Scale (Feet)



Source: Jerde, 2022

3. Project Description

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Figure 3-10a - Conceptual Volumetrics
3. Project Description



Northwest Corner



Southeast Side

3. Project Description

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Figure 3-10b - Conceptual Volumetrics
3. Project Description



Northeast Corner



Southwest Corner

3. Project Description

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3. Project Description

Publicly Accessible Open Space

Open space that is publicly accessible but privately maintained and operated will be provided adjacent to new development on the project site. A central spine of open space that is a minimum of 50 feet in width would run north to south within the project site from Imperial Highway, between the footprints of new development and continuing along the east façade of City Hall. The proposed project would include a minimum of 100,000 square feet of publicly accessible open space adjacent to new development.¹

The publicly accessible open space would include pedestrian walkways, plazas, and could include seating and outdoor commercial dining areas. This open space may also include fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions (including utilities that serve them and designated seating areas or exclusive seating for service areas), vendor carts, booths, outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements. The footprint of these elements would be counted toward the minimum 100,000 square feet required by the proposed specific plan for publicly accessible open space and would not be counted towards the maximum square footage of commercial development.

The publicly accessible open space would provide activated and engaging open-air spaces for community gatherings, socializing, and events that strengthen the connection between the existing Entertainment District (SPA 1) to the south and the retail and housing to the north. Portions of the open space areas could accommodate events and programming such as those that already occur on the project site (farmers markets, concerts, holiday events, etc.). Smaller gatherings could also occur (i.e., community bingo, yoga, and back to school and job fairs). Table 3-2, *Potential Events on the Project Site*, outlines examples of events and activities that currently occur onsite and possible future events.

During temporary construction of the proposed project, some events and activities that have previously occurred on the City Hall Lawn could be held on other City locations, such as Front Street (as described in Section 3.3.2.1, above), as determined and coordinated by the City, consistent with its current plans to locate events in various parts of the City. Following completion of construction, the project site would be able to accommodate community events, including some of the events that have previously been held on the City Hall Lawn, as well as new events and programming organized by the project proponent, such as yoga/exercise classes, community bingo, art/music events, etc. Example of the types of potential events that could occur on the project site are shown in Table 3-2.

¹ Based on the proposed project's conceptual site plan (Figure 3-8), the proposed project could provide publicly accessible open space and landscaped areas that total up to approximately 128,700 square feet of the project site. For a conservative analysis, this value was used in the analyses where applicable.

3. Project Description

Table 3-2 Potential Events on the Project Site

Event	Typical Size (attendees)	Frequency
Farmers market*	200	Weekly
Community yoga/exercise*	20-30	Weekly
Community bingo	15-20	Weekly
Open mic (poetry, art, talent show, etc.)	30-40	Monthly
Art walks	350-500	Monthly
Christmas tree lighting*	1,500-2,000	Yearly
Back to School	500-800	Yearly
Mini concerts	100-200	Monthly
Job fairs	60-100	Quarterly
Halloween event*	500-700	Yearly
Photo opportunity campaigns (pumpkin patch, backdrop walls, etc.)	400-500	Quarterly
Summer concerts*	200-300	Weekly (seasonal)
Wine and sip night	30-40	Monthly
Earth Day*	100-200	Yearly

*Event already occurs on project site.

Residential Open Space

Residential open space would be provided at 200 square feet of open space per residential unit. Residential open spaces may be provided in private or common open spaces. The residential open space minimum would be satisfied within each building based on the number of residential units located in that building. Common open space may be provided in various forms, such as playgrounds, picnic/barbeque and lawn areas, courtyards, outdoor seating, exercise or weight rooms, community rooms and spas/pools. Up to 20 percent of required open space may be accommodated in common interior recreation spaces, such as gym/health facilities. There would be no limit on the percentage of required residential open space that may be provided in common outdoor areas.

3.5.2.4 PROJECT PARKING

Vehicle Parking

The proposed project would provide parking consistent with the parking standards proposed by the specific plan, as discussed under Section 3.4.4, *Development Standards*, below. If all 350 residential units and 110,000 square feet of commercial uses are constructed, the proposed project would construct 651 parking spaces within the new mixed-use buildings. The remainder of the spaces required for the proposed project would be within the existing 1,050-space parking garage.

Buildout of the proposed project would include removal of the existing surface parking lot, which has 269 parking spaces. The existing County parking structure is underutilized and can accommodate the parking associated with the proposed project and can absorb the demand currently satisfied by the existing surface parking lot, which would be removed as part of the proposed project (see Appendix M.2, *Parking Study*).

3. Project Description

The proposed project would also allow for the construction of up to two additional stories on the existing County parking structure on the southern portion of the project site. This could add 700 additional parking spaces to the 1,050 existing parking spaces in the parking structure for a total of 1,750 parking spaces within the parking structure. The additional spaces from the expansion of the existing parking structure would be available to accommodate current or future parking needs of the civic center area but are not needed to meet the needs of the uses proposed under the project. If the parking structure were expanded, in total, the proposed project could provide a up to 2,401 parking spaces onsite.

Bicycle Parking

The proposed project would provide bicycle parking consistent with the standards proposed by the specific plan, as discussed under Section 3.4.4, *Development Standards*, below.

3.5.3 Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation and Access

Vehicular site access would be provided from one ingress-egress driveways off Norwalk Boulevard, three ingress-egress driveways off Avenida Manuel Salinas, and one ingress-egress driveway from Civic Center Drive along the existing driveway on the County parcel to the south of the project site. The Conceptual Site Plan utilizes the driveway on Norwalk Boulevard to provide access to parking and for loading and delivery activities within the mixed-use building on the northwest corner of the project site. The two southernly driveways on Avenida Manuel Salinas would provide access to parking within the mixed-use building on the eastern side of the project site. The northernmost driveway on Avenida Manuel Salinas, which would lead to the parking garage in the eastern building, would be limited to loading and deliveries only (see Figure 3-8, *Conceptual Site Plan*). Loading and delivery activities would occur within the proposed buildings. The proposed project may also include the construction of an elevated pedestrian bridge that would connect future development on the project site with the existing parking structure to facilitate access between the proposed buildings and the parking structure.

Pedestrian circulation would be incorporated within the project site to promote interactive use of the new commercial facilities and publicly accessible open space. Pedestrian access to the project site would be provided from Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard through open space connecting directly to ground-floor commercial uses. Pedestrians can also enter the project site from Avenida Manuel Salinas on walkways along the proposed driveway south of the eastern building and through the new parking garage in the eastern building. Pedestrian access to the project site would also be provided from Civic Center Drive by existing sidewalks or pathways through the County property to the south. Pedestrians would be able to directly access the parking structure onsite from Avenida Manuel Salinas and the County Courthouse property, consistent with existing conditions. See Figure 5-11, *Conceptual Ground-Floor Activation Plan*.

3.5.4 Sidewalk Improvements

Sidewalks and the bus turnout on the project site would be improved to further promote use of a multimodal transportation network. The proposed project would include the elongation of the bus turnout on Imperial Highway to center the bus stop within the block and align with the publicly accessible open space and pedestrian access to the project site from Imperial Highway. Along Imperial Highway, the proposed project could widen

3. Project Description

sidewalks within the project site and incorporate street trees to accommodate pedestrian activity and transit rider access to the project site. Along Norwalk Boulevard, the proposed project could also widened sidewalks within the project site to accommodate for pedestrian activity and access to the project site. Sidewalks along Avenida Manuel Salinas would continue similar to existing conditions.

3.5.5 Sustainability Features

Building and site design would integrate sustainable practices that conserve energy and water resources, reduce waste, and reduce the effects of urban heat gain, including the incorporation of solar panels on the rooftop of the mixed-use buildings. The project will comply with applicable requirements of the California Green Building Code, Title 24.

3.5.6 Security Features

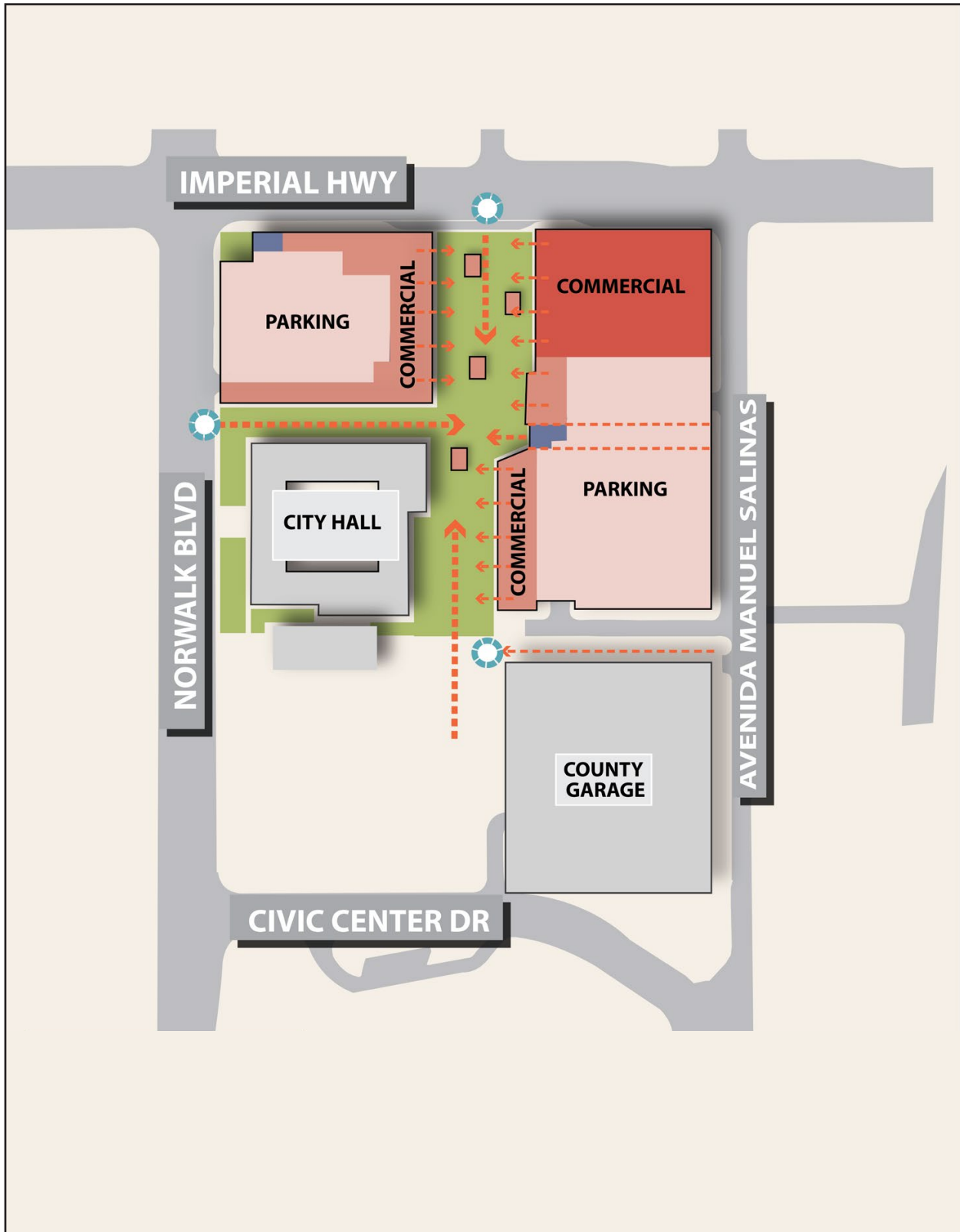
The residential components of the proposed project would be secured and would only be accessible to residents and their guests. The proposed project's commercial component, e.g., storefronts, would be secured during non-business hours. Parking would be located in the existing parking structure and new parking areas onsite. Private security would also be present onsite.


3.5.7 Development Standards


The proposed specific plan includes a set of development standards that would apply to future development on the project site. As shown in Figure 3-12, *Planning Areas*, the proposed project includes three planning areas that each have development standards.

- **Planning Area 1 (PA1):** This planning area includes the City Hall building (to remain) and landscape and entryway adjacent to the building along Norwalk Boulevard and the landscape area adjacent to the south side of the City Hall building, as shown on Figure 3-12.
- **Planning Area 2 (PA2):** This planning area includes the area currently improved with the surface parking lot, City Hall Lawn, and portions of landscaping and improvements adjacent to City Hall on the north and east. The development potential associated with Planning Area 2 comprised of no more than 350 residential units and 110,000 square feet of commercial development.
- **Planning Area 3 (PA3):** This planning area encompasses the existing parking garage.

Figure 3-11 - Conceptual Ground-Floor Activation Plan
3. Project Description



 Pedestrian/Bicycle Entrance

 Pedestrian Activation

Source: Jerde, 2022

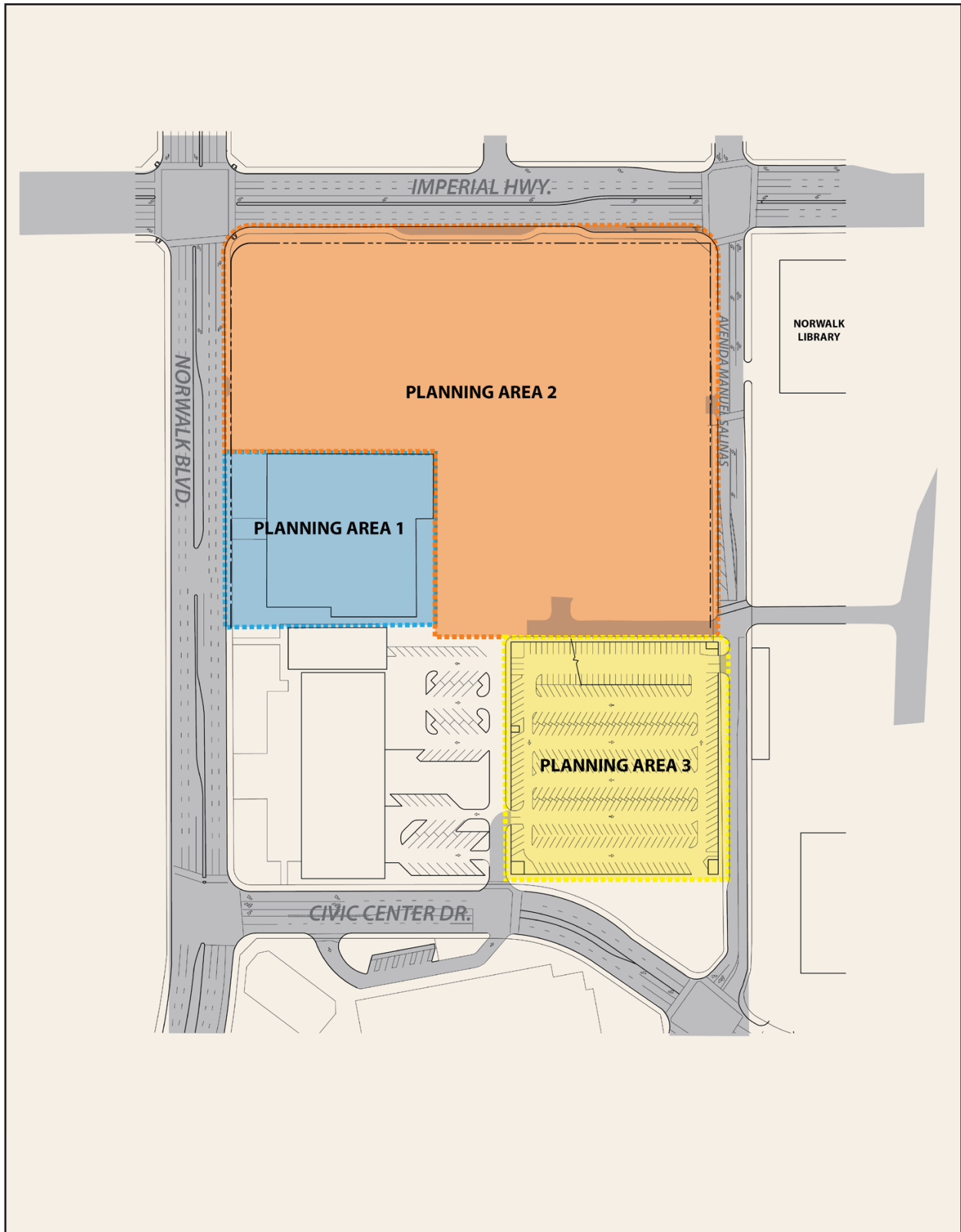
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3. Project Description

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Figure 3-12 - Planning Areas
3. Project Description



3. Project Description

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3. Project Description

3.5.7.1 SETBACKS

In PA 2, proposed building setbacks from the abutting right of way would be between five feet and 20 feet along Norwalk Boulevard; five feet and 25 feet along Imperial Highway; zero feet to 20 feet along Avenida Manuel Salinas; and five to 15 feet along the internal driveway/arrival drive. In PA2, setback from City Hall (building to building, excluding kiosks, pavilions, or other structures within the open space) would be a minimum of 50 feet.

In PA 1 and PA 3, side yard setback would be a minimum of 10 feet and rear yard setback would be a minimum of five feet.

3.5.7.2 HEIGHT

Building height in PA2 would range between three stories to seven stories. Building heights in PA1 and PA 3, where City Hall and the parking structure are located, respectively, would be a maximum of eight stories (or 120 feet). This is consistent with the existing Institutional land use and zoning designation. Figure 3-12 shows the locations of these planning areas.

3.5.7.3 PARKING

As detailed in the specific plan, the proposed project would provide parking standards within PA2 consistent with Table 3-3, *Parking Requirements*, below.

Table 3.3 Parking Requirements

Land Use	Minimum Required
Residential – Market Rate	1.5 spaces and .1 guest space per unit
Residential – Affordable	0.5 spaces/unit
Commercial	4 spaces per 1,000 gross square feet of commercial space
Bicycle Parking (Commercial)	4 per first 50,000 gross square feet, 1 per each 50,000 additional SF

Note: The Parking Study for the proposed project provides more information (see Appendix M.2).

3.5.7.4 BUILDING PLACEMENT AND FORM

Building placement and form outline standards to promote high quality and site-appropriate development within the Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan. The architectural character of the new development would be designed to respect and complement the character of City Hall and surrounding public buildings and maintain the architectural integrity of the project site. Building placement would allow for a central spine of open space which provides internal pedestrian connectivity between buildings. Primary entrances of residential and non-residential uses would be visible and accessible from the public right-of-way or publicly accessible areas of the project site to the extent feasible. Plazas, lawn or turf areas, outdoor dining, promenades, and other outdoor amenities accessible to the public would be designed to enable pedestrian use.

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3.5.7.5 SIGNAGE

Before issuance of any building permits for signs, the applicant would be required to submit a Master Sign Plan for the specific plan area for review and approval by the Community Development Director in accordance with the specific plan. The Master Sign Plan may include existing signage to remain and proposed future signage. The Master Sign Plan would supersede the requirements outlined in 17.03, Article II of the Norwalk Municipal Code. The Master Sign Plan shall establish placement and design criteria for the following:

- **Prominent Entrance Signage.** Signage to identify City Hall, Parking Structure, and Project Area (where applicable) for vehicular traffic. Prominent entrance signage is anticipated at the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard and the intersection of Imperial Hwy and Avenida Manuel Salinas.
- **Secondary Entrance Signage.** Smaller-scale identity signage to be installed at select intersections where arterials meet the specific plan boundary.
- Vehicular and Pedestrian Directional and Information Signage.
- The Master Sign Plan shall include the following for each sign type:
 - Permitted and prohibited sign types and general location requirements
 - Maximum sign size, sign area, letter size, and font; color palette
 - Sign construction material(s) and illumination/method or type of lighting

The Master Sign Plan may also include other architectural and environmental graphic enhancements consistent with the specific plan's architectural and design elements.

3.5.7.6 LIGHTING

The lighting for the proposed project includes safety and security lighting along walkways, including in parking areas and along internal driveways. Streetlights would be consistent with the development in terms of scale and design. The proposed project would also include accent lighting on buildings and landscaping. Ground-mounted lighting would be installed in the landscaped medians, entryways, and activity nodes to enhance these features during the nighttime. It would be directed upward along exterior walls, where they may also serve as effective illumination. Decorative lighting treatments would be encouraged in landscaping, pedestrian activity areas, and nodes and entryways. Outdoor lighting would be designed and installed so that all direct illumination is confined to the project site, and adjacent properties are protected from excessive spillover illumination. There would be no exterior night lighting that produces a light intensity exceeding 2.0 footcandles as measured at the property line of the nearest residentially zoned property.

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3.5.8 Utilities

The proposed project would require installation of all onsite utilities and connections to existing water and sewer mains, as well as development of onsite stormwater drainage. The proposed project would also connect to existing dry utilities, including electricity and natural gas lines.

3.5.9 Project Construction

For the purposes of the analysis in this EIR, it is assumed that construction for the maximum development allowed pursuant to the proposed specific plan would occur in one phase. Construction would occur over approximately 23 months and is anticipated to begin in 2023. Construction would include the following activities: grading and excavation, demolition and removal of hardscapes, trenching for site utilities and irrigation, building construction, architectural coatings, driveway and walkway construction, landscaping, signage, and street connection improvements. Soils within the proposed mixed-use building footprint areas would be removed and recompacted to a minimum depth of 8 to 10 feet below existing grade or 5 feet beneath the base of the foundations, whichever is deeper, or as otherwise required by the final geotechnical analysis. For minor site structures, such as free-standing, minor retaining walls, etc., removal and recompaction should extend at least 5 feet beneath existing grade or 2 feet beneath the base of foundations, whichever is deeper or as otherwise required by the final geotechnical analysis. Within non-structural areas (i.e., areas designed to receive concrete/asphalt paving, pavers, flatwork, etc.), the soils should be removed and replaced as properly compacted fill to a minimum depth of 3 feet below existing grade or 1-foot below the proposed finished subgrade, whichever is deeper, or as otherwise required by the final geotechnical analysis.

3.5.10 Discretionary Actions

This DEIR will serve as the primary environmental document for all future actions associated with the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan, including any discretionary approvals requested or required to implement the proposed project. The City of Norwalk is the lead agency under CEQA and has the principal approval authority over the proposed project. In order to implement the proposed project, the following approvals outlined in Table 3-4, *Permits and Approvals*, are anticipated to be required.

Table 3-4 Permits and Approvals

Lead Agency	Action
City of Norwalk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification of the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Project Environmental Impact Report • Zone map and zone text amendment to Specific Plan and remove the Public Facilities Overlay • General Plan map and text amendment to Mixed Use • Ground lease(s) • Reciprocal easement agreement(s) • Parking lease and/or license • Easements • Master conditional use permit for alcohol • Development agreement • Other agreements or actions of the City in furtherance of the Project

3. Project Description

Table 3-4 Permits and Approvals

Responsible Agencies	Action
County of Los Angeles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reciprocal easement agreement(s) • Parking lease and/or license • Easements • Other agreements or actions of the County in furtherance of the Project
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuance of a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit for construction activities • Issuance of Construction Permit
South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCAQMD Rule 201 (Permit to Construct) and SCAQMD Rule 203 (Permit to Operate): A permit is required to construct and operate any stationary equipment that generates new emissions (e.g., boiler or emergency generator). • SCAQMD Rule 403 (Large Operation Notification Form): The applicant/applicant's construction contractor is required to file a Large Operation Notification Form with SCAQMD for grading activities and prepare and implement a dust control plan.
Los Angeles County Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of building and emergency access plans for compliance with Fire Code.

3.6 INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

This DEIR is a project-level DEIR that examines the environmental impacts of the proposed project. This DEIR also addresses various actions by the City and others to adopt and implement the proposed project. The DEIR is intended to disclose to the public, agencies, and decision makers the proposed project's details, analyses of the proposed project's potential environment impacts, and identification of feasible mitigation or alternatives that would lessen or reduce significant environmental impacts. It is the intent of this DEIR to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed project, thereby enabling the City of Norwalk, other responsible agencies, and interested parties to make informed decisions with respect to the requested entitlements. The anticipated approvals required for this project are listed in Table 3-4, *Permits and Approvals*, above.

3.7 REFERENCES

Kosmont Companies. 2018, October 2 (adopted). City of Norwalk Economic Development Opportunities Plan.

Norwalk, City of. 2020a, April. City of Norwalk Zoning Map.
<https://www.norwalk.org/home/showpublisheddocument/23979/637236043923570000>.

_____. 2020b, April. City General Plan Land Use Map.
<https://www.norwalk.org/home/showpublisheddocument/23981/637236043927470000>.

4. Environmental Setting

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section provides a “description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, ... from both a local and a regional perspective” (Guidelines Section 15125[a]), pursuant to provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines. The environmental setting provides the baseline physical conditions from which the lead agency will determine the significance of environmental impacts resulting from the proposed project. Chapter 3, *Project Description*, specifically Section 3.3, *Project Location*, also provides a description of physical conditions on the project site. Additionally, each topical section provides a detailed discussion of existing conditions related to that topical area.

4.2 REGIONAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

4.2.1 Air Quality

The City of Norwalk is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB), which is managed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD). The SoCAB includes all of Orange County and the nondesert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. The air pollutants emitted into the ambient air by stationary and mobile sources are regulated by federal and state law. These regulated air pollutants are known as criteria air pollutants and are carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur dioxide, coarse inhalable particulate matter (PM₁₀), fine inhalable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), and lead. VOC and NO_x are criteria pollutant precursors and go on to form secondary criteria pollutants, such as ozone (O₃), through chemical and photochemical reactions in the atmosphere. Air basins are classified as attainment/nonattainment areas for particular pollutants depending on whether they meet ambient air quality standards (AAQS) for that pollutant. The SoCAB is designated nonattainment for O₃, PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, and lead (Los Angeles County only) under the California and National AAQS and nonattainment for nitrogen (NO₂) under the California AAQS. The proposed project’s consistency with the applicable AAQS is discussed in Section 5.2, *Air Quality*.

4.2.2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Current State of California guidance and goals for reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are generally embodied in Executive Order S-03-05; Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the Global Warming Solutions Act (2008); and Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act.

Executive Order S-3-05, signed June 1, 2005, set the following GHG reduction targets for California:

4. Environmental Setting

- 2000 levels by 2010
- 1990 levels by 2020
- 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050

AB 32 was passed by the state legislature on August 31, 2006, to place the state on a course toward reducing its contribution of GHG emissions. AB 32 follows the emissions reduction targets established in Executive Order S-3-05. Based on the GHG emissions inventory conducted for its 2008 Scoping Plan, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) approved a 2020 emissions limit of 427 million metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions (MMTCO_{2e}) for the state (CARB 2008). CARB is required to update the Scoping Plan every five years. In 2015, the governor signed Executive Order B-30-15 into law, establishing a GHG reduction target for 2030, which was later codified under SB 32 (2016). The 2016-2017 update to the Scoping Plan addresses the 2030 target of 40 percent below 1990 levels. The proposed project's consistency with CARB's Scoping Plan is analyzed in Section 5.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*.

In 2008, SB 375 was adopted to connect GHG emissions reductions targets for the transportation sector to local land use decisions that affect travel behavior. Its intent is to reduce GHG emissions from light-duty trucks and automobiles by aligning regional long-range transportation plans, investments, and housing allocations to local land use planning to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and vehicle trips. SB 375 required CARB to establish GHG emissions reduction targets for each of the 17 regions in California managed by a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). In addition, SB 375 requires CARB to update the targets for the MPOs every eight years. The targets set by CARB in 2010 for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region are an 8 percent per capita reduction from 2005 GHG emission levels by 2020 and a 13 percent per capita reduction from 2005 GHG emission levels by 2035 (CARB 2010). In 2017, SCAG's targets were updated to an 8 percent per capita GHG reduction in 2020 from 2005 levels (unchanged from the 2010 target) and a 19 percent per capita GHG reduction in 2035 from 2005 levels (compared to the 2010 target of 13 percent) (CARB 2018).

The 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), known as Connect SoCal, projects that the SCAG region has met its GHG per capita reduction targets of 8 percent by 2020 and will meet 19 percent by 2035. It is also projected that implementation of the plan would reduce VMT per capita for year 2045 by 4.1 percent compared to baseline conditions for the year.

Southern California Association of Governments

SCAG is a council of governments representing Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. SCAG is the federally recognized MPO for this region, which encompasses over 38,000 square miles. SCAG is a regional planning agency and a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SCAG is also the regional clearinghouse for projects requiring environmental documentation under federal and state law. In this role, SCAG reviews proposed development and infrastructure projects to analyze their impacts on regional planning programs. The southern California region's MPO, SCAG cooperates with South Coast AQMD, the California Department of Transportation, and other agencies in preparing regional planning documents. SCAG has developed regional plans to achieve specific regional objectives, as discussed below.

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Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

The RTP/SCS is updated periodically to allow for the consideration and inclusion of new transportation strategies and methods. On September 3, 2020, SCAG's Regional Council unanimously voted to approve and fully adopt Connect SoCal (2020–2045 RTP/SCS) and the addendum to the Connect SoCal Program EIR. Connect SoCal is a long-range visioning plan that builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS includes a “core vision” that centers on better maintaining and managing the transportation network for moving people and goods; expanding mobility choices by locating housing, jobs, and transit closer together; and increasing investments in transit and complete streets (SCAG 2020).

The RTP/SCS outlines a development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network and other transportation measures and policies, would reduce GHG emissions from transportation (excluding goods movement). The RTP/SCS does not require that local general plans, specific plans, or zoning be consistent, but provides incentives to governments and developers for consistency. The proposed project's consistency with the applicable 2020-2045 RTP/SCS policies is analyzed in detail in Section 5.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*.

4.3 LOCAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

4.3.1 Biological Resources

A biological resources technical report was prepared for the project site which confirmed that there are no sensitive vegetation communities, wildlife, or other biological resources on the project site or in a 500-foot buffer around the site. Refer to Section 5.3, *Biological Resources*, for additional information concerning biological resources and an analysis of impacts on such resources.

4.3.1 Cultural, Paleontological, and Tribal Cultural Resources

The project site is developed with landscaping, hardscaping, buildings, and a parking structure and is in a highly urbanized area of the city and the project site has already been subjected to ground-disturbing activities associated with the existing development. A historic resources and archaeological and paleontological resources reports were prepared for the project site (see Appendices E and F, respectively). The Historic Resources Report concluded that one building within the project site—Norwalk City Hall—appears to meet eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historical Places and California Register of Historic Resources as an individual resource. Therefore, this building meets the definition of a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA. No other buildings or improvements on the project site satisfy the above definition of a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA since there is insufficient evidence demonstrating that they meet eligibility criteria. The Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Assessment indicated that the project site does not contain any archaeological resources based on records search and an intensive pedestrian site survey by a qualified archaeologist.

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Refer to Sections 5.4, *Cultural Resources*, 5.6, *Geology and Soils*, and 5.16, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, for additional information concerning cultural and historical resources and an analysis of project impacts on such resources.

4.3.2 Transportation

Regional access to the project site is provided by major roadways, including Interstate 605 (I-605), Interstate 5 (I-5), Interstate 105 (I-105) and U.S. Route 91 (US-91). Local access to the project site is provided by Imperial Highway, Norwalk Boulevard, and Avenida Manuel Salinas, which border the project site to the north, west, and east, respectively (see Figure 3-2, *Local Vicinity*). A detailed list and description of the roadway network serving the project site are provided in Section 5.15, *Transportation and Traffic*. Walking paths are spread throughout the project site, including along internal streets and there are publicly accessible sidewalks surrounding the project site.

The Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center is approximately 0.61 mile east of the project site on Imperial Highway. The Norwalk Los Angeles County Metro C (Green) Line Norwalk Station is approximately 1.7 miles west of the project site on Hoxie Avenue. The Norwalk Transit System (NTS) provides local bus service along the Imperial Highway via NTS Route 4 and Norwalk Boulevard via NTS Route 1, 2, and 3 and Los Angeles County Metro Route 62. The closest bus stop along Imperial Highway is NTS Route 4 bus stop, which is located along the northern boundary of the project site. The closest bus stop along Norwalk Boulevard is at the southwest corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard.

Refer to Section 5.15, *Transportation*, for additional information concerning existing transportation facilities and traffic conditions and an analysis of project-related impacts.

4.3.3 Geology and Landforms

The project site is located in the Central Plain of the Los Angeles Basin, a coastal plain at the north end of the Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province. The Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province is characterized by mountain ranges separated by northwest-trending valleys, and extends from southwestern California south to Baja California, Mexico. The Los Angeles Basin is bounded by the Santa Monica Mountains and San Gabriel Mountains on the north, the Santa Ana Mountains on the east, and the Pacific Ocean on the south and west. The Santa Monica Mountains and San Gabriel Mountains are part of the Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province, an east-west-trending series of steep mountain ranges and valleys extending east from Santa Barbara County to central Riverside County.

The project site is located on a laterally extensive young alluvial fan deposits interpreted to be approximately Holocene and late Pleistocene age (CGS, 2016). The sediments are primarily derived from the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River drainages that run south from the San Gabriel Valley through the northwest trending Puente Hills (an area called the Whittier Narrows). The project site is located about five miles south of the Puente Hills and Whittier Narrows, and about two miles east of the San Gabriel River Channel. The Puente Hills were uplifted and deformed along the Whittier Fault, a section of the Elsinore Fault Zone. The project site is located within a seismically active region adjacent to major geologic structures (active faults); however, no faults are known to transect the project site (LGC Geotechnical 2022). The most important structural features in the area

4. Environmental Setting

are the San Andreas fault zone to the southwest, the Cucamonga fault to the south, and the Sierra Madre fault zone to the southwest.

Refer to Section 5.6, *Geology and Soils*, for additional information concerning geological and soil conditions and an analysis of the proposed project's impacts on geology and soils.

4.3.4 Hydrology

The project site is in a highly urbanized, built-out portion of the City of Norwalk where soils have already been disturbed by existing development. The existing project site varies in imperviousness, with driveways, parking lots, buildings, landscaping, etc. No streams or rivers traverse or are located in the vicinity of the project site, which is already developed and largely flat. The project site is in the Lower San Gabriel River Watershed, which encompasses approximately 78.5 square miles (50,240 acres) in Los Angeles County and has approximately 150 stream miles.

Refer to Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, for additional information concerning the noise environment and an analysis of the proposed project's noise impacts.

4.3.5 Noise

Noise levels in the project site are influenced by typical urban-related noise. Primary noise sources include vehicular traffic along adjacent roadways and operations associated with existing civic, commercial, multifamily residential, and institutional uses surrounding the project site.

Refer to Section 5.11, *Noise*, for additional information concerning the noise environment and an analysis of the proposed project's noise impacts.

4.3.6 Aesthetic Resources

The project site is in an urbanized setting at the northeast portion of the City's boundaries. The project site is bordered by Imperial Highway to the north, Avenida Manuel Salinas to the east, the Los Angeles County Superior Court–Norwalk and Civic Center Drive to the south, and Norwalk Boulevard to the west (see Figure 3-4, *Aerial View with Photograph Locations*). The project site's surrounding vicinity is fully developed with commercial, multi-family residential, and institutional uses. The project site contains open view corridors given the presence of the approximately 4.3-acre City Hall Lawn, and unique visual elements such as City Hall, a total of 160 landscaped trees throughout the project site), and monuments. Other surrounding uses include commercial uses across Imperial Highway to the north; the Norwalk Library and a surface parking lot across Avenida Manuel Salinas to the east; commercial and multiple-family residential uses and the Los Angeles County Department of Social Services building across Norwalk Boulevard to the west; and the Los Angeles County Superior Court – Norwalk and commercial uses to the south. Details related to impacts on the project site's aesthetic features, are provided in Section 5.1, *Aesthetics*.

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4.3.7 Public Services and Utilities

Public services and utilities are provided to the project site by entities listed in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1 Public Service and Utility Providers

Public Services	
Police	Los Angeles County Sheriff Department
Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services	Los Angeles County Fire Department
Public Schools	Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District
Library	Los Angeles County Library
Parks	Norwalk Recreation and Parks Service
Utilities	
Water	Golden State Water
Wastewater Collection and Treatment	Los Angeles County Sanitation District
Solid Waste	Athens Services
Electricity	Southern California Edison
Natural Gas	Southern California Gas Company

Refer to Sections 5.13, *Public Services*, and 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*, for additional information regarding public services and utilities and service systems, respectively, and an analysis of the proposed project’s impacts on services and utilities.

4.3.8 General Plan and Zoning

The project site is currently zoned Institutional and has a corresponding general plan land use designation of Institutional. The project site is also within a Public Facilities Overlay area.

4.4 ASSUMPTIONS REGARDING CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines states that cumulative impacts shall be discussed where they are significant. It further states that this discussion shall reflect the level and severity of the impact and the likelihood of occurrence, but not in as great a level of detail as that necessary for the project alone. Section 15355 of the Guidelines defines cumulative impacts as “...two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” Cumulative impacts represent the change caused by the incremental impact of a project when added to other proposed or committed projects in the vicinity.

The CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1) states that the information utilized in an analysis of cumulative impacts should come from one of two sources:

4. Environmental Setting

- A. A list of past, present and probable future projects producing related cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency.
- B. A summary of projections contained in an adopted General Plan or related planning document designed to evaluate regional or area-wide conditions.

The cumulative impact analyses in this DEIR use a Method A. Table 4-2, *Cumulative Projects*, outlines the cumulative projects near the project site.

Table 4-2 Cumulative Projects

No.	Project Location	City	Land Use	Size
N1	11944 Orange Street	City of Norwalk	Residential	Additional single-family residential unit
N2	13705 San Antonio Drive	City of Norwalk	Residential	60 du
N3	14815 Pioneer Boulevard	City of Norwalk	Residential	62 du
N4	13200 Bloomfield Avenue	City of Norwalk	Residential	700 du
N5	11729 Imperial Highway	City of Norwalk	Commercial	Existing facility conversion
N6	12843 Norwalk Boulevard	City of Norwalk	Drive-Through Restaurant	2,480 sf
N7	13111 Sycamore Street	City of Norwalk	Hotel	121 room
N8	CHP Office on Metro State Hospital Campus (11401 Bloomfield Avenue)	City of Norwalk	Office	37,000 sf Main Office 7,000 sf Auto Service Building 750 sf Radio Vault Building 750 sf Storage Building
N9	Holifield Park (12500 Excelsior Drive)	City of Norwalk	Park	50 acres
N10	10003 Freeman Avenue	City of Santa Fe Springs	Industrial	6,250 sf
N11	11401 Greenstone Avenue	City of Santa Fe Springs	Industrial	137,000 sf
N12	11733 Florence Street	City of Santa Fe Springs	Residential	63 du
N13	13225 Telegraph Road	City of Santa Fe Springs	Drive-Through Restaurant	4,723 sf
N14	13231 Lakeland Road	City of Santa Fe Springs	Residential	121 du
N15	9920-10020 Pioneer Boulevard	City of Santa Fe Springs	Industrial	35,837 sf 22,770 sf
N16	Northeast Corner of Lakeland and Laurel	City of Santa Fe Springs	Residential	18 du
N17	Heart of Norwalk Vision Plan	City of Norwalk	Mixed Use	Unknown

Source: Appendix M
SF= Square Feet
DU= Dwelling Units

The cumulative impacts of the proposed project have been addressed for each environmental category study described in detail in Chapter 5, *Environmental Analysis*, of this DEIR.

4. Environmental Setting

4.5 REFERENCES

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http://library.qcode.us/lib/norwalk_ca/pub/municipal_code/item/title_17.
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5. Environmental Analysis

Chapter 5 describes the environmental setting of the proposed project, analyzes its effects and the significance of its impacts, and recommends mitigation measures to reduce or avoid impacts. This chapter has a separate section for each environmental issue area that was determined to need further study in the EIR. This scope was determined in the notice of preparation (NOP), which was published February 2022, and through public and agency comments received during the NOP comment period from February 7, 2022, to March 9, 2022 (see Appendix A). Environmental issues and their corresponding sections are:

- 5.1 Aesthetics
- 5.2 Air Quality
- 5.3 Biological Resources
- 5.4 Cultural Resources
- 5.5 Energy
- 5.6 Geology/Soils
- 5.7 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 5.8 Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- 5.9 Hydrology and Water Quality
- 5.10 Land Use and Planning
- 5.11 Noise
- 5.12 Population and Housing
- 5.13 Public Services
- 5.14 Recreation
- 5.15 Transportation
- 5.16 Tribal Cultural Resources
- 5.17 Utilities and Service Systems

Sections 5.1 through 5.17 provide a detailed discussion of the environmental setting, impacts associated with the proposed project, and mitigation measures designed to reduce significant impacts where required and when feasible. The residual impacts following the implementation of any mitigation measure are also discussed.

Based on the conditions of the project site and nature of the proposed project, it was determined in the scoping process that three environmental impact categories would not be significantly affected by the proposed project: agricultural and forestry resources, mineral resources, and wildfire. These categories are discussed in Chapter 8, *Impacts Found Not to Be Significant*, of this DEIR.

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Organization of Environmental Analysis

To assist the reader with comparing information between environmental issues, each section is organized under seven major headings:

- Environmental Setting
 - Regulatory Background
 - Existing Conditions
- Thresholds of Significance
- Environmental Impacts
- Mitigation Measures
- Level of Significance After Mitigation
- Cumulative Impacts
- References

In addition, Chapter 1, *Executive Summary*, has a table that summarizes all impacts and mitigation measures by environmental issue.

Terminology Used in This Draft EIR

The level of significance is identified for each impact category in this DEIR. Although the criteria for determining significance are different for each topic area, the environmental analysis applies a uniform classification of the impacts based on definitions consistent with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines:

- **No impact.** The project would not change the environment.
- **Less than significant impact.** The project would not cause any substantial, adverse change in the environment.
- **Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated.** Prior to mitigation, the project would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment. The EIR includes mitigation measures that would reduce the impact to a less than significant level.
- **Significant and unavoidable impact.** The project would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment, and no feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.1 AESTHETICS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential impacts on the aesthetic resources of the project site and its surroundings. This section includes a qualitative discussion of the aesthetic characteristics of the environment that could potentially be altered by the proposed project's implementation and evaluates the proposed project's potential impacts on scenic vistas, scenic highways, light and glare, and consistency with established relevant regulations governing scenic quality.

5.1.1 Environmental Setting

5.1.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to protecting and preserving aesthetic resources and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

State

California Scenic Highway Program

The California Scenic Highway Program, maintained by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), protects scenic state highway corridors from changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to these highways. As discussed in Section 5.1.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, "Scenic Highways," there are no scenic highways in the project area.

California Building Code: Building Energy Efficiency Standards

Energy conservation standards for new residential and non-residential buildings were adopted by the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (now the California Energy Commission) in June 1977 and most recently revised in 2019 (California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 6). The Building Energy Efficiency Standards are designed to reduce wasteful, uneconomic, inefficient, or unnecessary energy consumption and enhance outdoor and indoor environmental quality. These standards include provisions related to lighting. For example, the Building Energy Efficiency Standards outline mandatory requirements for lighting control devices and luminaires. The standards are updated every three years to allow for the consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards became effective January 1, 2020, and apply to all newly constructed buildings, additions, and alterations. The 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards will become effective on January 2023.

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

The City of Norwalk's General Plan (1996) is primarily a policy document that sets goals, objectives, and policies concerning the community and directs growth and development. In addition, it outlines the programs that were

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developed to accomplish the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan. Goals, objectives, and procedures related to aesthetics are outlined below.

Land Use Element

- **Citywide Objective:** To establish a positive image for Norwalk as a growing city and take steps towards maintaining this positive image.
- **Citywide Policy:** Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of areas critical to creating a positive image for Norwalk.

Open Space Element

- **Park Design, Landscaping, and Maintenance Policy:** Ensure that new park and recreation facilities are designed to meet City standards.
- **Park Safety, Accessibility, and Compatibility Policy:** Encourage the design of parks, including activity buildings, outdoor facilities, people-gathering areas, lighting, parking areas, and other elements that do not adversely affect adjacent uses.
- **Park Safety, Accessibility, and Compatibility Policy:** Encourage parks and open space integration into new residential neighborhoods.
- **Park Safety, Accessibility, and Compatibility Policy:** Encourage parks which are located, oriented, and designed in such a way as to facilitate security, policing, and maintenance.
- **Streetscape Objective:** To establish a quality public open space environment that enhances the overall identity of the City.
- **Streetscape Objective:** To establish a consistent approach to the public streetscape, including sidewalks, landscaping, signage, furniture, and lighting.
- **Streetscape Policy:** Encourage the development of a cohesive streetscape throughout the City.
- **Streetscape Policy:** Encourage coordination between private development and public streetscape, including landscaping, signage and lighting.
- **Streetscape Policy:** Encourage active community participation in developing design priorities and specifications.

Community Design Element

- **Community Design Goal:** The City of Norwalk will be recognized as a place of visual order and exceptional quality in design.

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- **Community Design Policy:** New residential, commercial, industrial, and public facilities and right-of-way developments should be reviewed to determine consistency and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood, district, and the overall community.
- **Community Design Policy:** Existing residential, commercial, industrial, and public facilities and right-of-way improvements should be maintained to support a positive community image.

In addition to community design goals and policies, the Community Design Element outlines, in a broad context, considerations for the design and development of residential, commercial, and public facility use and right-of-way. These considerations guide architectural style, scale and massing, building orientation, exteriors, and landscaping. Public facilities and right-of-way considerations include general guidance on landscaping, streetlights, traffic control devices, pedestrian amenities, public signage, and gateways into the city.

City Center Area Plan

In addition to the General Plan, elements that guide citywide growth and development, the General Plan identifies three area plans in Norwalk—the City Center Area Plan, San Antonio Village Area Plan, and Firestone Boulevard Area Plan. The project site is in the City Center Area Plan area. The City Center Area is described as easily accessible by transit and freeway and commands a regional presence as a highly desirable professional office center. The “City Center will be distinguished by its quality architecture, park-like setting, and extensive network of attractively landscaped pedestrian walkways. Complementary uses such as restaurants, shops, conference facilities, and an entertainment complex help make City Center an economically competitive and dynamic place, designed to serve both the business community and the public” (Norwalk 1996).

The plan divides the City Center Area into seven subareas. The project site is in the “Civic Center” subarea, which is identified as a site that can be developed into a major civic facility with new office buildings and cultural facilities.

The urban design concept of the City Center Area Plan is a garden-office concept that would consist of widely spaced mid-to high-rise structures with extensive landscaping, pedestrian walkways linking the different components of the Civic Center, pedestrian-scaled amenities (such as street art, street furniture, waterscapes, and plazas), and buffering mechanisms (such as berms, landscaping, and fences).

The General Plan states that urban design guidelines may be established for the City Center, and the guidelines may address:

- Harmonious architectural design and quality materials.
- Site planning guidelines to create a cohesive project.
- A network of pedestrian walkways to link components of the City Center.
- A comprehensive Landscape Plan to give identity to the area.

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- Decorative pavements, artwork, waterscapes, seating, lighting, and other amenities to create a safe and inviting pedestrian environment.
- Screening of parking areas and structures to diminish impacts.
- Buffers between office, commercial and residential uses to protect residences from adverse impacts.

No overarching design guidelines have been adopted for the City Center Area Plan.

The City Center Area Plan also identifies City Hall as an essential structure for the city's historical, civic, and cultural heritage. It describes City Hall as a distinctive building with an expansive lawn area that provides cultural activities and open space for the surrounding professional office uses. The City Center Area Plan also identifies the County facilities near City Hall as important structures for the historical, civic, and cultural heritage of the City, including the library (approximately 100 feet east of the project site), the county courthouse (adjacent to the project site to the south), the County of Los Angeles Registrar-Recorder and Clerk (approximately 560 feet east of the project site), and the sheriffs' station (about 125 feet east of the project site).

The City Center Area Plan outlines objectives and policies further discussed in Section 5.10, *Land Use and Planning*, of this DEIR. The following goals and policies relate to aesthetics:

- **Land Use Policy:** Consider the establishment of urban design guidelines which will provide for an aesthetically pleasing, pedestrian-friendly, and economically viable business core and encourage mutually supportive uses.
- **Land Use Policy:** Encourage complementary and appropriate land uses adjacent to public transportation stations and routes.
- **Historic, Civic, and Cultural Resources Policy:** Support the preservation of historic structures and places.

City of Norwalk Municipal Code

- **Norwalk Municipal Code (NMC) Chapter 12.32.250** outlines parkway landscape standards for landscaping within a public parkway.
- **NMC Chapter 15.44**, known as the City of Norwalk Art in Public Spaces Program, provides the collection of recognized, permanent outdoor artwork throughout the city and outlines procedures for processing art in the public space in-lieu fees for qualifying projects and guidelines for artworks. The chapter applies to the commercial and industrial development of a certain size and cost. Eligible development projects must acquire and install artwork in a public place¹ on or in the vicinity of the project site, pay an in-lieu contribution to the Art in Public Places Fund, or combine the two options.

¹ "Public place" as used in NMC Chapter 15.44, means "any exterior area on public or private property, which is accessible and visible to the general public." (NMC Section 15.44.020).

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- **NMC Chapter 17.03.010** establishes landscape standards that require all yards abutting streets and other areas to be landscaped as part of approved development plans within any zone shall be landscaped and maintained as the chapter provides. The chapter establishes landscape requirements for single-family dwellings, multifamily dwellings, nonresidential landscape standards, landscape and irrigation plans, landscape installation and maintenance, and artificial turf standards. The purposes of the chapter are to establish landscape standards that will enhance the aesthetic appearance of the city and encourage quality design and installation, among others.
- **NMC Chapter 17.03, Article III**, is the City's Sign Ordinance. The sign ordinance outlines permit requirements for signage for various land use types, provides general requirements and limitations for signage, outlines exempt and prohibited signs, and outlines the requirements for the maintenance of signs. The purpose of the sign ordinance is "to recognize the need for business and certain other signs and encourage the effective and equitable use of signs yet prevent and eliminate the disarray and unsightly clutter which promote degrading conditions and tend to downgrade the community and depreciate economic and social values."

Existing Zoning and General Plan Designations

The project site has a General Plan land use designation of Institutional and has a corresponding zoning designation of Institution. Additionally, the project site is within a public facility overlay zone (PF zone). The purpose of the PF zone is to "promote the orderly and harmonious development of areas in the vicinity of the Civic Center and major public buildings, to ensure that the appearance of the area surrounding such facilities shall not be detrimental to the dignity and beauty of such public facilities or of the surrounding area." New construction or reconstruction of buildings within the PF zone must comply with NMC Article II, P-F Zone, Public Facilities Overlay Zone. In any required yard setback area adjacent to a street, only landscaping, fences and walls, driveways, and directional signs accessory to off-street parking and loading facilities are allowed. The PF Zone outlines requirements of development plan approval, limitations on permitted uses, and setbacks. The maximum allowable height is eight stories (120 feet).

5.1.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Visual Character

The City of Norwalk is entirely built out and urbanized, and the project site and its surrounding vicinity are fully developed with commercial, multifamily residential, and institutional uses. Views of the project site and the surrounding immediate area are provided in Figures 3-5, *Project Site Photographs*, and 3-6, and *Surrounding Uses Photographs*. Photo locations are shown in Figure 3-4. The project site is developed with City Hall and a portion of the county accessory building on the southwest side of the project site (see Figure 3-5, Photo 6); City Hall Lawn along the north side of the project site (see Figure 3-5, Photos 1 and 2); and a surface parking lot and three-story parking garage toward the southeast side of the project site (see Figure 3-5, Photos 3 and 5). Other surrounding uses include commercial uses across Imperial Highway to the north (see Figure 3-6, Photo 8); the Norwalk Library, and a surface parking lot across Avenida Manuel Salinas to the east (see Figure 3-6, Photos 9 and 10); commercial and multiple-family residential uses and the Los Angeles County Department

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of Social Services building across Norwalk Boulevard to the west (see Figure 3-6, Photo 12); and the Los Angeles County Superior Court–Norwalk and commercial uses to the south (see Figure 3-6, Photos 7 and 11).

The project site's area generally has an urban street grid with major roadways running north-south or east-west. Near the project site, Interstate 5 is elevated above the street grade and runs northwest-southeast, approximately 960 feet south of the project site and about 2,100 feet west of the project site. Buildings on the project site range from one story (City Hall and County accessory building) to two aboveground stories (3-story parking structure with one level subgrade). Due to the generally flat topography, existing development, and landscaping in the project area, the project site and surrounding area do not have long-distance or expansive views. Long-distance views are generally limited to views looking down roadways.

In the surrounding area, buildings generally range from one to seven stories. Several buildings in the vicinity reach six or seven stories. These six- and seven-story buildings include the Los Angeles Superior Courthouse adjacent to the project site; the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/Clerk building, approximately 560 feet east of the project site; an office building approximately 880 feet east of the project site; an office building approximately 1,260 feet east of the project site; and the Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, approximately 920 feet south of the project site.

The General Plan EIR determined that there are no scenic vistas or scenic roadways in the city that require special consideration. The General Plan does not identify any scenic vistas or roadways (Norwalk 1996). There are no designated or eligible scenic highways in the City of Norwalk, as identified by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans 2022).

Views and Visual Elements

The City Hall Lawn extends east-west along the northern end of the project site and is a turf lawn with various trees, memorials, signage, and walking paths (see Figures 3-5, Photos 1, 2, and 4). The City Hall Lawn provides green space and visual relief from the urban context. Visual elements on the project site include City Hall, which appears to meet eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources as an individual historical resource (see Figure 3-5, Photo 6). City Hall is at the southwest corner of the project site and is a single-story, Mid Century Modern civic building constructed in 1965. Its exterior walls are clad in small mosaic tiles in various hues of blue and green. The building entrance (facing west toward Norwalk Boulevard) is approached by a concrete walkway that features a tile-clad hexagonal planter with ornamental palm trees and small shrubs. On either side of this front walkway are lawns planted with grass and mature, lemon-scented gum trees. Various types of perimeter shrubs are planted at different points around the perimeter of the City Hall building (ARG 2022).

Another visual element is the mature trees of varying species that are situated around City Hall, dispersed throughout the City Hall Lawn, and near the intersections of Avenida Manuel Salinas/Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard/Imperial Highway) (see Figure 3-5, Photos 1, 2, 4, and 6). Mature trees also line the north-facing side of the county parking garage. Landscaping trees are also located in the surface parking lot. The project site also contains four monuments/memorials, including a tribute to Norwalk Emergency Workers near the northeast corner of the project site; the Manuel Salinas Plaque on the eastern side of the project site; the

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Freedom Memorial east of City Hall; and the time capsule located underground and marked with a concrete plinth with steel handrails and a metal flagpole just north of City Hall.

Landform

The project site and surrounding area are generally flat, at an elevation of 100 to 102 feet above mean sea level (South Environmental 2022).

Light and Glare

Existing nighttime light sources on the project site and in its vicinity include security lighting, sign, landscaping illumination, streetlights, lighting in parking areas, and vehicle headlights traveling on roadways and in the parking lots and parking structure. There are no light posts on the City Hall Lawn. In the project site and the vicinity, existing daytime and nighttime glare are caused by sunlight or vehicle headlights reflecting off surfaces, such as parked cars and cars traveling on adjacent roadways and within parking lots; light-colored buildings material; and windows.

5.1.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to aesthetics if the project would:

- AE-1 Has a substantial adverse impact on a scenic vista.
- AE-2 Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
- AE-3 In non-urbanized areas, the site's existing visual character or quality of public views and surroundings substantially degrade. (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.
- AE-4 Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

5.1.3 Environmental Impacts

5.1.3.1 METHODOLOGY

The assessment of aesthetic impacts is subjective by nature. Aesthetics generally refer to identifying visual resources, the quality of what can be seen, and overall visual perception of the environment. The analysis in this section identifies and objectively examines factors that contribute to the perception of aesthetic quality and potential impacts and focuses the impact analysis on the applicable CEQA Appendix G thresholds for aesthetics.

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5.1.3.2 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.1-1: The proposed project would not create a substantial adverse impact on a scenic vista. [Threshold AE-1]

A scenic vista generally refers to a view that possesses visual and aesthetic qualities of high value to the community. Aesthetic value is not limited to natural and rural viewsheds but can also be held in historic structures and districts, architectural design, and streetscapes. Scenic vistas typically include expansive or particularly prominent views of an essential visual resource. The Norwalk General Plan EIR determined that there are no scenic vistas in the city that require special consideration. The General Plan does not identify any scenic vistas in the city. The maximum allowable height on the project site (as defined by the site's current Institutional zoning) is eight stories.

The project site and surrounding area contain visual elements. The proposed project would change the views of some visual elements within the project site and from the surrounding public streets. However, the project site does not provide any scenic vistas that would be substantially affected by the proposed project.

Visual elements on the project site include City Hall, appears to be eligible for listing as a historic resource, and the City Hall Lawn, which provides passive green space and visual relief from the urban environment. City Hall fronts Norwalk Boulevard and is generally visible from vantage points along Norwalk Boulevard between Imperial Highway to the north to approximately the Los Angeles County Department of Social Services building to the south. City Hall can also be seen in the background from vantage points along Imperial Highway (between Norwalk Boulevard to the west and Avenida Manuel Salinas to the east) and Avenida Manuel Salinas (between Imperial Highway to the north and the parking structure on-site to the south) looking across the City Hall Lawn and the surface parking lot. Views of City Hall from Imperial Highway and Avenida Manuel Salinas are also interrupted or partially obscured by landscaping, signage, and vehicles in the surface parking lot. City Hall also contains an entrance from the surface parking lot and is generally visible from within the surface parking lot. Still, such views are also interrupted or partially obscured by landscaping, monuments, and vehicles.

The Norwalk Library to the east of the project site and the Los Angeles County Superior Court building to the south of the project site are visually prominent buildings in the surrounding area. Since these streets border the library, the Norwalk Library can be readily seen from vantage points along Imperial Highway and Avenida Salinas. The Norwalk Library is partially visible from Norwalk Boulevard, looking east across the City Hall Lawn. Still, it is partially obscured by landscaping and is not prominently featured in this location. The Norwalk Library is visible from within the project site, on the City Hall Lawn, which has a view like that from Avenida Manuel Salinas. The County Superior Court building fronts Norwalk Boulevard and can be seen from various vantage points along Norwalk Boulevard. Upper portions of the County Superior Court building are visible from Avenida Manuel Salinas and Imperial Highway, looking south and southeast across the City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot on-site, but views are interrupted or partially obscured by landscaping, buildings, and structures on the project site, and public right-of-way infrastructure, such as streetlights.

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As discussed in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the project provides for new development on the existing surface parking lot and City Hall Lawn in accordance with the proposed specific plan. The proposed project would allow new buildings in Planning Area 2 to be up to seven stories. The conceptual site plan provides for new mixed-use buildings generally sited along the east side of the project site, along with Avenida Manuel Salinas and Imperial Highway, and the northwest corner of the project site, along portions of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard. This height is lower than the current maximum height of eight stories permitted by the project site's current Institutional zoning. The specific plan would continue to allow a maximum height of up to eight feet (consistent with existing zoning) for Planning Area 1 (City Hall; where no changes are proposed) and Planning Area 3 (parking structure which the project could increase from two to five stories). See Figure 3-12 for the planning areas. The proposed project would incorporate publicly accessible open space and landscaped areas, but open space would generally be reoriented from the existing east-west configuration of the City Hall Lawn to a north-south direction extending from Imperial Highway to the County Courthouse, creating a central publicly accessible open space corridor through the new development and providing connectivity both within the project site and to uses to the north and south of the project site. The project would retain the existing City Hall building (see Figure 3-8, *Conceptual Site Plan*, and Figure 3-9, *Conceptual Ground Floor Plan*).

At the buildout of the proposed project, the more prominent views of City Hall would remain, while other views would be blocked by new development. Along Norwalk Boulevard, direct views of City Hall's western façade would generally remain unchanged. Project development along Norwalk Boulevard north of City Hall would block some views of City Hall from areas along Norwalk Boulevard closer to the intersection of Imperial Highway. Project development would also limit some views of City Hall from Imperial Highway, although some existing views from this location are constrained by distance and intervening landscaping. The proposed project would provide a publicly accessible open space area mid-block along Imperial Highway, which would provide a visual corridor into the project site and may allow views of City Hall from Imperial Highway. Development consistent with the specific plan would block views of City Hall across the project site from Avenida Manuel Salinas (see Figure 3-8, *Conceptual Site Plan*, and Figure 3-9, *Conceptual Ground Floor Plan*). However, existing views from Avenida Manuel Salinas are partially obscured by landscaping, structures, and vehicles in the surface parking lot. Within the project site, setbacks from City Hall and the new structures, as defined in the specific plan, would ensure that views of City Hall (including the eastern façade) remain visible from publicly accessible areas within the project site. Thus, following the proposed project's development, prominent views of City Hall will remain.

The buildout of the proposed project (primarily in Planning Area 2) would generally alter views through the project site of the Norwalk Library. However, views of the Norwalk Library would remain unchanged from Avenida Manuel Salinas and Imperial Highway east of Avenida Manuel Salinas. Existing views of the Norwalk Library from Imperial Highway west of Avenida Manuel Salinas are partially obstructed by existing landscaping. Project buildout could also limit views from Imperial Highway through the project site to the upper portions of the Los Angeles County Superior Court building. However, views of this building would remain from Imperial Highway through the north-south oriented publicly accessible open space and landscaped areas within the project site.

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As discussed above, the project would include the development of structures on portions of the existing City Hall Lawn and would re-orient the site's publicly accessible open space as a north-south corridor running through the project site. The project's publicly accessible open space would include views of green space and visual relief from the urban context along Imperial Highway and from publicly accessible areas within the project site. Landscaping would also be incorporated throughout the project site consistent with the specific plan. The proposed specific plan includes development standards governing the publicly accessible open space and project landscaping, and private residential open space.

While the project site contains visual elements, including the eligible historical resource of City Hall and the existing landscaped open area of City Hall Lawn, neither views of City Hall through the project site nor the City Hall Lawn constitute scenic vistas that the City has identified. There are no identified scenic vistas visible through the project site. In addition, the more prominent views of City Hall from the public street and publicly accessible portions of the project site (i.e., direct views of City Hall's western façade from Norwalk Boulevard and of the northern, southern, and eastern façades from within the project site), would be retained as part of the project. While the proposed project would result in changes in the visual environment, including views of City Hall and area buildings such as the Norwalk Library and the Los Angeles County Superior Court building, these views are not scenic vistas, and views of these buildings would remain available from public streets and other publicly accessible locations. Finally, while the proposed project would result in changes to the City Hall Lawn by replacing existing lawn areas with new structures resulting in changes in the visual environment, the proposed project would include a publicly accessible open space, re-oriented to run north-south through the project site, which would provide visual relief and green spaces visible from Imperial Highway and be accessible to the public.

The proposed project would not substantially affect a scenic vista, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.1-2: The proposed project would not alter scenic resources within a state scenic highway. [Threshold AE-2]

There are no scenic highways in the vicinity of the project site (Caltrans 2022, Norwalk 1996). State Route 1 is the closest eligible scenic highway to the project site and is located approximately 10 miles south (Caltrans 2022). State Route 91 is the closest officially designated scenic highway and is about 15 miles east of the project site. Due to the distance between the project site and these highways, existing and intervening development, and topography, the proposed project's development would not be visible from these highways. Therefore, the proposed project would not alter scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and **no impact** would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: No impact.

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Impact 5.1-3: The proposed project is within an urbanized area and would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. [Threshold AE-3]

Under California Public Resources Code Section 21071(a), an “urbanized area” for an incorporated city means having a population of at least 100,000 persons or less than 100,000 but combined with not more than two contiguous incorporated cities with at least 100,000 persons. The City of Norwalk has a population of 102,773 persons (U.S. Census 2022), so the proposed project is in an urbanized area as defined by Public Resource Code Section 21071(a). Therefore, the applicable threshold is consistent with applicable regulations governing scenic quality.

Although the buildout of the proposed project would change the visual character of the project site by constructing new mixed-use buildings and by modifying and re-orienting open space areas, project implementation would not conflict with zoning or regulations governing scenic quality, as further discussed below.

Construction Phase

Implementation of the proposed project would result in construction activities that would temporarily change the visual character of the project site and its surroundings. Construction activities would involve demolition, grading and site clearing, and building and site improvements. Construction staging areas, including earth stockpiling and storage of equipment and supplies, would contribute to a generally “disturbed site.” However, these effects would be typical of any site in the city that undergoes development or redevelopment. The site may be unsightly during the site preparation and construction phases. Still, construction activities are not considered significant because they are temporary and would not conflict with zoning or other scenic quality regulations. Also, temporary construction fencing would be erected to help shield the construction areas.

Operational Phase

Zoning Code and General Plan

The project site is currently zoned Institutional (eight story height limit) with a Public Facility Overlay and has a corresponding General Plan land use designation of Institutional (eight story height limit). The proposed project includes a General Plan map and text amendment that would change the project site’s General Plan land use designation to Mixed Use. The proposed project also includes a zone map and text amendment that would change the project site’s zoning and designation to the specific plan. The zone change would also remove the Public Facilities Overlay on the project site. The proposed specific plan would establish development and design standards and other zoning regulations governing scenic quality for the development of the project site (see Chapter 3, *Project Description*). With approval, the specific plan would be consistent with the zoning ordinance, and the project would comply with the specific plan.

Development standards in the specific plan include provisions for residential density, parking, building height, signage, setbacks, and open space. Implementation of the proposed project would result in a mixed-use development consistent with the applicable design and development standards outlined in the specific plan.

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The buildout of the proposed project would provide a cohesive visual character consistent with the standards in the specific plan.

The proposed project aims to provide a high-quality architectural design that complements the City Hall and surrounding civic center uses, consistent with the City's objectives for enhancing the city and creating a positive image of Norwalk consistent with guidelines in the specific plan. While the proposed project would remove the Public Facilities Overlay on the project site, the proposed specific plan would further the Public Facilities Overlay's intent of promoting an orderly and harmonious development in the vicinity of the Civic Center and other significant public buildings to preserve the dignity and beauty of the public facilities.

Development Standards

The specific plan's development standards provide regulatory guidance for the buildout of the project site. Development on the project site must comply with the proposed specific plan's development standards. The development standards provide for a high quality development while providing program and design flexibility.

Development of the proposed project would contribute to the urban character of the surrounding area with high-quality, mixed-use buildings of up to seven stories in Planning Area 2 that would complement City Hall and neighboring visually prominent buildings, such as the Norwalk Library and the Los Angeles County Superior Court building. For example, the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan includes design and development standards, such as ensuring facilities are designed and configured to provide edges and open space, create linkages and gateways, provide pedestrian connectivity; orienting buildings toward one another and the publicly accessible open space to stimulate pedestrian activity, and ensuring loading/service areas utilities and trash receptacles are visibly screened from shared outdoor spaces and pedestrian circulation areas. The proposed project's maximum height of eight stories in Planning Area 1 (where City Hall is located; no changes proposed in this area) and Planning Area 2 (where the County parking structure is located and could be expanded two additional stories) is consistent with what is currently allowed under the Institutional zone.

The proposed project's maximum height of seven stories for the mixed-use buildings in Planning Area 2 would be visually compatible with other buildings in the area, including the Los Angeles Superior Courthouse adjacent to the project site; the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/Clerk building approximately 560 feet east of the project site; an office building approximately 880 feet east of the project site; an office building approximately 1,260 feet east of the project site; and the Hilton DoubleTree Hotel approximately 920 feet south of the project site. Therefore, the buildout of the proposed project would be visually consistent with existing buildings surrounding the project site, which would support the positive image of the City and visual order.

Design Guidelines

Section 5, Architectural Standards and Design Guidelines, of the specific program generally shapes the relationship between buildings and open space within the project site and how the project would be seen from adjacent properties, addressing elements such as:

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- Landscape design approach
- Materials and color
- Massing and form, among others

Building massing and layout on the project site would be used to define open spaces. Buildings would be designed to respond to the existing context of the site and adjacent uses. The design guidelines encourage reinforcement of the urban edge, contemporary architectural design, accessible and visible design details, human-scale building articulation that complements neighboring developments, high-quality material, color use, and building/façade depth. These design features and ground-floor treatments would support pedestrian-oriented development, accentuate open spaces, and complement existing buildings on-site and adjacent to the project site. Open space, landscaping, and parking siting are generally encouraged to support the pedestrian environment and complement the overall architectural character of the community.

Future landscaping improvements would include water efficient or drought-tolerant landscaping. Signage and wayfinding, and outdoor lighting would be developed to complement building character.

General Plan Consistency

General Plan Elements

As described in Section 5.1.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, several elements in the General Plan have objectives and policies that address scenic quality, including Land Use, Open Space, and Community Design elements. In addition, the City Center Area Plan outlines objectives and policies that pertain to scenic quality. The proposed project is consistent with the City Center Area Plan and the General Plan, including provisions related to scenic quality. A detailed consistency analysis between the City Center Area Plan and the General Plan, including these elements, is provided in Chapter 5.10, *Land Use and Planning*.

The proposed project would allow for the construction and operation of a mixed-use development that would provide up to 350 multifamily residential uses and 110,000 square feet of commercial space. Development standards and design standards in the proposed specific plan would ensure a high-quality design that complements City Hall and surrounding land uses, which would promote a positive image of the City and maintain visual order. The proposed project includes integrating a publicly accessible open space through the center of the project, allowing for active and passive uses for visitors, commercial patrons, residents, and their guests and facilitating security and maintenance. The proposed project includes pedestrian-scale design, building articulation, amenities to create a safe and inviting pedestrian environment. The proposed project's circulation plan also facilitates coordination between the proposed development and the surrounding public streetscape.

The proposed project would include developing open space that would be publicly accessible but privately owned and maintained. This open space could include outdoor dining areas, fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, booths, outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements. The publicly accessible open space and landscaped areas would be designed and maintained consistent with the specific plan's development standards. Open space through the center of the project site and around City Hall—and its elements, such as lighting and gathering areas—would be consistent with the General Plan goals to support a

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positive community image and compatibility with the surrounding area outlined in the Land Use and Community Design Elements.

The proposed project would be consistent with the General Plan's goals, objectives, and policies that govern scenic quality.

City Center Area Plan

The City Center Area Plan area does not have established urban design guidelines and thus does not provide any governing urban design regulations. The City Center Area Plan does outline a vision for urban design guidelines, as discussed under Section 5.1.1.1. Development consistent with the proposed project would provide a harmonious architectural design with high-quality, visually consistent materials across the project site and surrounding uses. The proposed project would also include pedestrian walkways throughout the site to connect with public rights-of-way and provide visual cohesion with the surrounding urban environment. The proposed project's specific plan standards and guidelines to guide building placement and form, height, setbacks, signage, parking, lighting and landscaping to provide inviting and aesthetically pleasing development. Additionally, new parking areas would be provided internal to the proposed building and project site, visually limiting these areas' views from public rights-of-way. The addition of two parking levels to the existing parking structure would be visually consistent with the existing parking structure's design.

The City Center Area Plan outlines objectives and policies that guide development and aesthetics, such as the establishment of urban design guidelines to provide for an aesthetically pleasing, pedestrian-friendly, and economically viable business core that will encourage mutually supportive uses; provision of complementary uses adjacent to public transportation stations and routes; and preservation of historic structures and places. The proposed project includes development standards and design guidelines to promote an aesthetically pleasing pedestrian-friendly environment. The proposed project would provide a mixed-use development that would balance residential, commercial, and supportive uses on the project site and visually complement the surrounding uses adjacent to public bus lines along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard. The proposed project provides for a high-quality architectural design and use of materials and architectural design features that promote visual cohesion on-site, including with the existing City Hall, and complement nearby civic buildings, such as the library (approximately 100 feet east of the project site), the county courthouse (adjacent to the project site to the south), the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder and Clerk (approximately 560 feet east of the project site), and the Sheriffs' station (about 125 feet east of the project site). Additionally, the proposed project would integrate City Hall as a key building feature of the project site and would encourage the retention and relocation or integration of the existing memorials, plaque, and time capsule on-site. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the goals identified in the City Center Area Plan that govern scenic quality.

Conclusion

The proposed project would not conflict with the applicable goals, objectives, and policies of the City's adopted General Plan and zoning code governing scenic quality. Although development in accordance with the specific plan would change the existing visual elements of the project site, it would create an attractive, well-designed, mixed-use community with a high-quality pedestrian environment and high-quality architectural design,

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landscaping, and streetscaping. The specific plan, including its development and design standards, would be sensitive to the existing community and surrounding properties. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.1-4: The proposed project would not generate new sources of substantial light and glare. [Threshold AE-4]

Nighttime light and glare impacts affect a project's exterior lighting on adjacent uses and areas. Glare can also be generated by light reflecting off passing cars and large expanses of glass windows or other reflective surfaces. Excessive sunlight and glare can impair vision, cause annoyance, affect sleep patterns, and generate safety hazards when experienced by drivers. A significant impact may occur if lighting as part of the proposed project exceeds adopted thresholds for light and glare, including exterior lighting or light spillover, or if the proposed project creates a substantial new light source or glow. Light and glare impacts are determined by comparing the existing light and glare sources with the light and glare generated from the buildout of the proposed project. The project site and surrounding area are developed and contain many existing sources of nighttime illumination and daytime and nighttime glare, as discussed under Section 5.1.1.2, *Existing Conditions*.

Construction

Pursuant to NMC Section 9.04.150, construction activities are prohibited from 6:00 pm, or sunset (whichever is later) to 7:00 am. As Section 9.04.150 requires, construction consistent with the proposed project would occur primarily during daylight hours. If construction occurs after sunset and on-site lighting is needed, construction light sources from equipment and security lighting would be focused downward and shielded to avoid light spillover. Security lighting may also be provided onsite during construction. However, these lighting sources would be limited in use and directed downward towards the project site so as not to result in an offsite spill. Temporary lighting would be directed such that the nearest visually sensitive receptors, vehicle traffic on adjacent streets, and residences approximately 116 feet to the west of Norwalk Boulevard would not be directly affected. Therefore, construction activities are not anticipated to result in new sources of substantial temporary light. Since the project site is developed and in an urbanized area, the construction vehicles and materials on-site would not represent a new source of substantial glare. Since construction consistent with the proposed project would comply with NMC Section 9.04.150 impacts would be **less-than-significant**.

Operation

Illumination impacts affect a development's exterior lighting upon adjoining uses. Glare impacts are the effects of materials and surfaces that reflect light. The project site is in an urbanized area, surrounded by commercial, institutional, residential development, and major roadways, Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard, with significant vehicle traffic. The closest residential uses are the two multi-family residential buildings across Norwalk Boulevard, approximately 116 feet to the west of the project site. Existing light sources on the project site and its vicinity include vehicle headlights, streetlights, security lighting, and landscape/accent lighting.

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The proposed project would provide outdoor lighting typical of mixed-use development, open space, and landscaped areas, including the publicly accessible open space through the center of the project site. The lighting for the proposed project includes safety and security lighting along walkways, including in parking areas and along internal driveways. The proposed project would also include accent lighting on buildings and landscaping. The proposed project's lighting would be similar to existing lighting on the south side of the project site and in the project area. Buildout and operation of the proposed project would include 350 residential units and 110,000 square feet of commercial space. The specific plan includes lighting standards that specify that the on-site lighting plan shall be designed to direct light sources onto the site. Outdoor lighting shall be designed and installed to confine all direct illumination to the site, and adjacent properties are protected from spillover illumination. Low-wattage security lighting directed away from light-sensitive uses would be utilized and shielded to prevent spillover and glare. Streetlights would be consistent with the development in terms of scale and design. Ground-mounted lighting would be installed in the landscaped medians, entryways, and activity nodes to enhance these features during the nighttime. It would be directed upward along exterior walls, where they may also serve as effective illumination. Decorative lighting treatments would be encouraged in landscaping, pedestrian activity areas, and nodes and entryways. There would be no exterior night lighting that produces a light intensity exceeding 2.0 footcandles as measured at the property line of the nearest residentially zoned property to minimize lighting impacts to offsite sensitive receptors.

The buildout of the proposed project would result in more lighting and reflective surfaces compared to existing conditions on the project site. However, compliance with the standards in the specific plan and the California Building Code and Building Energy Efficiency standards, as amended by the NMC, would reduce light and glare impacts from the buildout of the proposed project. While there are no residential land uses abutting the development areas of the project site, lighting on the project site would be shielded and directed away from adjacent uses.

After compliance with existing state regulations and with the proposed project's design requirements for outdoor lighting and building materials, the operation of the proposed project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare. Impacts related to light and glare associated with the operation of the proposed project would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

Aesthetic impacts are localized to the project site and its immediate surroundings. Similar to the proposed project, other development projects would be required to comply with applicable state and local regulations, such as Title 24 (California Building Code) and applicable regulations from the NMC and be consistent with the City's General Plan. The new development would be subject to adopted plans and regulations that are in place to preserve a community's scenic resources and would need to demonstrate compliance with the City's zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Since none of the cumulative projects are within the

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general viewshed of the project site, the proposed project would not combine with other cumulative projects to create a cumulatively significant impact on scenic vistas and scenic quality.

Each cumulative project would be reviewed to determine its potential impacts on any scenic resources within a state scenic highway. The proposed project is not near a scenic highway; therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulative impact related to scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

The buildout of the proposed project and cumulative projects would result in the development of infill sites in urbanized areas. As with the proposed project, cumulative projects could introduce new sources of light and glare to an urban environment. As with the proposed project, each cumulative project would be expected to comply with applicable state and local regulations governing light and glare during construction and operation. If it is determined that a cumulative project would result in a potentially significant impact related to light or glare, it would be required to incorporate mitigation measures to reduce such effects. As discussed above, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on light and glare. Since none of the cumulative projects are within the general viewshed of the project site, the proposed project and incremental projects would not combine to generate a significant cumulative impact. Therefore, a **less-than-significant** impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.1.5 References

Architectural Resources Group (ARG). June 2022. Norwalk Entertainment District Historic Resources Assessment Report. (Appendix E)

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Norwalk, City of. 1996. General Plan.

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5.2 AIR QUALITY

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential for the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Project (proposed project) to impact air quality in a local and regional context. This evaluation is based on the methodology recommended by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD). The analysis focuses on air pollution from regional emissions and localized pollutant concentrations. In this section, “emissions” refers to the actual quantity of pollutant, measured in pounds per day (lbs/day), and “concentrations” refers to the amount of pollutant material per volumetric unit of air. Concentrations are measured in parts per million (ppm), parts per billion (ppb), or micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$).

Criteria air pollutant emissions modeling is included in Appendix B, *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data*, of this DEIR. Transportation-sector impacts are based on trip generation and vehicle miles traveled as provided by Gibson Transportation Consulting Inc. (see Appendix M). Cumulative impacts related to air quality are based on the regional boundaries of the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB). An evaluation of localized construction health risks is in Appendix C, *Construction Health Risk Assessment*, of this DEIR.

5.2.1 Environmental Setting

5.2.1.1 AIR POLLUTANTS OF CONCERN

Criteria Air Pollutants

The pollutants emitted into the ambient air by stationary and mobile sources are categorized as primary and/or secondary pollutants. Primary air pollutants are emitted directly from sources. Carbon monoxide (CO), volatile organic compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), coarse inhalable particulate matter (PM₁₀), fine inhalable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), and lead (Pb) are primary air pollutants. Of these, CO, SO₂, nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} are “criteria air pollutants,” which means that ambient air quality standards (AAQS) have been established for them. VOC and NO_x are criteria pollutant precursors that form secondary criteria air pollutants through chemical and photochemical reactions in the atmosphere. Ozone (O₃) and NO₂ are the principal secondary pollutants.

Each of the primary and secondary criteria air pollutants and its known health effects are described below.

- **Carbon Monoxide (CO)** is a colorless, odorless, toxic gas produced by incomplete combustion of carbon substances, such as gasoline or diesel fuel. CO is a primary criteria air pollutant. CO concentrations tend to be the highest during winter mornings with little to no wind, when surface-based inversions trap the pollutant at ground levels. Because CO is emitted directly from internal combustion, engines and motor vehicles operating at slow speeds are the primary sources of CO in the SoCAB. The highest ambient CO concentrations are generally found near traffic-congested corridors and intersections. The primary adverse health effect associated with CO is interference with normal oxygen transfer to the blood, which may result in tissue oxygen deprivation (South Coast AQMD 2005; US EPA 2022). The SoCAB is designated as being in attainment under the California AAQS and attainment (serious maintenance) under the National AAQS (CARB 2022a).

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- **Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)** are composed primarily of hydrogen and carbon atoms. Internal combustion associated with motor vehicle usage is the major source of VOCs. Other sources include evaporative emissions from paints and solvents, asphalt paving, and household consumer products such as aerosols (South Coast AQMD 2005). There are no AAQS for VOCs. However, because they contribute to the formation of O₃, South Coast AQMD has established a significance threshold (South Coast AQMD 2019). The health effects for ozone are described later in this section.
- **Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)** are a by-product of fuel combustion and contribute to the formation of ground-level O₃, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. The two major forms of NO_x are nitric oxide (NO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). NO is a colorless, odorless gas formed from atmospheric nitrogen and oxygen when combustion takes place under high temperature and/or high pressure. The principal form of NO_x produced by combustion is NO, but NO reacts quickly with oxygen to form NO₂, creating the mixture of NO and NO₂ commonly called NO_x. NO₂ is an acute irritant and more injurious than NO in equal concentrations. At atmospheric concentrations, however, NO₂ is only potentially irritating. NO₂ absorbs blue light; the result is a brownish-red cast to the atmosphere and reduced visibility. NO₂ exposure concentrations near roadways are of particular concern for susceptible individuals, including asthmatics, children, and the elderly. Current scientific evidence links short-term NO₂ exposures, ranging from 30 minutes to 24 hours, with adverse respiratory effects, including airway inflammation in healthy people and increased respiratory symptoms in people with asthma. Also, studies show a connection between elevated short-term NO₂ concentrations and increased visits to emergency departments and hospital admissions for respiratory issues, especially asthma (South Coast AQMD 2005; USEPA 2022a). On February 21, 2019, CARB's Board approved the separation of the area that runs along the State Route 60 corridor through portions of Riverside, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles counties from the remainder of the SoCAB for state nonattainment designation purposes. The Board designated this corridor as nonattainment.¹ The remainder of the SoCAB is designated in attainment (maintenance) under the National AAQS and attainment under the California AAQS (CARB 2022a).
- **Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂)** is a colorless, pungent, irritating gas formed by the combustion of sulfurous fossil fuels. It enters the atmosphere as a result of burning high-sulfur-content fuel oils and coal and chemical processes at plants and refineries. Gasoline and natural gas have very low sulfur content and do not release significant quantities of SO₂. When sulfur dioxide forms sulfates (SO₄) in the atmosphere, together these pollutants are referred to as sulfur oxides (SO_x). Thus, SO₂ is both a primary and secondary criteria air pollutant. At sufficiently high concentrations, SO₂ may irritate the upper respiratory tract. Current scientific evidence links short-term exposures to SO₂, ranging from 5 minutes to 24 hours, with an array of adverse respiratory effects, including bronchoconstriction and increased asthma symptoms. These effects are particularly adverse for asthmatics at elevated ventilation rates (e.g., while exercising or playing) at lower concentrations and when combined with particulates, SO₂ may do greater harm by injuring lung tissue. Studies also show a connection between short-term exposure and increased visits to emergency facilities and hospital admissions for respiratory illnesses, particularly in at-risk populations such as children, the

¹ CARB is proposing to redesignate SR-60 Near-Road Portion of San Bernardino, Riverside, and Los Angeles Counties in the SoCAB as attainment for NO₂ at the February 24, 2022 Board Hearing (CARB 2022b).

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elderly, and asthmatics (South Coast AQMD 2005; US EPA 2022). The SoCAB is designated as attainment under the California and National AAQS (CARB 2022a).

- **Suspended Particulate Matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5})** consists of finely divided solids or liquids such as soot, dust, aerosols, fumes, and mists. Two forms of fine particulates are now recognized and regulated. Inhalable coarse particles, or PM₁₀, include particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less (i.e., ≤0.01 millimeter). Inhalable fine particles, or PM_{2.5}, have an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 microns or less (i.e., ≤0.0025 millimeter). Particulate discharge into the atmosphere results primarily from industrial, agricultural, construction, and transportation activities. Both PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} may adversely affect the human respiratory system, especially in people who are naturally sensitive or susceptible to breathing problems. The EPA's scientific review concluded that PM_{2.5}, which penetrates deeply into the lungs, is more likely than PM₁₀ to contribute to health effects and at far lower concentrations. These health effects include premature death in people with heart or lung disease, nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, aggravated asthma, decreased lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms (e.g., irritation of the airways, coughing, or difficulty breathing) (South Coast AQMD 2005). There has been emerging evidence that ultrafine particulates, which are even smaller particulates with an aerodynamic diameter of <0.1 microns or less (i.e., ≤0.0001 millimeter) have human health implications because their toxic components may initiate or facilitate biological processes that may lead to adverse effects to the heart, lungs, and other organs (South Coast AQMD 2013). However, the EPA and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have not adopted AAQS to regulate these particulates. Diesel particulate matter is classified by CARB as a carcinogen (CARB 1998). Particulate matter can also cause environmental effects such as visibility impairment,² environmental damage,³ and aesthetic damage⁴ (South Coast AQMD 2005; US EPA 2022). The SoCAB is a nonattainment area for PM_{2.5} under California and National AAQS and a nonattainment area for PM₁₀ under the California AAQS (CARB 2022a).⁵
- **Ozone (O₃)** is a key ingredient of “smog” and is a gas that is formed when VOCs and NO_x, both by-products of internal combustion engine exhaust, undergo photochemical reactions in sunlight. O₃ is a secondary criteria air pollutant. O₃ concentrations are generally highest during the summer months when direct sunlight, light winds, and warm temperatures create favorable conditions for its formation. O₃ poses a health threat to those who already suffer from respiratory diseases as well as to healthy people. Breathing O₃ can trigger a variety of health problems, including chest pain, coughing, throat irritation, and congestion. It can worsen bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma. Ground-level O₃ also can reduce lung function and inflame the linings of the lungs. Repeated exposure may permanently scar lung tissue. O₃ also affects sensitive vegetation and ecosystems, including forests, parks, wildlife refuges, and wilderness areas. In

² PM_{2.5} is the main cause of reduced visibility (haze) in parts of the United States.

³ Particulate matter can be carried over long distances by wind and then settle on ground or water, making lakes and streams acidic; changing the nutrient balance in coastal waters and large river basins; depleting the nutrients in soil; damaging sensitive forests and farm crops; and affecting the diversity of ecosystems.

⁴ Particulate matter can stain and damage stone and other materials, including culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

⁵ CARB approved the South Coast AQMD's request to redesignate the SoCAB from serious nonattainment for PM₁₀ to attainment for PM₁₀ under the National AAQS on March 25, 2010, because the SoCAB did not violate federal 24-hour PM₁₀ standards from 2004 to 2007. The EPA approved the State of California's request to redesignate the South Coast PM₁₀ nonattainment area to attainment of the PM₁₀ National AAQS, effective on July 26, 2013.

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particular, O₃ harms sensitive vegetation during the growing season (South Coast AQMD 2005; US EPA 2022). The SoCAB is designated extreme nonattainment under the California AAQS (1-hour and 8-hour) and National AAQS (8-hour) (CARB 2022a).

- **Lead (Pb)** is a metal found naturally in the environment as well as in manufactured products. Once taken into the body, lead distributes throughout the body in the blood and accumulates in the bones. Depending on the level of exposure, lead can adversely affect the nervous system, kidney function, immune system, reproductive and developmental systems, and the cardiovascular system. Lead exposure also affects the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood. The effects of lead most commonly encountered in current populations are neurological effects in children and cardiovascular effects in adults (e.g., high blood pressure and heart disease). Infants and young children are especially sensitive to even low levels of lead, which may contribute to behavioral problems, learning deficits, and lowered IQ (South Coast AQMD 2005; USEPA 2018). The major sources of lead emissions have historically been mobile and industrial sources. As a result of the EPA's regulatory efforts to remove lead from gasoline, emissions of lead from the transportation sector dramatically declined by 95 percent between 1980 and 1999, and levels of lead in the air decreased by 94 percent between 1980 and 1999. Today, the highest levels of lead in air are usually found near lead smelters. The major sources of lead emissions today are ore and metals processing and piston-engine aircraft operating on leaded aviation gasoline. However, in 2008 the EPA and CARB adopted more strict lead standards, and special monitoring sites immediately downwind of lead sources recorded very localized violations of the new state and federal standards.⁶ As a result of these violations, the Los Angeles County portion of the SoCAB is designated as nonattainment under the National AAQS for lead (South Coast AQMD 2012; CARB 2022a). However, lead concentrations in this nonattainment area have been below the level of the federal standard since December 2011 (South Coast AQMD 2012). CARB's State Implementation Plan (SIP) revision was submitted to the EPA for approval. Because emissions of lead are found only in projects that are permitted by South Coast AQMD, lead is not a pollutant of concern for the proposed project.

Table 5.2-1, *Criteria Air Pollutant Health Effects Summary*, summarizes the potential health effects associated with criteria air pollutants.

⁶ Source-oriented monitors record concentrations of lead at lead-related industrial facilities in the SoCAB, which include Exide Technologies in the City of Commerce; Quemetco, Inc., in the City of Industry; Trojan Battery Company in Santa Fe Springs; and Exide Technologies in Vernon. Monitoring conducted between 2004 through 2007 showed that the Trojan Battery Company and Exide Technologies exceed the federal standards (South Coast AQMD 2012).

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Table 5.2-1 Criteria Air Pollutant Health Effects Summary

Pollutant	Health Effects	Examples of Sources
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest pain in heart patients • Headaches, nausea • Reduced mental alertness • Death at very high levels 	Any source that burns fuel such as cars, trucks, construction and farming equipment, and residential heaters and stoves
Ozone (O ₃)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cough, chest tightness • Difficulty taking a deep breath • Worsened asthma symptoms • Lung inflammation 	Atmospheric reaction of organic gases with nitrogen oxides in sunlight
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased response to allergens • Aggravation of respiratory illness 	Same as carbon monoxide sources
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀ and PM _{2.5})	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitalizations for worsened heart diseases • Emergency room visits for asthma • Premature death 	Cars and trucks (particularly diesels) Fireplaces and woodstoves Windblown dust from overlays, agriculture, and construction
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggravation of respiratory disease (e.g., asthma and emphysema) • Reduced lung function 	Combustion of sulfur-containing fossil fuels, smelting of sulfur-bearing metal ores, and industrial processes
Lead (Pb)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral and learning disabilities in children • Nervous system impairment 	Contaminated soil

Source: CARB 2022b.

Toxic Air Contaminants

CARB has identified other air pollutants as toxic air contaminants (TACs), which are pollutants that may cause serious, long-term effects. Main sources of outdoor TACs include emissions from stationary sources (e.g., factories, refineries, powerplants) and mobile sources e.g., cars, trucks, buses) (US EPA 2018). For indoor TACs, the main sources include building materials (e.g., asbestos) and chemicals like solvents (US EPA 2018). People exposed to TACs at sufficient concentrations and durations may have an increased chance of getting cancer or experiencing other serious health effects. These health effects can include damage to the immune system as well as neurological, reproductive (e.g., reduced fertility), developmental, respiratory, and other health problems (US EPA 2021b). By the last update to the TAC list in December 1999, CARB had designated 244 compounds as TACs (CARB 1999). Additionally, CARB has implemented control measures for a number of compounds that pose high risks and show potential for effective control. There are no air quality standards for TACs. Instead, TAC impacts are evaluated by calculating the health risks associated with a given exposure. The majority of the estimated health risks from TACs can be attributed to relatively few compounds, the most relevant to the proposed project being particulate matter from diesel-fueled engines.

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Diesel Particulate Matter

In 1998, CARB identified diesel particulate matter (DPM) as a TAC. Previously, the individual chemical compounds in diesel exhaust were considered TACs. Almost all diesel exhaust particles are 10 microns or less in diameter. Because of their extremely small size, these particles can be inhaled and eventually trapped in the bronchial and alveolar regions of the lungs. Long-term (chronic) inhalation of DPM is likely a lung cancer risk. Short-term (i.e., acute) exposure can cause irritation and inflammatory systems and may exacerbate existing allergies and asthma systems (USEPA 2002).

5.2.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Ambient air quality standards have been adopted at the state and federal levels for criteria air pollutants. In addition, both the state and federal government regulate the release of TACs. The proposed project is in the SoCAB and is subject to the rules and regulations imposed by the South Coast AQMD as well as the California AAQS adopted by CARB and National AAQS adopted by the EPA. Federal, state, and regional laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines that are potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized in this section.

Federal and State

Ambient Air Quality Standards

The Clean Air Act (CAA) was passed in 1963 by the US Congress and has been amended several times. The 1970 CAA amendments strengthened previous legislation and laid the foundation for the regulatory scheme of the 1970s and 1980s. In 1977, Congress again added several provisions, including nonattainment requirements for areas not meeting National AAQS and the Prevention of Significant Deterioration program. The 1990 amendments represent the latest in a series of federal efforts to regulate the protection of air quality in the United States. The CAA allows states to adopt more stringent standards or to include other pollution species. The California Clean Air Act, signed into law in 1988, requires all areas of the state to achieve and maintain the California AAQS by the earliest practical date. The California AAQS tend to be more restrictive than the National AAQS.

These National and California AAQS are the levels of air quality considered to provide a margin of safety in the protection of the public health and welfare. They are designed to protect “sensitive receptors” most susceptible to further respiratory distress, such as asthmatics, the elderly, very young children, people already weakened by other disease or illness, and persons engaged in strenuous work or exercise. Healthy adults can tolerate occasional exposure to air pollutant concentrations considerably above these minimum standards before adverse effects are observed.

Both California and the federal government have established health-based AAQS for seven air pollutants. As shown in Table 5.2-2, *Ambient Air Quality Standards for Criteria Pollutants*, these pollutants are O₃, NO₂, CO, SO₂, PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, and Pb. In addition, the state has set standards for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, vinyl chloride, and visibility-reducing particles. These standards are designed to protect the health and welfare of the populace with a reasonable margin of safety.

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Table 5.2-2 Ambient Air Quality Standards for Criteria Pollutants

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standard ¹	Federal Primary Standard ²	Major Pollutant Sources
Ozone (O ₃) ³	1 hour	0.09 ppm	*	Motor vehicles, paints, coatings, and solvents.
	8 hours	0.070 ppm	0.070 ppm	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1 hour	20 ppm	35 ppm	Internal combustion engines, primarily gasoline-powered motor vehicles.
	8 hours	9.0 ppm	9 ppm	
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm	0.053 ppm	Motor vehicles, petroleum-refining operations, industrial sources, aircraft, ships, and railroads.
	1 hour	0.18 ppm	0.100 ppm	
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂) ⁵	Annual Arithmetic Mean	*	0.030 ppm	Fuel combustion, chemical plants, sulfur recovery plants, and metal processing.
	1 hour	0.25 ppm	0.075 ppm	
	24 hours	0.04 ppm	0.14 ppm	
Respirable Coarse Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m ³	*	Dust and fume-producing construction, industrial, and agricultural operations, combustion, atmospheric photochemical reactions, and natural activities (e.g., wind-raised dust and ocean sprays).
	24 hours	50 µg/m ³	150 µg/m ³	
Respirable Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5}) ⁴	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m ³	12 µg/m ³	Dust and fume-producing construction, industrial, and agricultural operations, combustion, atmospheric photochemical reactions, and natural activities (e.g., wind-raised dust and ocean sprays).
	24 hours	*	35 µg/m ³	
Lead (Pb)	30-Day Average	1.5 µg/m ³	*	Present source: lead smelters, battery manufacturing & recycling facilities. Past source: combustion of leaded gasoline.
	Calendar Quarter	*	1.5 µg/m ³	
	Rolling 3-Month Average	*	0.15 µg/m ³	
Sulfates (SO ₄)	24 hours	25 µg/m ³	*	Industrial processes.
Visibility Reducing Particles	8 hours	ExCo =0.23/km visibility of 10≥ miles	*	Visibility-reducing particles consist of suspended particulate matter, which is a complex mixture of tiny particles that consists of dry solid fragments, solid cores with liquid coatings, and small droplets of liquid. These particles vary greatly in shape, size and chemical composition, and can be made up of many different materials such as metals, soot, soil, dust, and salt.
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 hour	0.03 ppm	*	Hydrogen sulfide (H ₂ S) is a colorless gas with the odor of rotten eggs. It is formed during bacterial decomposition of sulfur-containing organic substances. Also, it can be present in sewer gas and some natural gas and can be emitted as the result of geothermal energy exploitation.

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Table 5.2-2 Ambient Air Quality Standards for Criteria Pollutants

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standard ¹	Federal Primary Standard ²	Major Pollutant Sources
Vinyl Chloride	24 hours	0.01 ppm	*	Vinyl chloride (chloroethene), a chlorinated hydrocarbon, is a colorless gas with a mild, sweet odor. Most vinyl chloride is used to make polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic and vinyl products. Vinyl chloride has been detected near landfills, sewage plants, and hazardous waste sites, due to microbial breakdown of chlorinated solvents.

Source: CARB 2016.

Notes: ppm: parts per million; µg/m³: micrograms per cubic meter

* Standard has not been established for this pollutant/duration by this entity.

¹ California standards for O₃, CO (except 8-hour Lake Tahoe), SO₂ (1 and 24 hour), NO₂, and particulate matter (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, and visibility reducing particles), are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. California ambient air quality standards are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.

² National standards (other than O₃, PM, and those based on annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The O₃ standard is attained when the fourth highest 8-hour concentration measured at each site in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM₁₀, the 24-hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 µg/m³ is equal to or less than one. For PM_{2.5}, the 24-hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over three years, are equal to or less than the standard.

³ On October 1, 2015, the national 8-hour ozone primary and secondary standards were lowered from 0.075 to 0.070 ppm.

⁴ On December 14, 2012, the national annual PM_{2.5} primary standard was lowered from 15 µg/m³ to 12.0 µg/m³. The existing national 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards (primary and secondary) were retained at 35 µg/m³, as was the annual secondary standard of 15 µg/m³. The existing 24-hour PM₁₀ standards (primary and secondary) of 150 µg/m³ also were retained. The form of the annual primary and secondary standards is the annual mean, averaged over 3 years.

⁵ On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO₂ standard was established and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. The 1-hour national standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the 1-hour national standard to the California standard the units can be converted to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 75 ppb is identical to 0.075 ppm.

California has also adopted a host of other regulations that reduce criteria pollutant emissions.

- **Assembly Bill (AB) 1493: Pavley Fuel Efficiency Standards (Pavley I).** Pavley I is a clean-car standard that reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from new passenger vehicles (light-duty auto to medium-duty vehicles) from 2009 through 2016. In January 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars program (formerly known as Pavley II) for model years 2017 through 2025.
- **Heavy-Duty (Tractor-Trailer) GHG Regulation.** The tractors and trailers subject to this regulation must either use EPA SmartWay-certified tractors and trailers or retrofit their existing fleet with SmartWay-verified technologies. The regulation applies primarily to owners of 53-foot or longer box-type trailers, including both dry-van and refrigerated-van trailers, and owners of the heavy-duty tractors that pull them on California highways. These owners are responsible for replacing or retrofitting their affected vehicles with compliant aerodynamic technologies and low rolling resistance tires. Sleeper cab tractors model year 2011 and later must be SmartWay certified. All other tractors must use SmartWay-verified low-rolling-resistance tires. There are also requirements for trailers to have low-rolling-resistance tires and aerodynamic devices
- **SB 1078 and SB 107: Renewables Portfolio Standards.** A major component of California’s Renewable Energy Program is the renewables portfolio standard (RPS) established under Senate Bills 1078 (Sher) and 107 (Simitian). Under the RPS, certain retail sellers of electricity were required to increase the amount of renewable energy each year by at least 1 percent in order to reach at least 20 percent by December 30, 2010.

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- **California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 20: Appliance Energy Efficiency Standards.** The 2006 Appliance Efficiency Regulations (20 CCR sections 1601–1608) were adopted by the California Energy Commission on October 11, 2006 and approved by the California Office of Administrative Law on December 14, 2006. The regulations include standards for both federally regulated appliances and non–federally regulated appliances.
- **24 CCR, Part 6: Building and Energy Efficiency Standards.** Energy conservation standards for new residential and nonresidential buildings adopted by the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (now the California Energy Commission) in June 1977.
- **24 CCR, Part 11: Green Building Standards Code.** Establishes planning and design standards for sustainable site development, energy efficiency (in excess of the California Energy Code requirements), water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants.⁷

Tanner Air Toxics Act and Air Toxics Hot Spot Information and Assessment Act

Public exposure to TACs is a significant environmental health issue in California. In 1983, the California legislature enacted a program to identify the health effects of TACs and reduce exposure to them. The California Health and Safety Code defines a TAC as “an air pollutant which may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or in serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health” (17 CCR sec. 93000). A substance that is listed as a hazardous air pollutant pursuant to Section 112(b) of the CAA (42 US Code sec. 7412[b]) is a TAC. Under state law, the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), acting through CARB, is authorized to identify a substance as a TAC if it is an air pollutant that may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or serious illness, or may pose a present or potential hazard to human health.

California regulates TACs primarily through AB 1807 (Tanner Air Toxics Act) and AB 2588 (Air Toxics “Hot Spot” Information and Assessment Act of 1987). The Tanner Air Toxics Act set up a formal procedure for CARB to designate substances as TACs. Once a TAC is identified, CARB adopts an “airborne toxics control measure” for sources that emit that TAC. If there is a safe threshold for a substance (i.e., a point below which there is no toxic effect), the control measure must reduce exposure to below that threshold. If there is no safe threshold, the measure must incorporate “toxics best available control technology” to minimize emissions. To date, CARB has established formal control measures for 11 TACs that are identified as having no safe threshold.

Under AB 2588, TAC emissions from individual facilities are quantified and prioritized by the air quality management district or air pollution control district. High-priority facilities are required to perform a health risk assessment, and if specific thresholds are exceeded, are required to communicate the results to the public through notices and public meetings.

CARB has promulgated the following specific rules to limit TAC emissions:

⁷ The green building standards became mandatory in the 2010 edition of the code.

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- **13 CCR Chapter 10 Section 2485: Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling.** Generally restricts on-road diesel-powered commercial motor vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of greater than 10,000 pounds from idling more than five minutes.
- **13 CCR Chapter 10 Section 2480: Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit School Bus Idling and Idling at Schools.** Generally restricts a school bus or transit bus from idling for more than five minutes when within 100 feet of a school.
- **13 CCR Section 2477 and Article 8: Airborne Toxic Control Measure for In-Use Diesel-Fueled Transport Refrigeration Units (TRU) and TRU Generator Sets and Facilities Where TRUs Operate.** Regulations established to control emissions associated with diesel-powered TRUs.

Regional

South Coast Air Quality Management Planning

The South Coast AQMD is the agency responsible for improving air quality in the SoCAB and ensuring that the National and California AAQS are attained and maintained. South Coast AQMD is responsible for preparing the air quality management plan (AQMP) for the SoCAB in coordination with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The AQMP is a regional strategy plan implemented to achieve air quality standards by examining emissions, looking at regional growth projections, and the impact of existing and proposed control measures to provide healthful air in the long-term. Since 1979, a number of AQMPs have been prepared.

The CAA requires CARB to develop a State Implementation Plan (SIP) that describes how an area will attain national AAQS. The AQMP provides the framework for air quality basins to achieve attainment of the state and federal ambient air quality standards through the SIP. Areas are classified as attainment or nonattainment areas for a particular pollutant depending on whether they meet the AAQSs. Severity classifications for ozone nonattainment range in magnitude from marginal, moderate, and serious to severe and extreme.

- ***Unclassified.*** A pollutant is designated unclassified if the data are incomplete and do not support a designation of attainment or nonattainment.
- ***Attainment.*** A pollutant is in attainment if the AAQS for that pollutant was not violated at any site in the area during a three-year period.
- ***Nonattainment.*** A pollutant is in nonattainment if there was at least one violation of an AAQS for that pollutant in the area.
- ***Nonattainment/Transitional.*** A subcategory of the nonattainment designation. An area is designated nonattainment/transitional to signify that the area is close to attaining the AAQS for that pollutant.

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2016 AQMP

On March 3, 2017, South Coast AQMD adopted the 2016 AQMP, which serves as an update to the 2012 AQMP. The 2016 AQMP addresses strategies and measures to attain the following National AAQS:

- 2008 National 8-hour ozone standard by 2031
- 2012 National annual PM_{2.5} standard by 2025⁸
- 2006 National 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard by 2019
- 1997 National 8-hour ozone standard by 2023
- 1979 National 1-hour ozone standard by 2022

It is projected that total NO_x emissions in the SoCAB would need to be reduced to 150 tons per day (tpd) by year 2023 and to 100 tpd in year 2031 to meet the 1997 and 2008 federal 8-hour ozone standards. The strategy to meet the 1997 federal 8-hour ozone standard would also lead to attaining the 1979 federal 1-hour ozone standard by year 2022 (South Coast AQMD 2017), which requires reducing NO_x emissions in the SoCAB to 250 tpd. The additional strategies in the 2016 AQMP result in approximately 45 percent more reduction than existing regulations for the 2023 ozone standard and 55 percent more reduction to meet the 2031 ozone standard.

Reducing NO_x emissions would also reduce PM_{2.5} concentrations in the SoCAB. However, because the goal is to meet the 2012 federal annual PM_{2.5} standard no later than year 2025, South Coast AQMD is seeking to reclassify the SoCAB from “moderate” to “serious” nonattainment under this federal standard. A “moderate” nonattainment would require meeting the 2012 federal standard by no later than 2021.

The 2016 AQMP outlines stationary and mobile-source emission reductions from regulatory control measures, incentive-based programs, co-benefits from climate programs, mobile-source strategies, and reductions from federal sources such as aircrafts, locomotives, and ocean-going vessels. The 2016 AQMP includes 15 measures to reduce mobile source emissions. These measures include identifying actions to mitigate and reduce emissions associated with new development and redevelopment projects, to reduce facility-based (i.e., commercial marine ports, rail yards and intermodal facilities, warehouse and distribution centers, and commercial airports in addition to new and redevelopment projects), on-road, and off-road mobile sources of emissions, and also to identify the benefits of incentive programs in reducing emissions. Overall, strategies outlined in the 2016 AQMP are implemented in collaboration between CARB and the EPA (South Coast AQMD 2017).

2022 Draft AQMP

On October 1, 2015, the EPA strengthened the National AAQS for ground-level ozone, lowering the primary and secondary ozone standard levels to 70 parts per billion (ppb) (2015 Ozone National AAQS). The SoCAB is currently classified as an “extreme” nonattainment for the 2015 Ozone National AAQS. Thus, the Draft 2022 AQMP builds upon and includes additional measures from previous AQMPs to achieve this 2015 8-hour ozone standard (South Coast AQMD 2022b). Public comment period will end on June 21, 2022.

⁸ The 2016 AQMP requests a reclassification from moderate to serious nonattainment for the 2012 National PM_{2.5} standard.

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South Coast AQMD PM_{2.5} Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan

In 1997, the EPA adopted the 24-hour fine PM_{2.5} standard of 65 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³). In 2006, this standard was lowered to a more health-protective level of 35 µg/m³. The SoCAB is designated nonattainment for both the 65 and 35 µg/m³ 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards (24-hour PM_{2.5} standards). In 2020, monitored data demonstrated that the SoCAB attained both 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards. The South Coast AQMD has developed the “2021 Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan” for the 1997 and 2006 24-hour PM_{2.5} Standards for the SoCAB PM_{2.5} Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan, demonstrating that the SoCAB has met the requirements to be redesignated to attainment for the 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards (South Coast AQMD 2021a).

AB 617, Community Air Protection Program

AB 617 (C. Garcia, Chapter 136, Statutes of 2017) requires local air districts to monitor and implement air pollution control strategies that reduce localized air pollution in communities that bear the greatest burdens. In response to AB 617, CARB has established the Community Air Protection Program. Air districts are required to host workshops to help identify disadvantaged communities that are disproportionately affected by poor air quality. Once the criteria for identifying the highest priority locations have been identified and the communities have been selected, new community monitoring systems would be installed to track and monitor community-specific air pollution goals. In 2018 CARB prepared an air monitoring plan, the Community Air Protection Blueprint (Blueprint) that evaluates the availability and effectiveness of air monitoring technologies and existing community air monitoring networks. Under AB 617, the Blueprint is required to be updated every five years.

Under AB 617, CARB is also required to prepare a statewide strategy to reduce TACs and criteria pollutants in impacted communities; provide a statewide clearinghouse for best available retrofit control technology; adopt new rules requiring the latest best available retrofit control technology for all criteria pollutants for which an area has not achieved attainment of California AAQS; and provide uniform, statewide reporting of emissions inventories. Air districts are required to adopt a community emissions reduction program to achieve reductions for the communities impacted by air pollution that CARB identifies.

Lead Implementation Plan

In 2008, the EPA designated the Los Angeles County portion of the SoCAB as a nonattainment area under the federal lead (Pb) classification because of the addition of source-specific monitoring under the new federal regulation. This designation was based on two source-specific monitors in the City of Vernon and the City of Industry that exceeded the new standard in the 2007 to 2009 period. The remainder of the SoCAB, outside the Los Angeles County nonattainment area, remains in attainment of the new 2008 lead standard. On May 24, 2012, CARB approved the State Implementation Plan (SIP) revision for the federal lead standard, which the EPA revised in 2008. Lead concentrations in this nonattainment area have been below the level of the federal standard since December 2011. The SIP revision was submitted to the EPA for approval.

South Coast AQMD Rules and Regulations

All projects within the SoCAB are subject to South Coast AQMD rules and regulations in effect at the time of activity.

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- **Rule 401, Visible Emissions.** This rule is intended to prevent the discharge of pollutant emissions from an emissions source that results in visible emissions. Specifically, the rule prohibits the discharge of any air contaminant into the atmosphere by a person from any single source of emission for a period or periods aggregating more than three minutes in any one hour that is as dark as or darker than designated No. 1 on the Ringelmann Chart, as published by the US Bureau of Mines.
- **Rule 402, Nuisance.** This rule is intended to prevent the discharge of pollutant emissions from an emissions source that results in a public nuisance. Specifically, this rule prohibits any person from discharging quantities of air contaminants or other material from any source such that it would result in an injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public. Additionally, the discharge of air contaminants would also be prohibited where it would endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any number of persons or the public, or that cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property. This rule does not apply to odors emanating from agricultural operations necessary for the growing of crops or the raising of fowl or animals.
- **Rule 403, Fugitive Dust.** This rule is intended to reduce the amount of particulate matter entrained in the ambient air as a result of anthropogenic (human-made) fugitive dust sources by requiring actions to prevent, reduce, or mitigate fugitive dust emissions. Rule 403 applies to any activity or human-made condition capable of generating fugitive dust and requires best available control measures to be applied to earth-moving and grading activities.
- **Rule 445, Wood Burning Devices.** In general, the rule prohibits new developments from the installation of wood-burning devices. This rule is intended to reduce the emission of particulate matter from wood-burning devices and applies to manufacturers and sellers of wood-burning devices, commercial sellers of firewood, and property owners and tenants that operate a wood-burning device.
- **Rule 1113, Architectural Coatings.** This rule serves to limit the VOCs content of architectural coatings used on projects in the South Coast AQMD. Any person who supplies, sells, offers for sale, or manufactures any architectural coating for use on projects in the South Coast AQMD must comply with the current VOC standards set in this rule.
- **Rule 1403, Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities.** The purpose of this rule is to specify work practice requirements to limit asbestos emissions from building demolition and renovation activities, including the removal and associated disturbance of asbestos-containing materials (ACM). The requirements for demolition and renovation activities include asbestos surveying, notification, ACM removal procedures and time schedules, ACM handling and clean-up procedures, and storage, disposal, and landfilling requirements for asbestos-containing waste materials. All operators are required to maintain records, including waste shipment records, and are required to use appropriate warning labels, signs, and markings.

5.2.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project site is in the SoCAB, which includes all of Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties. The SoCAB is in a coastal plain with connecting broad valleys

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and low hills and is bounded by the Pacific Ocean in the southwest quadrant, with high mountains forming the remainder of the perimeter. The region lies in the semipermanent high-pressure zone of the eastern Pacific. As a result, the climate is mild, tempered by cool sea breezes. This usually mild weather pattern is interrupted infrequently by periods of extremely hot weather, winter storms, and Santa Ana winds (South Coast AQMD 2005).

Meteorology

Temperature and Precipitation

The annual average temperature varies little throughout the SoCAB, ranging from the low to middle 60s, measured in degrees Fahrenheit (°F). With a more pronounced oceanic influence, coastal areas show less variability in annual minimum and maximum temperatures than inland areas. The average low temperature is reported as 47.8°F in December, and the average high temperature is 85.2°F in August (USA.Com 2022).

In contrast to a very steady pattern of temperature, rainfall is seasonally and annually highly variable. Almost all rain falls from November through April. Rainfall averages 16.36 inches per year in the project site area (USA.Com 2022).

Humidity

Although the SoCAB has a semiarid climate, the air near the Earth's surface is typically moist because of a shallow marine layer. This "ocean effect" is dominant except for infrequent periods when dry, continental air is brought into the SoCAB by offshore winds. Periods of heavy fog are frequent, given the project site's location along the coast. Low clouds, often referred to as high fog, are a characteristic climatic feature. Annual average humidity is 70 percent at the coast and 57 percent in the eastern portions of the SoCAB (South Coast AQMD 1993).

Wind

Wind patterns across the southern coastal region are characterized by westerly or southwesterly onshore winds during the day and easterly or northeasterly breezes at night. Wind speed is somewhat greater during the dry summer months than during the rainy winter season.

Between periods of wind, periods of air stagnation may occur in the morning and evening hours. Air stagnation is one of the critical determinants of air quality conditions on any given day. During the winter and fall months, surface high-pressure systems over the SoCAB combined with other meteorological conditions can result in very strong, downslope Santa Ana winds. These winds normally continue a few days before predominant meteorological conditions are reestablished.

The mountain ranges to the east inhibit the eastward transport and diffusion of pollutants. Air quality in the SoCAB generally ranges from fair to poor and is similar to air quality in most of coastal Southern California. The entire region experiences heavy concentrations of air pollutants during prolonged periods of stable atmospheric conditions (South Coast AQMD 2005).

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Inversions

In conjunction with the two characteristic wind patterns that affect the rate and orientation of horizontal pollutant transport, two distinct types of temperature inversions control the vertical depth through which pollutants are mixed. These inversions are the marine/subsidence inversion and the radiation inversion. The height of the base of the inversion at any given time is known as the “mixing height.” The combination of winds and inversions are critical determinants in leading to the highly degraded air quality in summer and the generally good air quality in the winter in the project site area (South Coast AQMD 2005).

SoCAB Nonattainment Areas

The attainment status for the SoCAB is shown in Table 5.2-3, *Attainment Status of Criteria Air Pollutants in the South Coast Air Basin*.

Table 5.2-3 Attainment Status of Criteria Air Pollutants in the South Coast Air Basin

Pollutant	State	Federal
Ozone – 1-hour	Extreme Nonattainment	No Federal Standard
Ozone – 8-hour	Extreme Nonattainment	Extreme Nonattainment
PM ₁₀	Serious Nonattainment	Attainment
PM _{2.5}	Nonattainment	Nonattainment ²
CO	Attainment	Attainment
NO ₂	Nonattainment (SR-60 Near Road only) ¹	Attainment/Maintenance
SO ₂	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Nonattainment (Los Angeles County only) ³
All others	Attainment/Unclassified	Attainment/Unclassified

Source: CARB 2022a.

¹ On February 21, 2019, CARB’s Board approved the separation of the area that runs along State Route 60 corridor through portions of Riverside, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles counties from the remainder of the SoCAB for state nonattainment designation purposes. The Board designated this corridor as nonattainment. The remainder of the SoCAB remains in attainment for NO₂ (CARB 2019). CARB is proposing to redesignate SR-60 Near-Road Portion of San Bernardino, Riverside, and Los Angeles Counties in the SoCAB as attainment for NO₂ at the February 24, 2022 Board Hearing (CARB 2022c). This redesignation will not be official until the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) approves the rulemaking filed with the Secretary of State, expected in the fall of 2022 (South Coast AQMD 2022).

² The SoCAB is pending a resignation request from nonattainment to attainment for the 24-hour federal PM_{2.5} standards. The 2021 PM_{2.5} Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan demonstrates that the South Coast meets the requirements of the CAA to allow US EPA to redesignate the SoCAB to attainment for the 65 µg/m³ and 35 µg/m³ 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards. CARB has reviewed and adopted submit the 2021 PM_{2.5} Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan to the US EPA as a revision to the California State Implementation Plan (SIP) (CARB 2021a).

³ In 2010, the Los Angeles portion of the SoCAB was designated nonattainment for lead under the new 2008 federal AAQS as a result of large industrial emitters. Remaining areas for lead in the SoCAB are unclassified. However, lead concentrations in this nonattainment area have been below the level of the federal standard since December 2011 (South Coast AQMD 2012). CARB’s SIP revision was submitted to the EPA for approval.

Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study V

The Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study (MATES) is a monitoring and evaluation study on existing ambient concentrations of TACs and the potential health risks from air toxics in the SoCAB. In April 2021, South Coast AQMD released the latest update to the MATES study, MATES V. The first MATES analysis, MATES I, began in 1986 but was limited because of the technology available at the time. Conducted in 1998, MATES II was the first MATES iteration to include a comprehensive monitoring program, an air toxics emissions inventory, and a modeling component. MATES III was conducted in 2004 to 2006, with MATES IV following in 2012 to 2013.

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MATES V uses measurements taken during 2018 and 2019, with a comprehensive modeling analysis and emissions inventory based on 2018 data. The previous MATES studies quantified the cancer risks based on the inhalation pathway only. MATES V includes information on the chronic noncancer risks from inhalation and non-inhalation pathways for the first time. Cancer risks and chronic noncancer risks from MATES II through IV measurements have been reexamined using current Office of Environmental Health Hazards Assessment and CalEPA risk assessment methodologies and modern statistical methods to examine the trends over time.

The MATES V study showed that cancer risk in the SoCAB decreased to 454 in a million from 997 in a million in the MATES IV study. Overall, air toxics cancer risk in the SoCAB decreased by 54 percent since 2012 when MATES IV was conducted. MATES V showed the highest risk locations near the Los Angeles International Airport and the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. Diesel particulate matter (DPM) continues to be the major contributor to air toxics cancer risk (approximately 72 percent of the total cancer risk). Goods movement and transportation corridors have the highest cancer risk. Transportation sources account for 88 percent of carcinogenic air toxics emissions, and the remainder is from stationary sources, which include large industrial operations such as refineries and power plants as well as smaller businesses such as gas stations and chrome-plating facilities. (South Coast AQMD 2021a).

Existing Ambient Air Quality

Existing levels of ambient air quality and historical trends and projections in the vicinity of the project site are best documented by measurements taken by the South Coast AQMD. The proposed project is located within Source Receptor Area (SRA) 5: Southeast LA County.⁹ The air quality monitoring station closest to the project site (approximately 11 miles to the southwest) is the Compton-700 North Bullis Road Monitoring Station, which is one of 31 monitoring stations South Coast AQMD operates and maintains within the SoCAB.¹⁰ Data from this station includes O₃, NO₂, and PM_{2.5} and is summarized in Table 5.2-4, *Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Summary*. Data for PM₁₀ is provided by the Long Beach-2425 Webster Street Monitoring Station which is located 16 miles to the southwest. The data show that the area regularly exceeds the state and federal one-hour and eight-hour O₃ standards within the last five recorded years. Additionally, the area has regularly exceeded the state PM₁₀ standards and has exceeded the federal PM_{2.5} standard.

⁹ Per South Coast AQMD Rule 701, an SRA is defined as: “A source area is that area in which contaminants are discharged and a receptor area is that area in which the contaminants accumulate and are measured. Any of the areas can be a source area, a receptor area, or both a source and receptor area.” There are 37 SRAs in the South Coast AQMD’s jurisdiction.

¹⁰ Locations of the SRAs and monitoring stations are shown here: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/map-of-monitoring-areas.pdf>.

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Table 5.2-4 Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Summary

Pollutant/Standard	Number of Days Thresholds Were Exceeded and Maximum Levels ¹				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Ozone (O₃)					
State 1-Hour ≥ 0.09 ppm (days exceed threshold)	1	0	0	1	3
Federal 8-hour ≥ 0.070 ppm (days exceed threshold)	1	5	0	1	4
Max. 1-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.098	0.092	0.075	0.100	0.152
Max. 8-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.071	0.076	0.063	0.079	0.115
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)					
State 1-Hour ≥ 0.18 ppm (days exceed threshold)	0	0	0	0	0
Max. 1-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.0637	0.0991	0.0683	0.0700	0.0723
Coarse Particulates (PM₁₀)					
State 24-Hour > 50 µg/m ³ (days exceed threshold)	8	10	4	4	3
Federal 24-Hour > 150 µg/m ³ (days exceed threshold)	0	0	0	1	0
Max. 24-Hour Conc. (µg/m ³)	75.3	79.0	84.0	155.8	61.4
Fine Particulates (PM_{2.5})					
Federal 24-Hour > 35 µg/m ³ (days exceed threshold)	1	5	2	1	19
Max. 24-Hour Conc. (µg/m ³)	36.3	66.7	49.4	39.5	67.5

Source: CARB 2022d.

Notes: ppm = parts per million; ppb = parts per billion; µg/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter

¹ Data obtained from the Compton-700 North Bullis Road Monitoring Station for O₃, NO₂, and PM_{2.5}

² Data obtained from the Long Beach-2425 Webster Street Road Monitoring Station for PM₁₀.

Existing Emissions

The project site is at the southeast corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard in Norwalk. The project site is approximately 13.2 acres in area and encompasses the City Hall Lawn, Norwalk City Hall, a portion of an accessory building associated with the County Superior Court property, a public surface parking lot, and a three-story parking garage. As seen on Table 5.2-5, *Existing Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions*, the existing project site currently generates criteria air pollutant emissions from area sources (i.e., use of landscaping equipment, maintenance activities such as architectural coating) and energy use (i.e., natural gas used for heating). Mobile sources from the existing City Hall were excluded because there would be no net change between the proposed project and existing conditions for this land use.

Table 5.2-5 Existing Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions

Phase	Operation-Related Regional Emissions (pounds/day) ¹					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Year 2021						
Area	1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Energy ²	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Total	1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1

Sources: CalEEMod Version 2020.4. (Appendix B)

Notes: Based on highest winter or summer emissions.

¹ Includes only those pollutants in which South Coast AQMD have established regional significance thresholds and that are applicable.

² Utilizes CalEEMod historical energy rates.

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Sensitive Receptors

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to air pollution (i.e., TACs) than others due to the types of population groups or activities involved. Sensitive population groups include children, the elderly, the acutely ill, and the chronically ill, especially those with cardiorespiratory diseases.

Residential areas are also considered sensitive to air pollution because residents (including children and the elderly) tend to be at home for extended periods of time, resulting in sustained exposure to pollutants present. Other sensitive receptors include retirement facilities, hospitals, and schools. Recreational land uses are considered moderately sensitive to air pollution. Although exposure periods are generally short, exercise places a high demand on respiratory functions, which can be impaired by air pollution. In addition, noticeable air pollution can detract from the enjoyment of recreation. Industrial, commercial, retail, and office areas are considered the least sensitive to air pollution. Exposure periods are relatively short and intermittent because the majority of workers tend to stay indoors most of the time. In addition, the workforce is generally the healthiest segment of the population (South Coast AQMD 1993).

The nearest off-site sensitive receptors to the project site are the residents approximately 330 feet to the northeast (across Imperial Highway), 350 feet south (along Civic Center Drive), and 116 feet west (along Norwalk Boulevard). Other sensitive uses in the vicinity of the project site include the Paddison Elementary School campus approximately 900 feet northwest of the project site.

5.2.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to air quality if the project would:

- AQ-1 Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.
- AQ-2 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.
- AQ-3 Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- AQ-4 Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

5.2.2.1 SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT THRESHOLDS

South Coast AQMD has established thresholds of significance for air quality for construction activities and project operation in the SoCAB, as shown in Table 5.2-6, *South Coast AQMD Significance Thresholds*. The table lists thresholds that are applicable for all projects uniformly, regardless of size or scope. As discussed above, there is growing evidence that although ultrafine particulate matter contributes a very small portion of the overall atmospheric mass concentration, it represents a greater proportion of the health risk from PM. However, because the EPA and CARB have not adopted AAQS to regulate ultrafine particulate matter, South Coast AQMD has not developed thresholds for it.

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Table 5.2-6 South Coast AQMD Significance Thresholds

Air Pollutant	Construction Phase	Operational Phase
Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)	75 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	550 lbs/day	550 lbs/day
Nitrogen Oxides (NO _x)	100 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
Sulfur Oxides (SO _x)	150 lbs/day	150 lbs/day
Particulates (PM ₁₀)	150 lbs/day	150 lbs/day

Source: South Coast AQMD 2019.

Health Outcomes Associated with the AQMD Regional Significance Thresholds

Projects that exceed the South Coast AQMD’s regional significance threshold contribute to the nonattainment designation of the SoCAB. The attainment designations are based on the AAQS, which are set at levels of exposure that are determined to not result in adverse health effects. Exposure to fine particulate pollution and ozone causes myriad health impacts, particularly to the respiratory and cardiovascular systems:

- Increases cancer risk (PM_{2.5}, TACs)
- Aggravates respiratory disease (O₃, PM_{2.5})
- Increases bronchitis (O₃, PM_{2.5})
- Causes chest discomfort, throat irritation, and increased effort to take a deep breath (O₃)
- Reduces resistance to infections and increases fatigue (O₃)
- Reduces lung growth in children (PM_{2.5})
- Contributes to heart disease and heart attacks (PM_{2.5})
- Contributes to premature death (O₃, PM_{2.5})
- Contributes to lower birth weight in newborns (PM_{2.5}) (South Coast AQMD 2015a)

Exposure to fine particulates and ozone aggravates asthma attacks and can amplify other lung ailments such as emphysema and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Exposure to current levels of PM_{2.5} is responsible for an estimated 4,300 cardiopulmonary-related deaths per year in the SoCAB. In addition, University of Southern California scientists, in a landmark children’s health study, found that lung growth improved as air pollution declined for children aged 11 to 15 in five communities in the SoCAB (South Coast AQMD 2015b).

South Coast AQMD is the primary agency responsible for ensuring the health and welfare of sensitive individuals exposed to elevated concentrations of air pollutants in the SoCAB and has established thresholds that would be protective of these individuals. To achieve the health-based standards established by the EPA, South Coast AQMD prepares an AQMP that details regional programs to attain the AAQS. Mass emissions thresholds shown in Table 5.2-6 are not correlated with concentrations of air pollutants but contribute to the cumulative air quality impacts in the SoCAB. These thresholds are based on the trigger levels for the federal New Source Review Program, which was created to ensure projects are consistent with attainment of health-based federal AAQS. Regional emissions from a single project do not trigger a regional health impact, and it is speculative to identify how many more individuals in the air basin would be affected by the health effects listed previously. Projects that do not exceed the South Coast AQMD regional significance thresholds in Table 5.2-6

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would not violate any air quality standards or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

If projects exceed the emissions in Table 5.2-6, emissions would cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment status of the air basin and would contribute to elevating health effects associated with these criteria air pollutants. Known health effects related to ozone include worsening of bronchitis, asthma, and emphysema and a decrease in lung function. Health effects associated with particulate matter include premature death of people with heart or lung disease, nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, decreased lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms. Reducing emissions would contribute to reducing possible health effects related to criteria air pollutants. However, for projects that exceed the emissions in Table 5.2-6, it is speculative to determine how exceeding the regional thresholds would affect the number of days the region is in nonattainment, because mass emissions are not correlated with concentrations of emissions or how many additional individuals in the air basin would be affected by the health effects cited previously.

South Coast AQMD has not provided methodology to assess the specific correlation between mass emissions generated and the effect on health to address the issue raised in *Sierra Club v. County of Fresno* (Friant Ranch, L.P.) (2018) 6 Cal.5th 502, Case No. S21978. South Coast AQMD currently does not have methodologies that would provide the City with a consistent, reliable, and meaningful analysis to correlate specific health impacts that may result from a proposed project's mass emissions.¹¹ Ozone concentrations are dependent on a variety of complex factors, including the presence of sunlight and precursor pollutants, natural topography, nearby structures that cause building downwash, atmospheric stability, and wind patterns. Because of the complexities of predicting ground-level ozone concentrations in relation to the National and California AAQS, and the absence of modeling tools that could provide statistically valid data and meaningful additional information regarding health effects from criteria air pollutants generated by individual projects, it is not possible to link specific health risks to the magnitude of emissions exceeding the significance thresholds. However, if a project in the SoCAB exceeds the regional significance thresholds, the project could contribute to an increase in health effects in the basin until the attainment standards are met in the SoCAB.

CO Hotspots

Areas of vehicle congestion have the potential to create pockets of CO called hotspots. These pockets have the potential to exceed the state one-hour standard of 20 parts per million (ppm) or the eight-hour standard of 9 ppm. Because CO is produced in greatest quantities from vehicle combustion and does not readily disperse into the atmosphere, adherence to AAQs is typically demonstrated through an analysis of localized CO concentrations. Hotspots are typically produced at intersections, where traffic congestion is highest because

¹¹ In April 2019, the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) published an Interim Recommendation on implementing *Sierra Club v. County of Fresno* (2018) 6 Cal.5th 502 (“Friant Ranch”) in the review and analysis of proposed projects under CEQA in Sacramento County. Consistent with the expert opinions submitted to the court in *Friant Ranch* by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) and South Coast AQMD, the SMAQMD guidance confirms the absence of an acceptable or reliable quantitative methodology that would correlate the expected criteria air pollutant emissions of projects to likely health consequences for people from project-generated criteria air pollutant emissions. The SMAQMD guidance explains that while it is in the process of developing a methodology to assess these impacts, lead agencies should follow the *Friant Ranch* Court’s advice to explain in meaningful detail why this analysis is not yet feasible. Since this interim memorandum SMAQMD has provided methodology to address health impacts. However, a similar analysis is not available for projects within the South Coast AQMD region.

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vehicles queue for longer periods and are subject to reduced speeds. With the turnover of older vehicles and introduction of cleaner fuels, as well as implementation of control technology on industrial facilities, CO concentrations in the SoCAB and the state have steadily declined.

In 2007, the SoCAB was designated in attainment for CO under both the California AAQS and National AAQS. The CO hotspot analysis conducted for attainment by South Coast AQMD did not predict a violation of CO standards at the busiest intersections in Los Angeles during the peak morning and afternoon periods.¹² As identified in South Coast AQMD's 2003 AQMP and the 1992 Federal Attainment Plan for Carbon Monoxide (1992 CO Plan), peak carbon monoxide concentrations in the SoCAB in years before the 2007 redesignation were a result of unusual meteorological and topographical conditions and not of congestion at a particular intersection. Under existing and future vehicle emission rates, a project would have to increase traffic volumes at a single intersection by more than 44,000 vehicles per hour—or 24,000 vehicles per hour where vertical and/or horizontal air does not mix—to generate a significant CO impact (BAAQMD 2017).¹³

Localized Significance Thresholds

South Coast AQMD identifies localized significance thresholds (LST), shown in Table 5.2-7, *South Coast AQMD Localized Significance Thresholds*. Emissions of NO₂, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} generated at a project site could expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of criteria air pollutants. Off-site mobile-source emissions are not included in the LST analysis. A project would generate a significant impact if it generates emissions that, when added to the local background concentrations, violate the AAQS.

¹² The four intersections were: Long Beach Boulevard and Imperial Highway; Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue; Sunset Boulevard and Highland Avenue; and La Cienega Boulevard and Century Boulevard. The busiest intersection evaluated (Wilshire and Veteran) had a daily traffic volume of approximately 100,000 vehicles per day with LOS E in the morning peak hour and LOS F in the evening peak hour.

¹³ The CO hotspot analysis refers to the modeling conducted by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District for its CEQA Guidelines because it is based on newer data and considers the improvement in mobile-source CO emissions. Although meteorological conditions in the Bay Area differ from those in the Southern California region, the modeling conducted by BAAQMD demonstrates that the net increase in peak hour traffic volumes at an intersection in a single hour would need to be substantial. This finding is consistent with the CO hotspot analysis South Coast AQMD prepared as part of its 2003 AQMP to provide support in seeking CO attainment for the SoCAB. Based on the analysis prepared by South Coast AQMD, no CO hotspots were predicted for the SoCAB. As noted in the preceding footnote, the analysis included some of Los Angeles' busiest intersections, with daily traffic volumes of 100,000 or more peak hour vehicle trips operating at LOS E and F.

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Table 5.2-7 South Coast AQMD Localized Significance Thresholds

Air Pollutant (Relevant AAQS)	Concentration
1-Hour CO Standard (CAAQS)	20 ppm
8-Hour CO Standard (CAAQS)	9.0 ppm
1-Hour NO ₂ Standard (CAAQS)	0.18 ppm
Annual NO ₂ Standard (CAAQS)	0.03 ppm
24-Hour PM ₁₀ Standard – Construction (South Coast AQMD) ¹	10.4 µg/m ³
24-Hour PM _{2.5} Standard – Construction (South Coast AQMD) ¹	10.4 µg/m ³
24-Hour PM ₁₀ Standard – Operation (South Coast AQMD) ¹	2.5 µg/m ³
24-Hour PM _{2.5} Standard – Operation (South Coast AQMD) ¹	2.5 µg/m ³
Annual Average PM ₁₀ Standard (South Coast AQMD) ¹	1.0 µg/m ³

Source: South Coast AQMD 2019.

ppm – parts per million; µg/m³ – micrograms per cubic meter

¹ Threshold is based on South Coast AQMD Rule 403. Since the SoCAB is in nonattainment for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}, the threshold is established as an allowable change in concentration. Therefore, background concentration is irrelevant.

To assist lead agencies, South Coast AQMD developed screening-level LSTs to back-calculate the mass amount (pounds per day) of emissions generated onsite that would trigger the levels shown in Table 5.2-7 for projects under five acres. These “screening-level” LST tables are the LSTs for all projects of five acres and less and are based on emissions over an 8-hour period; however, they can be used as screening criteria for larger projects to determine whether or not dispersion modeling may be required.

The construction screening-level LSTs in SRA 5 are shown in Table 5.2-8, *South Coast AQMD Screening-Level Localized Significance Thresholds for Construction*. For construction activities, LSTs are based on the acreage disturbed per day and equipment used (South Coast AQMD 2011) up to the project site acreage. The different types of construction activities would require different equipment mixes, resulting in multiple LSTs. The screening-level LSTs reflect the thresholds for receptors who would be on-site less than 24 hours per day (e.g., employees of neighboring businesses), within 93 feet (28 meters) for NO_x and CO; and receptors who could potentially be on-site for up to 24 hours per day (e.g., residential uses), at 117 feet (36 meters) for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}.

Table 5.2-8 South Coast AQMD Screening-Level Localized Significance Thresholds for Construction

Acreage Disturbed	Threshold (lbs/day)			
	Nitrogen Oxides (NO _x)	Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Coarse Particulates (PM ₁₀)	Fine Particulates (PM _{2.5})
≤1.00 Acre Disturbed per Day	80	593	7.84	3.43
2.50 Acres Disturbed per Day	123	997	15.13	5.42
3.00 Acres Disturbed per Day	133	1,104	17.29	6.00
3.94 Acres Disturbed per Day	151	1304	21.35	7.07
4.00 Acres Disturbed per Day	152	1317	21.62	7.14

Source: South Coast AQMD 2008, 2011b.

Notes: The screening-level LSTs are based on receptors with exposure durations less than 24-hours within 93 feet (28 meters) for NO_x and CO and sensitive receptors within 117 feet (36 meters) of the project site for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}.

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Health Risk

Whenever a project would require use of chemical compounds that have been identified in South Coast AQMD Rule 1401, placed on CARB’s air toxics list pursuant to AB 1807, or placed on the EPA’s National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants, a health risk assessment is required by the South Coast AQMD. Table 5.2-9, *South Coast AQMD Toxic Air Contaminants Incremental Risk Thresholds*, lists the TAC incremental risk thresholds for operation of a project. The type of land uses that typically generate substantial quantities of criteria air pollutants and TACs from operations include industrial (stationary sources) and warehousing (truck idling) land uses (CARB 2005). Residential and commercial uses do not use substantial quantities of TACs, thus these thresholds are typically applied to new industrial projects only. Additionally, the purpose of this environmental evaluation is to identify the significant effects of the proposed project on the environment, not the significant effects of the environment on the proposed project (*California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District* (2015) 62 Cal.4th 369 (Case No. S213478)). However, the environmental document must analyze the impacts of environmental hazards on future users when a proposed project exacerbates an existing environmental hazard or condition. Residential, school, commercial, and office uses do not use substantial quantities of TACs and typically do not exacerbate existing hazards, so these thresholds are typically applied to new industrial projects.

Table 5.2-9 South Coast AQMD Toxic Air Contaminants Incremental Risk Thresholds

Maximum Incremental Cancer Risk	≥ 10 in 1 million
Cancer Burden (in areas ≥ 1 in 1 million)	> 0.5 excess cancer cases
Hazard Index (project increment)	≥ 1.0

Source: South Coast AQMD 2019.

5.2.3 Environmental Impacts

5.2.3.1 METHODOLOGY

This air quality evaluation was prepared in accordance with the requirements of CEQA to determine if significant air quality impacts are likely to occur in conjunction with future development that would be accommodated by the proposed project. South Coast AQMD’s *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* (Handbook) and updates on its website are intended to provide local governments with guidance for analyzing and mitigating project-specific air quality impacts. The Handbook provides standards, methodologies, and procedures for conducting air quality analyses were used in this analysis.

Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions

Air pollutant emissions are calculated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2020.4 (CAPCOA 2021). CalEEMod compiles an emissions inventory of construction (fugitive dust, off-gas emissions, on-road emissions, and off-road emissions), area sources, indirect emissions from energy use, mobile sources, indirect emissions from waste disposal (annual only), and indirect emissions from water/wastewater (annual only). Criteria air pollutant emissions modeling is included in Appendix B of this DEIR. The calculated

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emissions of the proposed project are compared to thresholds of significance for individual projects as shown in Table 5.2-6 using the South Coast AQMD Handbook. Following is a summary of the assumptions used for the proposed project analysis.

Construction Phase

- **Activities, Schedule, and Equipment.** Development of the proposed project is anticipated to commence in June 2023 be completed in May 2025. The construction schedule and equipment used in the analysis represents a conservative scenario because vertical building construction was split into three overlapping construction components (all over one phase). The three overlapping components are composed of the expansion of the existing parking garage, construction of the proposed mixed-use building on the northwest part of the project site and associated parking garage, and construction of the proposed mixed-use building on the northeast part of the project site and its associated parking garage building.

Operational Phase

- **Transportation:** The primary source of mobile criteria air pollutants is tailpipe exhaust emissions from the combustion of fuel (i.e., gasoline and diesel). For particulate matter, brake and tire wear and fugitive dust are created by vehicles traveling on roadways. Per Gibson Transportation Consulting (see Appendix M), the proposed project would generate an additional 8,699 weekday trips (prior to implementation of any Transportation Demand Management Program) (Gibson 2022). Existing mobile-source emissions associated with the Norwalk City Hall and existing seasonal events that would continue were not modeled because the uses would remain as is after buildout of the proposed project. Transportation criteria pollutant emissions assumed a project baseline year of 2022 and buildout year of 2025.
- **Area Sources.** Area source emissions from use of consumer cleaning products, landscaping equipment, and VOC emissions from paints are based on CalEEMod default values based on 350,000 square feet of residential space, 110,000 square feet of commercial uses, and approximately 476,000 square feet of parking garage building areas. For gas barbeques, it is assumed that eight barbeques will be shared between the project's residential uses.
- **Energy:** Criteria air pollutant emissions from energy use (natural gas used for cooking, heating, etc.) are based on the CalEEMod defaults for natural gas usage for nonresidential and residential land uses. Criteria air pollutant emissions from energy use are associated with natural gas used for heating.¹⁴

Construction Health Risk Assessment

A construction health risk assessment (HRA) for TACs associated with construction equipment exhaust was prepared for the proposed project. Sources evaluated in the HRA include off-road construction equipment and heavy-duty diesel trucks along the truck haul route. Modeling is based on the EPA's AERMOD, v. 10.2.1, air

¹⁴ While the residential portion of the proposed project would be all-electrical appliances (refer to Mitigation Measure GHG-1) and only the commercial portion would utilize natural gas for cooking, the analysis estimates natural gas usage for residential and commercial to provide a conservative analysis.

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dispersion modeling program and the latest HRA guidance from the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) to estimate excess lifetime cancer risks and chronic noncancer hazard indices at the nearest maximum exposed off-site sensitive receptors and assumes 24-hour outdoor exposure with risks averaged over a 70-year lifetime (OEHHA 2015).

DPM emissions were based on the CalEEMod construction runs, using annual exhaust PM₁₀ construction emissions presented in pounds (lbs) per day. Construction of the proposed project would occur continuously over a total cumulative duration of approximately 1.92 years (501 workdays) between years 2023 and 2025. The average daily emission rates from construction equipment used during the proposed project were determined by dividing the annual average emissions for each construction year by the number of construction days per year for each calendar year of construction. The off-site hauling emission rates were adjusted to evaluate localized emissions from the haul route distance within 1,000 feet of the project site.

Air dispersion modeling using AERMOD was conducted to assess the impact of emitted compounds on sensitive receptors. The model is a steady-state Gaussian plume model and is approved by South Coast AQMD for estimating ground level impacts from point and fugitive sources in simple and complex terrain. Meteorological data from the South Coast AQMD for the nearest representative meteorological station (Fullerton Airport) with the five latest available years (2012 to 2016) of records were used to represent local weather conditions and prevailing winds (South Coast AQMD 2022).

A unit emission rate of one gram per second was used for all emission sources. The unit emission rates were proportioned over the poly-area sources for on-site construction emissions and divided between the volume sources for off-site hauling emissions. The maximum modeled concentrations at each sensitive receptor (the residential and school receptors) were multiplied by the construction emission rates to obtain the maximum concentrations at the off-site maximum exposed individual resident (MEIR). The calculated total cancer risk for a resident conservatively assumes that the MEIR is a pregnant woman in the third trimester that gives birth during the approximately two-year construction window; therefore, calculated risk values for years 2023 through part of 2025 (up to two years of age) were multiplied by a factor of 10. In addition, it was conservatively assumed that the residents were outdoors 8 hours a day, 260 construction days per year, and exposed to all of the daily construction emissions.

For the Paddison Elementary School student receptors, it is assumed the ages range between 5 and 10 years based on the grade levels of kindergarten through 5th grade. Therefore, all calculated risk values were multiplied by a factor of 3. Additionally, it is assumed the students were outdoors and are subject to DPM for 8 hours per day, and approximately 180 school days per year.

5.2.3.2 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

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Impact 5.2-1: The proposed project would not conflict with nor obstruct the implementation of the applicable air quality management plan. [Threshold AQ-1]

A consistency determination with the AQMP plays an important role in local agency project review by linking local planning and individual projects to the AQMP. It fulfills the CEQA goal of informing decision makers of the environmental effects of the proposed project under consideration early enough to ensure that air quality concerns are fully addressed. It also provides the local agency with ongoing information as to whether they are contributing to the clean air goals in the AQMP.

The two principal criteria for conformance with an AQMP are:

1. Whether the project would exceed the assumptions in the AQMP.
2. Whether the project would result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations, cause or contribute to new violations, or delay timeline attainment of air quality standards.

Criterion 1

The regional emissions inventory for the SoCAB is compiled by South Coast AQMD and SCAG. Regional population, housing, and employment projections developed by SCAG are based, in part, on cities' general plan land use designations. These projections form the foundation for the emissions inventory of the AQMP. Additionally, demographic trends are incorporated into SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy to determine priority transportation projects and vehicle miles traveled in the SCAG region (SCAG 2020). Because the AQMP strategy is based on projections from local general plans and SCAG's regional growth forecasts, projects that are consistent with the local general plan are considered consistent with the air-quality-related regional plan (South Coast AQMD 1993).

The proposed project would establish a specific plan that provides development standards and land use requirements to guide the development of a mixed-use development with residential uses, commercial uses, and open space and landscaped areas on the project site. The proposed project would require a general plan amendment for the proposed project; therefore, it is considered a project of statewide, regional, or area-wide significance (CEQA Title 14 and Section 15206(b)(1)). However, the proposed project's population contribution is within SCAG'S forecast growth projections for Norwalk and Los Angeles County. Thus, implementation of the proposed project would not substantially affect demographic projections beyond what is accounted for in the current 2016 AQMP. Overall, the proposed project would not substantially affect housing, employment, or population projections within the region as further discussed in Section 5.12, *Population and Housing*.

Criterion 2

As discussed in Impact 5.1-3, the long-term emissions generated by the proposed project would not produce criteria air pollutants that exceed the South Coast AQMD significance thresholds for proposed project operations. South Coast AQMD's significance thresholds identify whether a project has the potential to cumulatively contribute to the SoCAB's nonattainment designations.

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Summary

Because the proposed project would not exceed the South Coast AQMD’s regional significance thresholds (see Impact 5.1-2 and Impact 5.1-3) and growth is consistent with regional growth projections, the proposed project would not interfere with South Coast AQMD’s ability to achieve the long-term air quality goals identified in the AQMP. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with nor obstruct implementation of the AQMP, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.2-2: Construction activities associated with the proposed project would not generate short-term emissions in exceedance of South Coast Air Quality Management District’s Air Quality Management Plan threshold criteria and thus would not cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations of the South Coast Air Basin. [Threshold AQ-2 (part)]

Construction activities produce combustion emissions from various sources, such as onsite heavy-duty construction vehicles, vehicles hauling materials to and from the project site, and motor vehicles transporting the construction crew. Construction of the proposed project would generate criteria air pollutants associated with construction equipment exhaust and fugitive dust from site preparation, rough and fine grading, utilities trenching, building construction, architectural coating, and pavement of asphalt and non-asphalt surfaces on the site. Air pollutant emissions from construction activities on-site would vary daily as construction activity levels change. An estimate of maximum daily construction emissions for the proposed project is provided in Table 5.2-10, *Maximum Daily Regional Construction Emissions*. The table shows the highest daily emissions that would be generated over the anticipated construction period.

Table 5.2-10 Maximum Daily Regional Construction Emissions

Construction Phase	Pollutants (lbs/day) ^{1,2}					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Year 2023						
Asphalt Demolition	3	25	25	<1	1	1
Asphalt Demolition Debris Haul	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Asphalt Demolition and Rough Grading	4	34	34	<1	8	4
Site Preparation and Rough Grading	3	35	25	<1	11	6
Site Preparation Soil Haul	<1	13	3	<1	3	1
Rough Grading and Fine Grading	2	19	16	<1	4	2
Rough Grading Soil Haul	<1	30	8	<1	6	2
Fine Grading Soil Haul	<1	7	2	<1	1	0
Commercial Parking Garage Addition, Pile Driving, Parking Garage Building, Northwest Building, and East Building 2023	8	62	85	<1	9	4
Commercial Parking Garage Addition, Parking Garage Building, Northwest Building, and East Building 2023	8	60	82	<1	9	4

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Table 5.2-10 Maximum Daily Regional Construction Emissions

Construction Phase	Pollutants (lbs/day) ^{1,2}					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Year 2024						
Commercial Parking Garage Addition, Parking Garage Building, Northwest Building, and East Building 2024	8	56	81	<1	9	4
Year 2025						
Commercial Parking Garage Addition, Parking Garage Building, Northwest Building, and East Building 2025	7	53	79	<1	9	4
Paving	1	9	15	<1	1	<1
Architectural Coating	22	1	5	<1	1	<1
Maximum Daily Construction Emissions						
Project's Maximum Daily Emissions	22	62	85	<1	11	6
South Coast AQMD Regional Construction Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Significant?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: CalEEMod Version 2020.4.

¹ Where specific information regarding proposed project-related construction activities was not available from the applicant, construction assumptions were based on CalEEMod defaults, which are based on construction surveys conducted by South Coast AQMD of construction equipment.

² Includes implementation of fugitive dust control measures required by South Coast AQMD under Rule 403, including watering disturbed areas a minimum of two times per day, reducing speed limit to 15 miles per hour on unpaved surfaces, replacing ground cover quickly, and street sweeping with Rule 1186-compliant sweepers.

The SoCAB is designated nonattainment for O₃ and PM_{2.5} under the California and National AAQS, nonattainment for PM₁₀ under the California AAQS,¹⁵ and nonattainment for lead (Los Angeles County only) under the National AAQS. According to South Coast AQMD methodology, any project that does not exceed (or can be mitigated to less than) the daily threshold values would not add significantly to a cumulative impact (South Coast AQMD 1993). As shown in Table 5.2-10, the maximum daily emissions for VOC, NO_x, CO, SO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} from construction-related activities would be less than their respective South Coast AQMD regional significance threshold values. Therefore, short-term air quality impacts from the proposed project's construction activities would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.2-3: Long-term operation of the proposed project would generate additional vehicle trips and associated emissions compared to existing conditions but would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant in exceedance of South Coast AQMD's threshold criteria. [Threshold AQ-2 (part)]

The proposed project would generate an increase in criteria air pollutant emissions from on-road mobile sources, area sources (e.g., landscaping equipment, architectural coating) and energy use (i.e., natural gas used

¹⁵ Portions of the SoCAB along SR-60 in Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties are nonattainment for NO₂ under the California AAQS. However, CARB approved a redesignation to attainment based on 2018-2020 data on February 24, 2022. This redesignation will not be official until the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) approves the rulemaking filed with the Secretary of State, expected in the fall of 2022 (South Coast AQMD 2022).

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for cooking in commercial uses)¹⁶. The proposed project would result in an increase of 8,699 weekday daily vehicle trips (prior to any Transportation Demand Management Program) and 8,709 weekend daily vehicle trips (see Section 5.15, *Transportation*) and associated mobile-source emissions. The proposed new buildings would, at minimum, be designed and built to meet the current Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards at the time they are constructed. As shown in Table 5.2-11, *Proposed Project Regional Operation Emissions*, the net changes in maximum daily emissions from operation of the proposed project would be less than their respective South Coast AQMD regional significance threshold values. Therefore, impacts to the regional air quality associated with operation of the proposed project would be **less than significant**.

Table 5.2-11 Proposed Project Regional Operation Emissions

Source	Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs/day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Existing Conditions (2022)						
Area	1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Energy ¹	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Mobile ²	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Total	1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Proposed Project (2025)						
Area	10	<1	29	<1	<1	<1
Energy ¹	<1	4	3	<1	<1	<1
Mobile ²	28	28	277	1	75	20
Total	39	32	308	1	76	21
Net Change						
Area	9	<1	29	<1	<1	<1
Energy ¹	<1	3	2	<1	<1	<1
Mobile ²	28	28	277	1	75	20
Total Net Change	38	30	308	1	76	21
South Coast AQMD Regional Threshold	55	55	550	150	150	550
Exceeds Threshold?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: CalEEMod Version 2020.4.0. Highest winter or summer emissions are reported.

Notes: lbs: Pounds.

¹ The default historic electricity and natural gas rates in CalEEMod were used for the existing Norwalk City Hall building, which would remain after buildout.

² Based on 2025 emission rates.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.2-4: The proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations during construction. [Threshold AQ-3 (part)]

This impact analysis describes changes in localized impacts from short-term construction activities. The proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to elevated pollutant concentrations during construction

¹⁶ Natural gas was assumed for residential uses for the unmitigated model runs for a conservative analysis.

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activities if it would cause or contribute significantly to elevated levels. Unlike the mass of construction and operation emissions in the regional emissions analysis shown in Table 5.2-10 and Table 5.2-11, which are described in pounds per day, localized concentrations refer to an amount of pollutant in a volume of air (ppm or $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) and can be correlated to potential health effects.

Construction-Phase Localized Significance Thresholds

The screening-level LSTs (pounds per day) are the amount of project-related emissions at which localized concentrations could exceed the ambient air quality standards for criteria air pollutants for which the SoCAB is designated nonattainment. As stated, they are based on the acreage disturbed and distance to the nearest sensitive receptor. The nearest off-site sensitive receptor to the project site is the multifamily residential development along Norwalk Boulevard to approximately 116 feet west of the project site. However, to provide a conservative analysis of impacts, the on-site residences that could surround construction accommodated under the proposed project are considered in the analysis. It is anticipated that on-site residences could be within 82 feet of active construction areas.¹⁷

Table 5.2-12, *Maximum Daily On-Site Localized Construction Emissions*, shows the maximum daily construction emissions (pounds per day) generated during onsite construction activities. As shown in the table, maximum daily construction emissions would not exceed the South Coast AQMD screening-level LSTs for NO_x , CO, PM_{10} , and $\text{PM}_{2.5}$. The onsite PM_{10} and $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ emissions shown represent the total onsite particulate matter emissions from vehicle exhaust and fugitive dust. Onsite NO_x emissions are from off-road equipment exhaust. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not result in a potentially significant localized air quality impact or cause an exceedance of the California AAQS.

Table 5.2-12 Maximum Daily On-Site Localized Construction Emissions

Construction Activity	Pollutants (lbs/day) ¹			
	NO_x	CO	PM_{10}^2	$\text{PM}_{2.5}^2$
South Coast AQMD ≤ 1.00 Acre LST	80	593	7.84	3.43
Asphalt Demolition	24	24	1.15	1.08
Asphalt Demolition Debris Haul	<1	<1	0.22	0.03
Site Preparation Soil Haul	<1	<1	0.04	0.01
Rough Grading Soil Haul	<1	<1	0.08	0.01
Fine Grading Soil Haul	<1	<1	0.02	0.00
Paving	9	15	0.42	0.39
Architectural Coating	1	2	0.05	0.05
Exceeds LST?	No	No	No	No
South Coast AQMD 2.50 Acre LST	123	997	15.13	5.42
Rough Grading and Fine Grading	18	15	3.80	2.18
Exceeds LST?	No	No	No	No

¹⁷ The distance of 82 feet is the minimum referenced distance for the South Coast AQMD LST methodology (South Coast AQMD 2008b)

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Table 5.2-12 Maximum Daily On-Site Localized Construction Emissions

Construction Activity	Pollutants(lbs/day) ¹			
	NO _x	CO	PM ₁₀ ²	PM _{2.5} ²
South Coast AQMD 3.00 Acre LST	133	1,104	17.29	6.00
Asphalt Demolition and Rough Grading	34	32	7.36	4.33
Exceeds LST?	No	No	No	No
South Coast AQMD 3.94 Acre LST	151	1,304	21.35	7.07
Commercial Parking Garage Addition, Pile Driving, Parking Garage Building, Northwest Building, and East Building 2023	54	64	2.63	2.50
Commercial Parking Garage Addition, Parking Garage Building, Northwest Building, and East Building 2024	49	61	2.23	2.12
Commercial Parking Garage Addition, Parking Garage Building, Northwest Building, and East Building 2025	45	61	1.92	1.82
Exceeds LST?	No	No	No	No
South Coast AQMD 4.00 Acre LST	152	1,317	21.62	7.14
Site Preparation and Rough Grading	34	23	10.12	5.72
Exceeds LST?	No	No	No	No

Sources: CalEEMod Version 2020.4.0, and South Coast AQMD 2008 and 2011.

Notes: In accordance with South Coast AQMD methodology, only onsite stationary sources and mobile equipment occurring on the project area are included in the analysis. LSTs are based on non-sensitive receptors within 82 feet (25 meters) for NO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} in Source Receptor Area (SRA) 35.

¹ Based on information provided or verified by the City. Where specific information regarding project-related construction activities or processes was not available, construction assumptions were based on CalEEMod defaults, which are based on construction surveys conducted by the South Coast AQMD.

² Includes implementation of fugitive dust control measures required by South Coast AQMD under Rule 403, including watering disturbed areas a minimum of two times per day, reducing speed limit to 15 miles per hour on unpaved surfaces, replacing ground cover quickly, and street sweeping with Rule 1186-compliant sweepers.

As shown in the Table 5.2-12, the maximum daily NO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} construction emissions from project construction-related activities would be less than their respective South Coast AQMD screening-level LSTs. Thus, construction activities would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Therefore, localized air quality impacts from construction activities would be **less than significant**.

Construction Health Risk

The proposed project would temporarily elevate concentrations of DPM in the vicinity of sensitive land uses during construction activities. As stated, South Coast AQMD currently does not require health risk assessments for short-term emissions from construction equipment, which primarily consist of DPM. However, this analysis has been included to conservatively gauge the potential health-risk-related impacts of short-term construction activities on off-site sensitive receptors. The estimated excess lifetime cancer risk and chronic noncancer hazard index at the nearest sensitive receptors are shown in Table 5.2-13, *Construction Risk Summary*.

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Table 5.2-13 Construction Risk Summary

Receptor	Cancer Risk (per million)	Chronic Hazards
Maximum Exposed Individual Resident (MEIR)	21.7	0.054
Maximum Exposed School Receptor – Paddison Elementary School Students	0.1	0.003
Significance Thresholds	10	1.0
Exceeds Threshold?	Yes	No

Note: Cancer risk calculated using 2015 OEHHA HRA guidance.

The results of the HRA are based on the maximum modeled receptor concentration over the construction exposure period, conservatively assuming a 24-hour per day outdoor exposure and averaged over a 70-year lifetime. According to the modeling results, the MEIR is the multifamily residential development west of City Hall across Norwalk Boulevard. The maximum exposed receptor location for Paddison Elementary School, which is 900 feet to the northwest of the project site, lies within the athletic field in the southeastern portion of the school campus.

As shown in Table 5.2-13, the maximum incremental cancer risk during the construction phase of the proposed project at the MEIR is 21.7 per million, which exceeds the significance threshold of 10 per million. It should be noted that these health impacts are based on conservative (i.e., health protective) assumptions which tend to produce upper-bound estimates of exposure and risk. Utilizing the latest 2015 OEHHA Guidance Manual, the calculated total cancer risk conservatively assumes that the risk for the MEIR consists of a pregnant woman in the third trimester that subsequently gives birth to an infant during the approximately 2-year construction period; therefore, all calculated risk values were multiplied by a factor of 10. In addition, it was conservatively assumed that the residents were outdoors 8 hours a day, 260 construction days per year and exposed to all of the daily construction emissions. Cancer risk for students at Paddison Elementary School is 0.1 per million and would not exceed 10 per million. For noncarcinogenic effects, the chronic hazard index identified for each toxicological endpoint totaled less than one for all the off-site sensitive receptors. Therefore, chronic noncarcinogenic hazards are within limits imposed by South Coast AQMD. However, because the cancer risk for the MEIR (the multifamily residential development to the west) would exceed the 10 per million threshold, project-related construction activities would result in **potentially significant** health risk impacts.

Mitigation Measures:

AQ-1 Construction contractors shall, at minimum, use equipment that meet the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Tier 4 Interim emissions standards for off-road diesel-powered construction equipment of 50 horsepower or more in use a total of 20 hours or more, unless it can be demonstrated to the City of Norwalk Community Development Department that such equipment is not commercially available. For purposes of this mitigation measure, “commercially available” shall mean the availability of Tier 4 Interim engines similar to the availability for other large-scale construction projects in the city occurring at the same time and taking into consideration factors such as (i) potential significant delays to critical-path timing of construction and (ii) geographic proximity to the project site

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of Tier 4 Interim equipment. Where such equipment is not commercially available, as demonstrated by the construction contractor, Tier 3 equipment retrofitted with a California Air Resources Board's Level 3 Verified Diesel Emissions Control Strategy (VDECS) shall be used. This requirement shall apply to all activities (e.g., foundation, pile driving, vertical construction, etc.) related to construction of:

- a. Existing Commercial Parking Garage Improvements (e.g., additional parking levels)
- b. Proposed Buildings and Structures (e.g., proposed mixed-use buildings)

In addition, the following shall also be completed:

- Prior to construction, the project engineer shall ensure that all construction (e.g., grading and building) plans clearly show the requirement for EPA Tier 4 Interim emissions standards for construction equipment of 50 horsepower or more and in use a total of 20 hours or more for the activities stated above.
- During construction, the construction contractor shall maintain a list of all operating equipment in use on the construction site for a total of 20 hours or more for verification by the City of Norwalk.
- The construction equipment list shall state the makes, models, Equipment Identification Numbers, Engine Family Numbers, and number of construction equipment on-site. Equipment shall be properly serviced and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- To the extent that equipment is available and cost-effective, contractors shall use electric, hybrid, or alternate-fueled off-road construction equipment.
- Contractors shall use electric construction tools, such as saws, drills, and compressors, where grid electricity is available.
- Construction contractors shall ensure that all nonessential idling of construction equipment is restricted to five minutes or less in compliance with Section 2449 of the California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Article 4.8, Chapter 9.

Significance After Mitigation: Mitigation Measure AQ-1 would reduce the proposed project's construction emissions and potential off-site health risks, as shown in Table 5.2-14, *Construction Health Risk Summary: Mitigated*. The results indicate that, with mitigation, cancer risk at the MEIR (the multifamily residential development on Norwalk Boulevard across from City Hall) would be reduced to 4.7 in a million, which is less than the South Coast AQMD's significance threshold of 10 in a million. Therefore, with incorporation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1, the proposed project would not expose off-site sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of DPM emissions during construction. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

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Table 5.2-14 Construction Health Risk Summary: Mitigated

Receptor	Cancer Risk (per million) ¹	Chronic Hazards
Maximum Exposed Individual Resident	4.7	0.014
Significance Thresholds	10	1.0
Exceeds Threshold?	No	No

Note: Cancer risk calculated using 2015 OEHHA HRA guidance.

¹ With incorporation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1, which requires off-road equipment of 50 horsepower or more that are used in activities related to construction of the proposed structures and buildings be fitted with engines that meet the EPA Tier 4 Interim emissions standards.

Impact 5.2-5: The proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations during operation. [Threshold AQ-3 (part)]

This impact analysis describes changes in localized impacts from long-term operational activities. The proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to elevated pollutant concentrations during operation of the proposed project if it would cause or contribute significantly to elevated levels. The proposed project would result in new changes to the project site's current operations.

Operational Phase LSTs

The screening-level LSTs are the amount of project-related stationary and area sources of emissions at which localized concentrations (ppm or $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) would exceed the ambient air quality standards for criteria air pollutants for which the SoCAB is designated a nonattainment area. The proposed project would involve the construction of new mixed-use buildings, which would not generate a substantial number of trucks (e.g., like warehouse land uses). Typical sources of criteria air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed project from stationary and area sources include energy use (natural gas used for cooking and water heating), landscaping fuel and aerosols. Estimating the proposed natural gas emissions using CalEEMod defaults provides a conservative analysis as the residential portion will be all-electrical appliances, and only the commercial portion would utilize natural gas for cooking.¹⁸ Types of land uses that typically generate substantial quantities of criteria air pollutants and TACs include industrial (stationary sources) and warehousing (truck idling) land uses. These types of major air pollutant emissions sources would not be included or expanded under the proposed project. Thus, the proposed project would not result in creation of land uses that would generate substantial concentrations of criteria air pollutant emissions. Therefore, localized operation-related air quality impacts are **less than significant**.

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

Areas of vehicle congestion have the potential to create pockets of CO called hotspots. These pockets have the potential to exceed the state one-hour standard of 20 ppm or the eight-hour standard of 9.0 ppm. Because CO is produced in greatest quantities from vehicle combustion and does not readily disperse into the atmosphere, adherence to AAQS is typically demonstrated through an analysis of localized CO concentrations. Hot spots are typically produced at intersections, where traffic congestion is highest because vehicles queue for

¹⁸ Natural gas use was assumed for both residential and non-residential portions of the proposed project.

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longer periods and are subject to reduced speeds. The SoCAB has been designated in attainment of both the National and California AAQS for CO. Under existing and future vehicle emission rates, a project would have to increase traffic volumes at a single intersection by more than 44,000 vehicles per hour—or 24,000 vehicles per hour where vertical and/or horizontal mixing is substantially limited—to generate a significant CO impact (BAAQMD 2017). As described in the proposed project’s traffic study (Appendix M), the proposed project would generate a net increase of 301 AM peak-hour daily vehicle trips and 545 PM peak-hour vehicle trips (Gibson 2022). Peak-hour traffic typically represents approximately 10 percent of daily traffic. Therefore, traffic generated by the proposed project is substantially below the incremental increase in the vehicle trips needed to generate a significant CO impact. Implementation of the proposed project would not have the potential to substantially increase CO hotspots at intersections in the vicinity of the project site. A **less than significant impact** would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.2-6: The proposed project would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) that would adversely affect a substantial number of people. [Threshold AQ-4]

The threshold for odor is if a project creates an odor nuisance pursuant to South Coast AQMD Rule 402, Nuisance, which states:

A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property. The provisions of this rule shall not apply to odors emanating from agricultural operations necessary for the growing of crops or the raising of fowl or animals.

The type of facilities that are considered to have objectionable odors include wastewater treatment plants, compost facilities, landfills, solid waste transfer stations, fiberglass manufacturing facilities, paint/coating operations (e.g., auto body shops), dairy farms, petroleum refineries, asphalt batch plants, chemical manufacturing, and food manufacturing facilities. The proposed project does not include any of these uses.

Construction activities could also generate odors from construction equipment, such as diesel exhaust, and from VOCs from architectural coatings and paving activities. However, these odors would be temporary and confined to the immediate vicinity of the construction equipment. Additionally, compliance with South Coast AQMD Rule 402 would minimize and provide a control for odors. Therefore, impacts related to objectionable operational and construction-related odors would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

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5.2.4 Cumulative Impacts

In accordance with South Coast AQMD's methodology, any project that produces a significant project-level regional air quality impact in an area that is in nonattainment contributes to the cumulative impact. Consistent with the methodology, projects that do not exceed the regional significance thresholds or localized significance thresholds would not result in significant cumulative impacts. In addition, projects that do not exceed the cancer risk or chronic hazard thresholds based on the latest guidance from OEHHA (2015) would not result in significant cumulative impacts.

Cumulative projects in the local area include new development and general growth in the project area. The greatest source of emissions in the SoCAB is mobile sources. Due to the extent of the area potentially impacted by cumulative emissions (i.e., the SoCAB), South Coast AQMD considers a project cumulatively significant when project-related emissions exceed the South Coast AQMD regional emissions thresholds shown in Table 5.2-6 or risk thresholds in Table 5.2-9 (South Coast AQMD 1993).

Construction

The SoCAB is designated nonattainment for O₃ and PM_{2.5} under the California and National AAQS, nonattainment for PM₁₀ under the California AAQS,¹⁹ and nonattainment for lead (Los Angeles County only) under the National AAQS. Construction of cumulative projects will further degrade the regional and local air quality, as air quality will be temporarily impacted during construction activities. However, as shown in Impact 5.2-2, project-related construction activities would not generate short-term emissions that would exceed the South Coast AQMD regional emissions thresholds. In addition, construction of the proposed project would not exceed localized significance thresholds. Further the proposed project would incorporate Mitigation Measure AQ-1, which would ensure that health risk impacts during construction are **less than significant**. Therefore, the construction-related air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed project would not be cumulatively considerable.

Operation

For operational air quality emissions, any project that does not exceed (or can be mitigated to less than) the daily regional threshold values would not be considered by South Coast AQMD to be a substantial source of air pollution and does not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulative air quality impact. As discussed in the above in Impact 5.2-3, operation of the proposed project would not result in emissions in excess of the South Coast AQMD regional emissions thresholds. Therefore, the air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed project would not be cumulatively considerable and impacts are **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

¹⁹ Portions of the SoCAB along SR-60 in Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties are proposed nonattainment for NO₂ under the California AAQS.

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5.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project to biological resources in the project site area. The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical report(s):

- *Biological Resources Assessment for the Norwalk Entertainment District: Civic Center Specific Plan Project*, South Environmental, March 2022 (“Biological Resources Assessment”)

A copy of the Biological Resources Assessment is in the technical appendices to this DEIR (Appendix D).

5.3.1 Environmental Setting

5.3.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines that are related to protection and preservation of biological resources and applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Federal

Endangered Species Act

The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) of 1973, as amended, protects and conserves any species of plant or animal that is endangered or threatened with extinction, as well as the habitats where these species are found. “Take” of endangered species is prohibited under Section 9 of the FESA. “Take” means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct.” Section 7 of the FESA requires federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on proposed federal actions that may affect any endangered, threatened, or proposed (for listing) species or critical habitat that may support the species. Section 4(a) of the FESA requires that critical habitat be designated by the USFWS “to the maximum extent prudent and determinable, at the time a species is determined to be endangered or threatened.” This provides guidance for planners/managers and biologists by indicating locations of suitable habitat and where preservation of a particular species has high priority. Section 10 of the FESA provides the regulatory mechanism for incidental take of a listed species by private interests and nonfederal government agencies during lawful activities. Habitat conservation plans for the impacted species must be developed in support of incidental take permits to minimize impacts to the species and formulate viable mitigation measures.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) protects individuals as well as any part, nest, or eggs of any bird listed as migratory. In practice, federal permits issued for activities that potentially impact migratory birds typically have conditions that require pre-disturbance surveys for nesting birds. In the event nesting is observed, a buffer area with a specified radius must be established, within which no disturbance or intrusion is allowed until the young have fledged and left the nest, or it has been determined that the nest has failed. If not otherwise specified in the permit, the size of the buffer area varies with species and local circumstances (e.g., presence of busy

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roads, intervening topography, etc.), and is based on the professional judgment of a monitoring biologist. A list of migratory bird species protected under the MBTA is published by USFWS.

Clean Water Act, Section 404

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates discharge of dredged or fill material into “waters of the United States.”¹ Any filling or dredging within waters of the United States requires a permit, which entails assessment of potential adverse impacts to USACE wetlands and jurisdictional waters and any mitigation measures that the USACE requires. Section 7 consultation with USFWS may be required for impacts to a federally listed species. When a Section 404 permit is required, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification is also required from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Clean Water Act, Sections 401 and 402

Section 401(a)(1) of the CWA specifies that any applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct any activity that may result in any discharge into navigable waters shall provide the federal permitting agency with a certification, issued by the state in which the discharge originates, that any such discharge will comply with the applicable provisions of the CWA. In California, the applicable RWQCB must certify that the project will comply with water quality standards. Permits requiring Section 401 certification include Corps Section 404 permits and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under Section 402 of the CWA. NPDES permits are issued by the applicable RWQCB. The City of Norwalk is in the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles RWQCB (Region 9).

US Army Corp of Engineers

The USACE Regulatory Branch regulates activities that discharge dredged or fill materials into waters of the United States (WOTUS) under Section 404 of the federal CWA and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. Its authority applies to all WOTUS where the material (1) replaces any portion of a WOTUS with dry land or (2) changes the bottom elevation of any portion of any WOTUS. Activities that result in fill or dredge of WOTUS require a permit from the USACE. To be considered WOTUS, a feature must be a traditional navigable water, an interstate water, a territorial sea, or an impoundment of these waters, or have a connection to a traditional navigable water (whether as a tributary or as an adjacent wetland).

State

California Fish and Game Code, Section 1600

Section 1600 of the California Fish and Game Code requires a project proponent to notify the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) of any proposed alteration of streambeds, rivers, and lakes. The

¹ “Waters of the United States,” as applied to the jurisdictional limits of the USACE under the Clean Water Act, includes all waters that are currently used, were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters that are subject to the tide; all interstate waters, including interstate wetlands; and all other waters, such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds whose use, degradation, or destruction could affect interstate or foreign commerce; water impoundments; tributaries of waters; territorial seas; and wetlands adjacent to waters. The terminology used by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act includes “navigable waters,” which is defined at Section 502(7) of the act as “waters of the United States, including the territorial seas.”

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intent is to protect habitats that are important to fish and wildlife. CDFW may review and place conditions on the project, as part of a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) that address potentially significant adverse impacts within CDFW's jurisdictional limits.

California Fish and Game Code, Sections 3503 et seq.

Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code states that it is “unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the order Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds of prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto.” Activities that result in the abandonment of an active bird of prey nest may also be considered in violation of this code. In addition, California Fish and Game Code, Section 3511 prohibits the taking of any bird listed as fully protected, and California Fish and Game Code, Section 3515 states that it is unlawful to take any non-game migratory bird protected under the MBTA.

California Migratory Bird Protection Act

The California Migratory Bird Protection Act (MBPA) was enacted in September 2019 to reinforce the MBTA at the state level. The Act states:

“It is unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird as designated in the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. Sec. 703 et seq.) before January 1, 2017, any additional migratory nongame bird that may be designated in that federal act after that date, or any part of a migratory nongame bird described in this section, except as provided by rules and regulations adopted by the United States Secretary of the Interior under that federal act before January 1, 2017, or subsequent rules or regulations adopted pursuant to that federal act, unless those rules or regulations are inconsistent with this code.” This section is inactive on January 20, 2025, and the following language below will be adopted.

“It is unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird as designated in the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. Sec. 703 et seq.), or any part of a migratory nongame bird described in this section, except as provided by rules and regulations adopted by the United States Secretary of the Interior under that federal act.” This section is operative starting on January 20, 2025.

Nesting Bird Protection, California Fish and Game Code

Nesting birds, including raptors, are protected under California Fish and Game Code Section 3503, which reads, “it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto.” In addition, under California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5, “it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto.” Passerines and non-passerine land birds are further protected under California Fish and Game Code Section 3513.

Fish and Game Code Section 3800 indicates that all birds occurring naturally in California that are not resident game birds, migratory game birds, or fully protected birds are nongame birds. And it is unlawful to take any nongame bird except as provided in the California Fish and Game Code.

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Pursuant to these code sections, CDFW recommends surveys for nesting birds that could potentially be directly (e.g., actual removal of trees/vegetation) or indirectly (e.g., noise disturbance) impacted by project-related activities. Disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings or lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered “take” by CDFW.

California Endangered Species Act

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) generally parallels the main provisions of the FESA and is administered by the CDFW. Its intent is to prohibit take and protect state-listed endangered and threatened species of fish, wildlife, and plants. Unlike its federal counterpart, CESA also applies the take prohibitions to species petitioned for listing (state candidates). Candidate species may be afforded temporary protection as though they were already listed as threatened or endangered at the discretion of the Fish and Game Commission. Unlike the FESA, CESA does not include listing provisions for invertebrate species. Under certain conditions, CESA has provisions for take through a 2081 permit or memorandum of understanding (MOU). In addition, some sensitive mammals and birds are protected by the state as “fully protected species.” California “species of special concern” are species designated as vulnerable to extinction due to declining population levels, limited ranges, and/or continuing threats. This list is primarily a working document for the CDFW’s California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), which maintains a record of known and recorded occurrences of sensitive species. Informally listed taxa are not protected per se, but warrant consideration in the preparation of biological resources assessments.

California Native Plant Protection Act

The California Native Plant Protection Act of 1977 (California Fish and Game Code Sections 1900 et seq.) prohibits importation of rare and endangered plants into California, “take” of rare and endangered plants, and sale of rare and endangered plants. CESA defers to the Act, which ensures that state-listed plant species are protected when state agencies are involved in projects subject to CEQA. In this case, plants listed as rare under the California Native Plant Protection Act are not protected under CESA; however, impacts to endangered, rare, or threatened species, including plants, are evaluated under CEQA.

Local

City of Norwalk Street Tree Ordinance

The Street Tree Ordinance in the Norwalk Municipal Code protects “street trees” and “street shrubs” as defined in the ordinance. Section 12.32.070 states in part that “[n]o person shall cut, trim, prune, plant, spray, remove, injure or interfere with any street tree or shrub without prior permission of the Director of Public Services. The Director may grant such permission in his or her discretion, and where necessary, subject to the condition that a removed tree or shrub will be replaced by an approved tree or shrub in conformity with the master plan, and to such other conditions as he or she may deem in the public interest.” Furthermore, NMC Section 12.32.120 provides that during the construction of any building or structure no street tree shall be “in the vicinity of such building or structure without such good and sufficient guards or protectors as shall prevent

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injury to the tree or shrub” from the construction. NMC Section 12.32.130 requires a permit for certain construction operations that affect street trees and street shrubs.

5.3.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project site is a flat area at an elevation of 100-102 feet above mean sea level (amsl) and is largely developed with the City Hall building, surface parking, a large parking structure, associated landscaping such as non-native trees and shrubs, and the City Hall Lawn with sporadic non-native trees that is used for periodic gatherings and cultural events. The project site is in an urban setting surrounded by development.

Soils on the project site include Urban land-Hueneme, drained-San Emigdio complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes, which is a non-hydric soil found in urban areas of Los Angeles County.

Plants

The project site is largely developed with the City Hall Lawn occurring in the northern section and buildings and parking occurring in the southern section. Plants that occur are found in landscaping and planters with a complete dominance of ornamental trees, shrubs, and lawn. A total of 160 landscaped trees are planted on the project site. The plants on the project site are heavily pruned, mowed, or otherwise maintained for public safety. No native plants or habitats occur on the project site, nor do any sensitive natural communities because landscaped areas and lawns are not considered sensitive. The list of plants observed during the reconnaissance visit are in Table 5.3-1, *Summary of Plants Observed at the Project Site*.

Table 5.3-1 Summary of Plants Observed at the Project Site

Common Name	Scientific Name
Outeniqua yellowwood	<i>Afrocarpus falcatus</i>
camelia species	<i>Camelia sp.</i>
fountain grass	<i>Cenchrus setaceus</i>
broad leaf hopbush	<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i>
lemon-scented gum	<i>Corymbia citriodora</i>
red ironbark	<i>Eucalyptus sideroxyton</i>
fig species	<i>Ficus sp.</i>
Chinese holly	<i>Ilex cornuta</i>
jacaranda	<i>Jacaranda mimosifolia</i>
American sweetgum	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>
bottlebrush	<i>Melaleuca sp.</i>
Kentucky bluegrass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>
Canary Island pine	<i>Pinus canariensis</i>
pine species	<i>Pinus sp.</i>
common bird-of-paradise	<i>Strelitzia reginae</i>

Source: South Environmental, 2022.

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Animals

During the survey, several bird species common to urban settings of Southern California were observed on the project site: common raven (*Corvus corax*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*). No mammals, reptiles, or amphibians were observed during the visit, and it is expected that common animals that would typically be found in urban areas might occur (i.e., fox squirrel, California ground squirrel, coyote).

Special-Status Species

A single monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) was observed on the project site near the trees in the northwest corner. Monarch is a candidate for federal listing that is protected as a wintering population at winter roost sites in California that extend along the coast from northern Mendocino to Baja California, Mexico. However, the habitat for overwintering monarch roosts includes wind-protected tree groves (eucalyptus, Monterey pine, cypress), with nectar and water sources nearby. While a single monarch was observed, the project site lacks necessary wind protected roosting sites, nectar plants (annual wildflowers), and a nearby water source, and therefore, the project site does not support protected wintering populations of monarch.

No other special-status species were observed on the site during the survey. According to the literature review, no special-status species have previously been recorded on the project site and none are expected to occur based on the level of development and lack of native habitats. There was no other evidence of special-status species: tracks, scat, carcasses or bones at the project site. Based on the literature analysis, no special-status species were assessed to have the potential to inhabit the project site. The severely disturbed nature of the project site and its complete fragmentation from core high-quality habitat generally does not provide conditions that would support populations of special-status species. There are no special habitats on the project site, such as caves, thickets, cliffs, or wetlands that many special-status species in the region require. Furthermore, the project site is not within designated Critical Habitat for any species.

Wildlife Movement Corridors and Habitat Linkages

The project area is entirely developed and is set in an urbanized setting. The project site is completely isolated from native habitats for plants and animals. The closest area with native habitats is approximately five miles to the northeast in the Puente Hills. While there are some parks closer to the project site, the parks do not provide high-quality habitats that special-status wildlife require. There is no habitat corridor connecting the project site to the Puente Hills area. The survey area is not within an important habitat linkage corridor as defined by the South Coast Missing Linkages Project, nor is it part of or close to USFWS critical habitat. Moreover, it is not in or close to any state or federal protected parks, forests, or wilderness areas. Therefore, the project site is isolated from high-quality natural habitats and does not provide wildlife movement corridors or habitat linkages.

Jurisdictional Resources

The project site is within the Coyote Creek – San Gabriel Watershed. No water resources (i.e., wetlands, rivers, lakes, drainage ditches) were found on the project site based on the survey. The project site is a developed, urban area and lacks jurisdictional resources.

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5.3.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to biological resources if the project would:

- B-1 Have a substantial 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.
- B-2 Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- B-3 Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- B-4 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.
- B-5 Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- B-6 Conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

5.3.3 Environmental Impacts

5.3.3.1 METHODOLOGY

The biological resources were assessed based on a literature review and a field survey. The literature review included queries of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) online and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California online to identify special-status plants, animals, and natural communities that have previously been recorded in the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Whittier 7.5" quad that the project site is located within, and the eight surrounding USGS 7.5" quads: El Monte, Baldwin Park, La Habra, Anaheim, Los Alamitos, Long Beach, South Gate, and Los Angeles.

South Environmental conducted a field survey of the project site on January 5, 2022 to assess which plants, natural communities, and wildlife currently occupy the site, or have the potential to occur at the site. South Environmental also completed an assessment of potential jurisdictional features during the survey. Observations from the field survey are discussed under 5.3.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, above.

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5.3.3.2 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.3-1: The proposed project would not result in a substantial 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 with the implementation of BIO-1 [Threshold B-1]

The project site is entirely developed with City Hall, a parking structure, a parking lot, and a landscaped lawn area. No native habitats occur on the project site and no special-status species are expected to occur on the project site due to the lack of habitat and level of development. A single monarch butterfly was observed near the trees in the northwestern corner of the project site; however, while monarch's wintering populations are considered sensitive, a single butterfly is not considered sensitive. No wintering population was observed during the survey, and none is expected to occur because the trees where the monarch was observed lack wind protection, a food source, and a nearby water supply that the population would require. **No impacts** would occur to special-status species or its habitat from the project.

The proposed development would require the removal of shrubs and trees that could provide potential nesting structures for birds protected by the MBTA, MBPA, and the Fish and Game Code. If present at the time of vegetation removal, active nests, eggs, or young could be destroyed or otherwise disturbed to a point at which the young do not survive, which would be a violation of the MBTA, MBPA, and the Fish and Game Code. In addition, indirect impacts from construction noise or vibration have the potential to disturb an active bird nest to the point of failure if the nest is within immediate proximity to project construction activities, and this would also be a violation of the MBTA and Fish and Game Code, resulting in a **significant impact**. To avoid impacts to active bird nests, eggs, or young, preconstruction nesting bird surveys and monitoring is required as described in Mitigation Measure BIO-1 below.

Mitigation Measures:

BIO-1 If possible, ground-disturbing activities and vegetation removal (including tree trimming) should be timed to occur outside the bird nesting season (September 1–January 31).

If ground disturbing activities or vegetation removal (including tree trimming) are scheduled during the bird nesting season (February 1–August 31) a preconstruction survey for nesting birds shall be conducted within 72 hours prior to initiation of construction activities. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist with prior experience conducting nesting bird surveys for construction projects. The survey area shall include the project site and suitable habitat within a 100-foot buffer, or a buffer size determined by the qualified biologist based on level of proposed disturbance and access. If no active nests are found, no additional measures are required.

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If active nests are found the biologist will map the location and document the species and nesting stage. A no-work buffer will be established around the active nest as determined by the qualified biologist and based on the species sensitivity to disturbance and the type and duration of the disturbance. No construction activities shall occur within the no-work buffer until the biologist has determined the nest is no longer active.

Significance After Mitigation: After implementation of BIO-1, impacts to nesting birds would be reduced to a less than significant impact.

Impact 5.3-2: Development of the proposed project would not result in the loss of riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service. [Threshold B-2]

No sensitive natural communities or riparian habitat occur on the project site. The project site is an urban area with buildings, a parking lot, a parking structure, and a landscaped lawn. Therefore, **no impact** to riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities would occur from the proposed project.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: No impact.

Impact 5.3-3: The proposed project would not have substantial impact on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means [Threshold B-3]

No state or federally protected wetlands and no jurisdictional waters were present on-site during the site survey. Therefore, development of the project will result in **no impact** to state or federally protected wetlands.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: No impact.

Impact 5.3-4: The proposed project would not affect 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 [Threshold B-4]

The project site is not in any contiguous native habitat corridors and is unlikely to provide any significant function as a wildlife corridor or wildlife movement area due to the proximity of major roads and development. The project site is bordered to the north by Imperial Highway; to the east by Avenida Manuel Salinas civic buildings and parking lots; to the south by Civic Center Drive and commercial buildings; and to the west by Norwalk Boulevard and commercial and multi-family residential buildings. Based on the lack of native habitats, the urban nature of the project site, and the project site's isolation from other habitat, there were no migratory wildlife corridors, habitat linkages, or wildlife nursery sites. Therefore, development of the proposed project would not interfere with an established wildlife corridor and would not impede on the use of native wildlife nursery sites. No waterways occur on or adjacent to the project site and no fish would be present as a result.

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No impact to the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors would occur from the proposed project. Nor would the proposed project impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites because they do not occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: No impact.

Impact 5.3-5: The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. [Threshold B-5]

Trees and shrubs occur within the sidewalk immediately adjacent to the project site along Norwalk Boulevard, Imperial Highway, and Avenida Manuel Salinas, and within the project site itself. The proposed project would redevelop portions of the project site, which would include both the removal and/or relocating of existing trees and shrubs. Planting of new trees and landscaping in the proposed development site as part of the project as described in the proposed specific plan. With respect to trees, as shown in Figure 5.3-1, and dependent on the ultimate design and layout of buildings constructed under the specific plan, the proposed project could result in the removal of up to 160 trees within the project site.

The proposed project would comply with the Norwalk Tree Ordinance as it applies to any street trees and street shrubs, as defined in the ordinance, that may be located on or adjacent to the project site, including by obtaining any required approval from the City prior to removal, and by providing guards and protectors sufficient to prevent injury from project construction to street trees and street shrubs that are not authorized for removal. Because the proposed project would comply with applicable provisions of the Norwalk Tree Ordinance as it relates to any street trees and street shrubs on or adjacent to the project site, the proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Figure 5.3-1 - Onsite Trees
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Source: South Environmental, 2022

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Impact 5.3-6: The proposed project would not conflict with an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, National Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan [Threshold B-6]

There are no adopted Habitat Conservation Plans or Natural Community Conservation Plans or similar approved plans at the local, regional, state, or federal level for the project site or adjacent areas. Therefore, development of the proposed project would have **no impact** to an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: No impact.

5.3.4 Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project and the cumulative projects are within urbanized areas and are generally limited to infill sites. As discussed in 5.3.3.2, *Impact Analysis*, above, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact to biological resources with the incorporation of mitigation measure BIO-1. The project site does not contain sensitive habitat and does not support special-status wildlife or plant species. Additionally, the project site is not within nor near a wildlife corridor or nursery site. Additionally, the project site is not included in an HCP nor NCCP. Therefore, development of the project site would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact. Similar to the proposed project, each cumulative project would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for its impact on biological resources and would be required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations protecting biological resources. If necessary, each cumulative project would also be required to prepare a biological resources study and incorporate mitigation measures to reduce impacts to biological resources.

The proposed project would not contribute to a potentially significant cumulative biological resources impact. Therefore, a **less-than-significant** impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.3.5 References

South Environmental. 2022, March. Biological Resources Assessment for the Norwalk Entertainment District: Civic Center Specific Plan Project. Appendix D.

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5.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources comprise archaeological and historical resources. A cultural resource is defined as any object or specific location of past human activity, occupation, or use, identifiable through historical documentation, inventory, or oral evidence. Cultural resources provide information on scientific progress, environmental adaptations, group ideology, or other human advancements. Cultural resources can be separated into three categories: archaeological, built environment, and traditional cultural resources.

Archaeology studies human artifacts, such as places, objects, and settlements, that reflect group or individual religious, cultural, or everyday activities. Archaeological resources include both historic and prehistoric remains of human activity. Historic-period resources include historic structures, structural ruins (such as foundation remnants), sites (such as artifact reuse deposits and artifact-filled features), objects, or places that are at least 50 years old and are significant for their engineering, architecture, cultural use, or association. In California, historic resources cover human activities over the past 12,000 years. Prehistoric resources can include lithic artifact or ceramic scatters, quarries, habitation sites, temporary camps/rock rings, ceremonial sites and monuments, canals, historic roads and trails, bridges, and ditches and objects.

A traditional cultural resource or property can include Native American sacred sites (such as rock art sites and cemeteries) and traditional resources, such as gathering locations, which are important for maintaining the cultural traditions of any group. These resources are described and evaluated in Section 5.16, *Tribal Cultural Resources*.

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential for implementation of the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan (proposed project) to impact cultural resources. Please also see Section 5.6, *Geology and Soils*, regarding potential impacts to paleontological resources and Section 5.16, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, regarding potential impacts to Native American cultural resources.

The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical reports:

- *Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Historic Resources Technical Report*, Architectural Resources Group, June 2022.
- *Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Assessment Report of the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Project, City of Norwalk, Los Angeles County, California*, Cogstone, June 2022

Complete copies of these technical reports are provided in Appendix E (Historic Resources Technical Report) and Appendix F (Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Report) of this DEIR.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.4.1 Environmental Setting

5.4.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal

National Historic Preservation Act

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 coordinates public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect the nation's historic and archaeological resources. The act authorized the National Register of Historic Places, which lists districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture.

Section 106, (Protection of Historic Properties), of the act requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. Section 106 Review ensures that historic properties are considered during federal project planning and implementation. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent federal agency, administers the review process with assistance from state historic preservation offices.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation's master inventory of known historic resources. Established under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is administered by the National Park Service and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Eligibility for the National Register is addressed in *National Register Bulletin 15: "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation."* Bulletin 15 states that in order to be eligible for the National Register, a resource must both: (1) be historically significant, and (2) retain sufficient integrity to adequately convey its significance.

Significance is assessed by evaluating a resource against established eligibility criteria. A resource is considered significant if it satisfies any one of the following four National Register criteria:

- **Criterion A (events):** associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- **Criterion B (persons):** associated with the lives of significant persons in our past.
- **Criterion C (architecture):** embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- **Criterion D (information potential):** has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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Once significance has been established, it must then be demonstrated that a resource retains enough of its physical and associative qualities—or integrity—to convey the reason(s) for its significance. Integrity is best described as a resource’s “authenticity” as expressed through its physical features and extant characteristics. Generally, if a resource is recognizable as such in its present state, it is said to retain integrity, but if it has been extensively altered then it does not. Whether a resource retains sufficient integrity for listing is determined by evaluating the seven aspects of integrity defined by the National Park Service:

- **Location** (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred).
- **Setting** (the physical environment of a historic property).
- **Design** (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property).
- **Materials** (the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular manner or configuration to form a historic property).
- **Workmanship** (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory).
- **Feeling** (a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time).
- **Association** (the direct link between an important historic event/person and a historic property).

Integrity is evaluated by weighing all seven of these aspects together and is ultimately a “yes or no” determination—that is, a resource either retains sufficient integrity or it does not. Some aspects of integrity may be weighed more heavily than others depending on the type of resource being evaluated and the reason(s) for the resource’s significance. Since integrity depends on a resource’s placement within a historic context, integrity can be assessed only after it has been concluded that the resource is in fact significant.

Archaeological Resources Protection Act

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (United States Code, Title 16, Sections 470aa et seq.) regulates the protection of archaeological resources and sites on federal and Indian lands.

State

California Public Resources Code

Archaeological and historical sites are protected under a wide variety of state policies and regulations in the California Public Resources Code (PRC). In addition, cultural resources are recognized as nonrenewable resources and receive protection under the PRC and CEQA.

PRC Sections 5020 to 5029.5 continued the former Historical Landmarks Advisory Committee as the State Historical Resources Commission. The commission oversees the administration of the California Register of

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Historical Resources and is responsible for designating State Historical Landmarks and Historical Points of Interest.

PRC Sections 5079 to 5079.65 define the functions and duties of the Office of Historic Preservation, which administers federal- and state-mandated historic preservation programs in California as well as the California Heritage Fund.

PRC Sections 5097.9 to 5097.991 provide protection to Native American historical and cultural resources and sacred sites; identify the powers and duties of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC); require that descendants be notified when Native American human remains are discovered; and provide for treatment and disposition of human remains and associated grave goods.

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an authoritative guide used to identify, inventory, and protect historical resources in California. Established by an act of the state legislature in 1998, the California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of significant architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural resources; identifies these resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under CEQA.

The structure of the California Register program is similar to that of the National Register, though the former more heavily emphasizes resources that have contributed specifically to the development of California. To be eligible for the California Register, a resource must first be deemed significant under one of the following four criteria, which are modeled after the National Register criteria listed above:

- **Criterion 1** (events): associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
- **Criterion 2** (persons): associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
- **Criterion 3** (architecture): 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.
- **Criterion 4** (information potential): has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state, or the nation.

Mirroring the National Register, the California Register also requires that resources retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing. A resource's integrity is assessed using the same seven aspects of integrity used for the National Register. However, since integrity thresholds associated with the California Register are generally less rigid than those associated with the National Register, it is possible that a resource may lack the integrity required for the National Register but still be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Certain properties are automatically listed in the California Register:

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- All California properties that are listed in the National Register.
- All California properties that have formally been determined eligible for listing in the National Register (by the State Office of Historic Preservation).
- All California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and above.
- California Points of Historical Interest that have been reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation and recommended for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission.

Resources may be nominated directly to the California Register. There is no prescribed age limit for listing in the California Register, although guidelines state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.

Native American Human Remains

Sites that may contain human remains important to Native Americans must be identified and treated in a sensitive manner, consistent with state law (i.e., California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and PRC Section 5097.98).

In the event that human remains are encountered during project development and in accordance with the Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, the County Coroner must be notified if potential human bone is discovered. The Coroner will then determine within two working days of being notified if the remains are subject to his or her authority. If the Coroner recognizes the remains to be Native American, he or she shall contact the NAHC by phone within 24 hours, in accordance with PRC Section 5097.98. The NAHC will then designate a “most likely descendant,” who can recommend to the property owner or the person responsible for the excavation work the means for treating or disposing, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and associated grave goods.

Tribal Cultural Resources

As of 2015, CEQA established that “[a] project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment” (PRC Section 21084.2). In order to be considered a “tribal cultural resource,” a resource must be:

- (1) Listed, or determined to be eligible for listing, on the national, state, or local register of historic resources, OR
- (2) A resource that the lead agency determines, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to treat as a tribal cultural resource pursuant to criteria of PRC Section 5024.1(c).

To help determine whether a project may have such an effect, the lead agency must consult with any California Native American tribe that requests consultation as required by PRC Section 21080.3.1 and is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project. If a lead agency determines that a project may cause a substantial adverse change to tribal cultural resources, the lead agency must consider measures to

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mitigate that impact. PRC Section 20184.3 (b)(2) provides examples of mitigation measures that lead agencies may consider to avoid or minimize impacts to tribal cultural resources.

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

Educational and Cultural Resources Element

Objectives

- To provide a broad range of educational and cultural opportunities for Norwalk residents.
- To encourage cultural and social diversity and the preservation of the cultural heritage of the City of Norwalk.

Policies

- Develop and maintain the appropriate environment to preserve historically or culturally important buildings, structures, sites, or neighborhoods
- Foster public appreciation for the beauty and culture of the City and the accomplishments of its past reflected through its buildings, structures, sites, areas, neighborhoods and ethnic diversity

Implementation Programs

Support the undertaking of a survey of historic resources. Prepare an inventory of buildings, structures and sites which identifies the significance of the resource and important facts such as date of construction, architect, builder, physical appearance, etc.

City of Norwalk Historic Landmarks

The Educational and Cultural Resources Element identifies four buildings with historic importance, including the Sproul Museum, Paddison Ranch Buildings, Darius David Johnston House, and Front Street Buildings. None of these resources are located on or adjacent to the project site. The City of Norwalk does not have a historic preservation ordinance or mechanisms by which buildings and other resources can be locally designated. Therefore, there are no local designation criteria.

5.4.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

General Setting

The project site is in the eastern section of Norwalk, a suburban community approximately 16 miles southeast of Downtown Los Angeles. Norwalk is one of several communities in Southeast Los Angeles County that are collectively called the “Gateway Cities,” so named because they are equidistant between the urban centers of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Santa Ana. The area around the project site is primarily commercial and institutional in character, and major thoroughfares, including Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard, are

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flanked by shopping centers, hotels, and civic buildings serving various city and county governmental agencies. Inward-facing blocks are residential and generally consist of modest tract houses. Like all of Norwalk, the area around the project site is flat and exhibits no variation in topography. Streets generally conform to a rectilinear grid, though some are skewed to parallel the course of Interstate 5 and an adjacent railroad right-of-way.

The project site is roughly 13.2 acres and is entirely disturbed from prior development. It spans the entirety of three parcels that are owned by the City of Norwalk, and part of a fourth parcel that is owned by the County of Los Angeles. The project site is bounded by Imperial Highway on the north, Norwalk Boulevard on the west, and Avenida Manuel Salinas on the east. The south boundary abuts the Los Angeles County Superior Court-Norwalk facility, then jogs south to encompass the entirety of the adjacent parking structure.

Geologic Setting

The project site lies within the Los Angeles Basin, a sedimentary basin that includes the coastal plains of Los Angeles and Orange counties and out to Catalina Island. This region is bounded by the Santa Ana Mountains to the east, the Santa Monica Mountains to the north, and the San Joaquin Hills to the south. The marine Los Angeles Basin began to develop in the early Miocene, about 23 million years ago. Through time the basin transitioned to terrestrial deposition by the middle Pleistocene, about a million years ago.

The area is part of the coastal section of the northernmost Peninsular Range Geomorphic Province and is characterized by elongated northwest-trending mountain ridges separated by sediment-floored valleys. Subparallel faults branching off the San Andreas Fault to the east create the local mountains and hills. The Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province is in the southwestern corner of California and is bounded by the Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province to the north and the Colorado Desert Geomorphic Province to the east.

The project site is mapped entirely as late Pleistocene to Holocene young alluvium (unit 2) that was deposited from 126,000 years ago into historic times. These flood plain deposits consist of poorly sorted, permeable clays to sands. Deposits are poorly consolidated and may be capped by poorly to moderately developed soils. These sediments were deposited by streams and rivers on canyon floors and in the flat flood plains of the area.

Ethnographic Setting

Information regarding the ethnographic setting is summarized from Appendix F (Cogstone 2022). Little is known about the early Native American peoples of this region. They were replaced about 1,000 years ago by the Gabrielino (Tongva) who were semisedentary hunters and gatherers. The Gabrielino speak a language that is part of the Takic language family. Their territory encompassed a vast area, stretching from Topanga Canyon in the northwest, to the base of Mount Wilson in the north, to San Bernardino in the east, Aliso Creek in the southeast, and the Southern Channel Islands—in all, an area of more than 2,500 square miles. At European contact, the tribe consisted of more than 5,000 people living in various settlements throughout the area. Some of the villages could be quite large, housing up to 150 people.

The Gabrielino are considered to have been one of the wealthiest tribes and to have greatly influenced tribes they traded with. Houses were domed, circular structures thatched with tule or similar materials. The best-

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known artifacts were made of steatite and were highly prized. Many common everyday items were decorated with inlaid shell or carvings, reflecting an elaborately developed artisanship. The main food zones utilized were marine, woodland, and grassland. Villages were located near water sources necessary for the leaching of acorns, which was a daily occurrence. The principal game animals were deer, rabbit, jackrabbit, woodrat, mice, ground squirrels, antelope, quail, dove, ducks, and other birds.

Historic Setting

In 1869, brothers Atwood and Gilbert Sproul purchased 463 acres of land in *Corazon de los Valles*, or Heart of the Valleys. In 1873, the Sproul brothers deeded 23 acres to the Anaheim Branch Railroad, stipulating that it would be used for a passenger stop, and Gilbert Sproul surveyed a town site. The next year the name was officially recorded as Norwalk. Over the next few decades, the town drew new residents and became a center of agriculture, especially the dairy industry. As the town grew, the need for local control also increased and a special incorporation election was called; in 1957 Norwalk became the 66th city in Los Angeles County (Norwalk 2022).

Norwalk History

When Norwalk incorporated, it became California’s 15th largest city, but in the early years of cityhood, the community lacked a permanent city hall or other centralized public facilities. Rather, local government “operated out of a variety of leased spaces including a three-room office on Firestone Boulevard, and subsequently out of the abandoned Nettie L. Waite School facility at 12110 E. Walnut Street” (ARG 2022).

In 1963, plans were approved for a new Civic Center complex to better serve the community. Initial plans called for the proposed Norwalk Civic Center to occupy a large site at the southeast corner of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard, in the eastern portion of the city. Ground was broken on the Norwalk Civic Center in 1964. The first installation to be built within the complex was Norwalk City Hall, a “modern” style municipal structure designed by the architectural firm of Kistner, Wright and Wright of Los Angeles and constructed by the Coastate Brothers, a contracting firm based in Long Beach. As noted in initial plans, the building had a fortified basement to serve as an emergency operations center for 22 Southern California cities, a reminder of the nuclear tensions in the Cold War era.

In addition to City Hall, the Civic Center plan called for the construction of several other municipal buildings. These included a civic auditorium, which was to be north of City Hall; a courthouse for the Los Angeles County Superior Court south of City Hall; a branch library facility; and a branch police station. Of these, a courthouse (1968), public library (1969), and police station (1972) were actually built. The civic auditorium, however, was not constructed, leaving an undeveloped area at the north end of the Civic Center complex. This area (now known as City Hall Lawn) was later planted with a lawn that functions as a public amenity, though it was not planned as such.

Construction of City Hall was completed in 1965; the building was dedicated in April of that year. The building was the first permanent, purpose-built civic structure in the city following the decision to incorporate in 1957.

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Built Environment

In order to determine whether there are built environment historical resources within the project site that could be affected by the proposed project, the Historical Resources Assessment Report (in Appendix E) conducted the following efforts:

- Site visit in January 2022 assessing existing conditions and documenting buildings and other site features.
- Review of background documents and other reference materials related to the evaluation of historical resources.
- Review of applicable background materials, including the State of California’s Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD) and historical building permit records.
- Archival research about the site’s development history, design, and occupancy.
- Identification of applicable historic contexts and themes.
- Evaluation of the site and its requisite improvements against federal (National Register) and state (California Register) designation criteria.

As a result of these efforts, three buildings have been identified on the project site: Norwalk City Hall (built 1965), the County accessory building (built 2010), and the parking structure (built 1996). The County accessory building and parking structure are not of historical age and, as discussed further below and in Appendix E, do not appear to satisfy eligibility criteria for listing on the California or National Registers. Norwalk City Hall and other nearby features on the project site, such as landscaped areas, the surface parking lot, and City Hall Lawn, were evaluated to determine whether they meet the eligibility criteria for listing on the National or California Register. A summary of this evaluation is provided here (see Appendix E for more detail).

City Hall

Located at the southwest corner of the Project Site is Norwalk City Hall, a Mid-Century Modern style civic building that was constructed in 1965 and is the hub of city government for Norwalk. This building is one story tall with a full basement, is constructed of steel and concrete, and sits on a poured concrete foundation. It is square in plan and oriented inward around a central courtyard, which is open to the sky and framed by the building’s four interlocking wings. The building is capped by a flat roof with rolled asphalt sheathing and a parapet. Within the courtyard, the roof projects outward from the face of the building and is supported by steel columns, forming a breezeway that spans the perimeter of the inner courtyard. Exterior walls are clad in small mosaic tiles that are rendered in various hues of blue and green. See Figure 5.4-1, *City Hall Photographs*.

The building is oriented to the west, toward Norwalk Boulevard, and is symmetrically composed. Exposed steel structural beams spaced at regular intervals divide this façade into fourteen bays of equal width. The center four bays are recessed and form the primary entrance to the inner courtyard. The entrance, which is slightly elevated, is supported by slender steel columns and approached by terrazzo steps with steel rails. Bronze letters denoting the building’s street address (“12700”) are incised into the riser of one of the steps. Channel letters

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(spelling “NORWALK CITY HALL” and “12700”) are affixed to a steel girder above the entrance. Ingress is provided by four pairs of glazed metal doors that are surrounded by fixed metal windows; together, these doors and windows form a continuous wall of floor-to-ceiling glazing. Elsewhere on this façade, fenestration consists of fixed aluminum windows.

The east façade is similar, but not identical to, the west façade. It, too, is divided into fourteen bays and has a central recessed entrance to the courtyard with slender steel column supports. This entrance is approached by non-original concrete steps with aggregate treads and chrome handrails, and an accessible ramp. Channel letters (spelling “NORWALK CITY HALL” and “12700”) are affixed to a steel girder above the entrance. Ingress is provided by three pairs of glazed doors that are set within a continuous wall of floor-to-ceiling glazing; what was originally a fourth pair of doors has been replaced by a fixed aluminum window. Secondary entrances include glazed and solid metal doors. Fenestration consists of fixed aluminum windows. The north end of the east façade has a projecting volume that is an addition dating to 1985; however, original mosaic tiles and aluminum windows appear to have been salvaged and integrated onto the addition, rendering it compatible with the original part of the building.

The side (north, south) façades are also divided into equidistant bays and feature the same fixed aluminum windows that are found elsewhere on the building. There are no entrances on either of these side façades. The east end of the south façade features a projecting volume, which is also an addition dating to 1985. It, too, features original mosaic wall tiles and aluminum windows that appear to have been salvaged and incorporated into the addition to obfuscate the delineation between old and new.

Ingress to the building’s interior spaces is provided via walls that face inward toward the central courtyard. These walls are also clad in small mosaic tiles. Entrances on these inward-facing walls generally consist of glazed, flush-mounted aluminum doors with aluminum sidelights and transoms.

Within the courtyard is an integral building volume that is circular in shape and houses the City Council chamber. This volume is built of thin-shell concrete and is capped by a ribbed parabolic roof that extends fully to the ground and gives this portion of the building an elastic-like appearance. The arched walls that are formed by this roof structure are fully glazed with fixed aluminum windows. Ingress is provided by glazed bifold doors. The primary (north) entrance is surmounted by an arched metal canopy. By the 1980s, the originally constructed building became overcrowded as existing city departments grew and additional departments were created to better serve the community. City officials announced plans to add an additional 5,000 square feet of space in 1984. Subsequent changes to the project site include the construction of the parking structure to the southeast of City Hall (1996), the construction of the County accessory building (2010), and the installation of a public art piece called Freedom Memorial (2017), which celebrates the contributions of local men and women who served in the Armed Forces. In addition, the undeveloped space to the north of City Hall (described in more detail, below) has been incrementally improved over time by the planting of grass in the 1970s, installation of a time capsule in 1979, and the installation of trees, sidewalks, and other landscape and hardscape features, many of which date to the early 2000s. A summary of modifications to City Hall since its original construction follows:

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- Addition to south façade (1985)
- Addition to east façade (1985)
- One set of glazed doors replaced with fixed metal window on east façade
- Original steps and hexagonal concrete planter removed from east entrance and replaced with new concrete steps, planters, and an accessible ramp
- Some doors and windows replaced on inward-facing walls (within the inner courtyard)

Site and Landscape Features

The project site contains various site and landscape features. These include (1) hardscape features located at the west entrance to Norwalk City Hall; (2) an interior courtyard that is framed by the four intersecting wings of Norwalk City Hall; (3) a surface parking lot that is located to the east of Norwalk City Hall and to the north of the parking structure, (4) a landscaped area that is located to the north of Norwalk City Hall and is known as City Hall Lawn, and (5) landscaping around the perimeter of Norwalk City Hall. Each of these features is described in more detail below.

West Entrance of Norwalk City Hall

The west-facing entrance to Norwalk City Hall is approached by a concrete walkway and a tile-clad hexagonal planter. The small mosaic tiles that are applied to the planter are the same as those that are applied to the exterior walls of the building. Adjacent to the walkway is a concrete plinth containing three metal flagpoles and a polished granite sign with bronze letters that spell “NORWALK CITY HALL.”

Courtyard (within Norwalk City Hall)

The interior courtyard that is framed by the four intersecting wings of Norwalk City Hall is landscaped with a Japanese-style garden, with mature podocarpus trees and various types of manicured shrubs and ground cover. The interior of the courtyard is finished in concrete with score lines that mimic the appearance of cut stone. The perimeter of the courtyard, beneath the breezeway, is finished in terrazzo.

Surface Parking Lot

To the east of Norwalk City Hall is a surface parking lot. The lot is accessed from the east, via Avenida Manuel Salinas. It is paved in asphalt and has islands composed of concrete curbs and mature ficus trees. The lot is illuminated by “cobra head” style streetlights that are affixed to granite poles. At the center of the parking lot is a public art installation called Freedom Memorial, which commemorates local women and men who have served in the military. Designed by artist Nan Butler-Beckstrom, the installation was dedicated in 2017 and consists of five monolithic sculptures, each of which represents one of the five branches of military – Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard. The installation uses “historical images and information to create etchings telling the stories of soldiers who bravely fought to preserve freedom.” (ARG 2022).

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City Hall Lawn

To the north of Norwalk City Hall is an open landscaped space called City Hall Lawn. Per the original plan for the Norwalk Civic Center, this space was intended to be developed with a civic auditorium, but that building was not constructed as planned. Historic aerial photographs show that this void was planted with grass in the 1970s and was incrementally modified over time with trees, sidewalks, planters, and other improvements, with many of the present-day site improvements (including an undulated sidewalk and landscaping/signage at Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway) dating to 2000 and after. Signage for an adjacent movie theater is also located within City Hall Lawn, at the southwest corner of Imperial Highway and Avenida Manuel Salinas. It is not known precisely when this signage was installed, but it likely corresponds with the construction of the movie theater (located to the south of the Project Site) in 1996.

What is now called City Hall Lawn consists of a broad lawn planted with grass and various species of mature trees, with a preponderance of lemon scented gums and Canary Island pines. The lawn is transected by an undulated concrete sidewalk that dates to circa 2015. This sidewalk leads to a concrete slab with steel handrails and a metal flagpole, which is located adjacent to the north façade of Norwalk City Hall. Located on the slab is a time capsule with a polished granite cornerstone that reads “PLEASE OPEN JULY 4, 2076//GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES FROM THE CITIZENS OF NORWALK, 1979.” The time capsule is buried beneath the slab and is not publicly visible. At the far northwest corner of City Hall Lawn, at the southeast corner of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard, is a sign that reads “NORWALK CIVIC CENTER,” which is surrounded by a fountain and vegetation. The signage and landscaping were both installed circa 2000.

Perimeter Landscaping

The west, north, and south perimeters of Norwalk City Hall are landscaped with lawns containing mature lemon scented gum trees. A low manicured hedge spans the perimeter of the building, providing a modest buffer between the building footprint and the adjacent lawn. This planting scheme is also applied to a portion of the building’s east perimeter. The east entrance to Norwalk City Hall (facing the surface parking) is approached by non-original hardscape features including concrete steps, a concrete ramp, and concrete planter boxes. These hardscape features were installed in 2017.

Figure 5.4-1 - City Hall Photographs
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Primary (west) façade, view northeast (ARG, 2022)



Primary (west) façade, view southeast (ARG, 2022)



North façade, detail of wall tiles and aluminum windows (ARG, 2022)



Building viewed from courtyard, view northwest (ARG, 2022)



Rear (east) façade, view west (ARG, 2022)



Rear (east) façade, view southwest. Note addition in foreground (ARG, 2022)



Building viewed from courtyard, view north (ARG, 2022)



Circular volume at center of courtyard, view northeast. Note ribbed parabolic roof (ARG, 2022)



South façade, view north (ARG, 2022)



North façade, view southwest (ARG, 2022)



Circular volume at center of courtyard, view southwest (ARG, 2022)



Interior of circular volume, showing City Council chamber (ARG, 2022)

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Historical Resources

Project Site

The City Hall building appears to meet eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register and California Register as an individual resource. As detailed in Appendix E, City Hall appears to satisfy National Register Criterion A/State California Register Criterion 1 for its association with broad patterns of civic and institutional development that shaped Norwalk and its collective identity during the formative years of cityhood. The building is a tangible expression of the ambitious civic improvement efforts that characterized the city during this time, when it was trying to cement its roots and solidify its civic identity. The construction of Norwalk City Hall appears to have signified an important moment in the civic and institutional history of the city. It is a physical reflection of the city's coming-of-age in the postwar period and is a reflection of the optimism that defined the community's collective identity as it witnessed tremendous growth and transformation. City Hall also appears to satisfy National Register Criterion C/California Register Criterion 3 for embodying distinctive characteristics of a style, type, and method of construction. None of the other buildings or site/landscape features on the project site appear to meet these criteria.

Character-defining features are those physical elements of a resource that define its historic character and help to convey its significance. ARG developed the following list of features that may be considered character-defining features for Norwalk City Hall, which is included below. This inventory was developed based on visual inspection of the building, review of historical photographs, and evaluation of historical building permits and various other archival materials. No interior character-defining features are identified. Character-defining features are confined to the building's rectangular outer volume, circular inner volume, and inner courtyard connecting these volumes, as well as two hardscape features in the west building setback identified below. Other landscape and hardscape features adjacent to the outer perimeter of the building, including trees, shrubs, walkways, steps, ramps, and planters, are not identified as character-defining features of the historical resource and are distinguished from the building.

Building Exterior

- Simple massing and rectilinear building forms
- Square plan oriented around an open inner courtyard
- Flat roof
- Mosaic tile wall cladding
- Terrazzo steps with incised numbers and a steel handrail (west façade)
- Glazed metal doors
- Fixed, flush-mounted metal windows
- Circular, ribbed concrete shell volume with floor-to-ceiling glazing (within courtyard)
- Barrel-vaulted canopy at entrance to circular volume (within courtyard)]

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Site and Landscape

- Hexagonal planter fronting Norwalk Boulevard clad in mosaic tiles (west setback)
- Polished granite plinth with bronze signage and three flagpoles (west setback)
- Landscaped courtyard (at center of building)

Other buildings and site features within the boundaries of the project site do not satisfy eligibility criteria for federal or state listing. These include the parking structure, the County accessory building, the surface parking lot to the immediate east of Norwalk City Hall, and the landscaped open space (City Hall Lawn) to the immediate north of City Hall. The Civic Center Parking Structure was built in 1996 and represents a utilitarian addition to the complex, as opposed to an improvement like City Hall that carried significant weight in the institutional history of the city. Neither the surface parking lot nor City Hall Lawn nor the landscaping adjacent to City Hall on its north, east and south setbacks appear to express important patterns of civic and institutional development in a meaningful way. City Hall Lawn does not appear to have been deliberately planned as a designed landscape, but rather emerged in somewhat organic fashion on land that was originally intended for a large civic auditorium but remained undeveloped. Its history cannot be definitely linked to any sort of concerted plan or other framework that would render it significant in the context of Norwalk’s civic and institutional history.

Adjacent to the Project Site

There are no historical resources adjacent¹ to the project site listed in the State of California’s Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD).

However, field inspection and preliminary research indicates that there may be a potential historic district adjacent to (and including a small part of) the project site. Preliminary analysis indicates that the potential historic district may consist of four contributing buildings: Norwalk City Hall (built 1965), the Southeast Superior Courts building (built 1969), the Norwalk Library (built 1969), and the Norwalk Sheriff’s Station (built 1972). These four buildings were all conceived under the auspices of the original plan for the Norwalk Civic Center that was developed by architects Kistner, Wright and Wright in the early 1960s, and their civic functions complement one another in a manner that may render them collectively significant in the context of local civic and institutional development. These buildings also share common architectural characteristics in that they were all designed in compatible iterations of post-World War II Modernism: Norwalk City Hall is designed in the Mid-Century Modern style and the Southeast Superior Courts building, the Norwalk Library, and the Norwalk Sheriff’s Station are designed in the New Formalist style.

Almost all of this potential district falls outside the boundaries of the project site, and for this reason its potential eligibility was not evaluated for purposes of the Historical Resources Technical Report, which was limited to the boundaries of the project site. (Note that only Norwalk City Hall falls within the boundaries of the project site; the Southeast Superior Courts building, the Norwalk Library, and the Norwalk Sheriff’s Station are all outside the boundaries of the project site).

¹ “Adjacent” resources are defined as those historical resources with direct adjacency to the Project Site, either within its viewshed or with a view of it.

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Such a potential historic district would not include any other buildings or improvements on the project site including the parking structure, the County accessory building, the surface parking lot, or landscaping adjacent to Norwalk City Hall (aside from that building’s inner landscaped courtyard, the hexagonal planter in the west setback and the polished granite plinth with bronze letters and three metal flagpoles in the west setback). Specifically, the City Hall Lawn; all landscape and hardscape features on the north, south, and east perimeters of Norwalk City Hall; and landscape and hardscape features on the west perimeter of City Hall aside from the two features described above, would not be included in any potential historic district.

For purposes of the Historic Resources Technical Report, the potential district is being treated as an “adjacent” historical resource.

Archaeological Resources

Cogstone requested a search of the California Historical Resources Information System from the South Central Coastal Information Center at California State University–Fullerton on January 4, 2022, which included the entire proposed project site as well as a half-mile radius. Results of the record search indicate that no previous studies have been completed within the project site and that six studies have been completed previously within a half-mile radius of the project site. No cultural resources have been recorded within the project site. Outside of the project site, two cultural resources, both historic built environment resources, have been previously documented within the half-mile search radius. A Sacred Lands File (SLF) search was completed on March 7, 2022 and indicated that there are no sacred lands or resources known within the same USGS Quadrangle, Township, Range, and Section as the project site.

A cultural resources pedestrian survey of the project site was conducted on March 3, 2022. The survey found that the entire project site was either landscaped or hardscaped. Native sediments were not encountered during the survey. No archaeological resources were identified during the pedestrian survey.

5.4.2 Thresholds of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 provides direction on determining significance of impacts to archaeological and historical resources. Generally, a resource shall be considered “historically significant” if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register:

- Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.
- Is associated the with lives of persons important in our past.
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
- Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (PRC Section 5024.1; 14 CCR Section 4852)

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The fact that a resource is not listed in the California Register of Historic Resources, not determined to be eligible for listing, or not included in a local register of historical resources does not preclude a lead agency from determining that it may be a historical resource.

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project has the potential to impact a historical resource when the project results in a “substantial adverse change” to the resource’s significance. Substantial adverse change is defined as “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource will be materially impaired” (Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations [CCR], Section 15064.5).

The significance of a historical resource is materially impaired when a project:

- a) Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resources that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, the California of Historical Resources; or
- b) Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code (PRC) of its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the PRC, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project established by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or
- c) Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for the purposes of CEQA.

A project that has been determined to conform with the Secretary of the *Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (the Standards) shall generally be considered to be a project that will not cause a significant impact on a historical resource (Title 14 CCR, Section 15064.5(b)(3)).

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to cultural resources if the project would:

- C-1 Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.
- C-2 Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.
- C-3 Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.

Please also see Section 5.6, *Geology and Soils*, regarding potential impacts to paleontological resources, and Section 5.16, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, regarding potential impacts to Native American cultural resources.

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5.4.3 Environmental Impacts

5.4.3.1 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.4-1: The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5. [Threshold C-1]

One building within the project site—City Hall—appears to meet eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register and California Register as an individual resource. This building satisfies the definition of a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA. Therefore, both indirect/temporary and direct/operational impacts to this historical resource were evaluated and described below.

The historical resource (City Hall) is confined to the rectangular outer building volume, the circular inner building volume, the inner courtyard connecting these volumes, and site features within the west building setback including a hexagonal planter and a granite plinth with bronze signage and three metal flagpoles. Landscaping around the outer perimeter of the Norwalk City Hall building is not considered to be a part of the historical resource because it is not associated with the historical and architectural significance of the building.

No other buildings or improvements on the project site satisfy the above definition of a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA since there is insufficient evidence demonstrating that they meet eligibility criteria. This includes the parking structure, the County accessory building, the surface parking lot to the east of Norwalk City Hall, and perimeter landscaping, including the City Hall Lawn and landscape and hardscape features along the north, south, and east perimeters of the Norwalk City Hall building.

Construction

The proposed project would include the construction of a mixed-use development around City Hall. Paving and landscaping could occur up to the City Hall building. The nearest pile would be driven at a distance of approximately 50 feet from the historical resource. This is not anticipated to be any material impairment to the historical resource because of the distance between the piles and the historical resource. Moreover, there has been previous construction activity adjacent to the historical resource since its construction including the Southeast Superior Courts building (1969) and the parking structure (1996), neither of which is known to have impaired its material integrity.

It is possible that pile driving activity could result in limited damage to the mosaic tiles that clad the exterior walls of the historical resource. The tiles are a character-defining feature of the historical resource. Site inspection showed that the tiles periodically fall from the building, thereby indicating that they may be susceptible to vibration. Any such damage is anticipated to be minimal and localized, can be easily repaired, and is not anticipated to result in “material impairment” of the resource. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource

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pursuant to Section 15064.5, and a **less than significant impact** would occur. Additionally, Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would ensure that any vibration-related impacts associated with piledriving activities during construction would reduce impacts to less than significant.

Operation

Project Site

The proposed project would not result in direct impacts to historical resources. No changes to the Norwalk City Hall building would occur as part of the proposed project. The historical resource would be located at a distance from the proposed new buildings, which would be built on sites to the north and east of Norwalk City Hall that are currently improved with the non-historic City Hall Lawn and non-historic surface parking lot, respectively.

None of the character-defining features associated with Norwalk City Hall would be removed or indirectly altered as a result of the proposed project. Character-defining exterior features and finishes, and character-defining site and landscape features that are associated with the historical resource, would not be modified in any way by the construction of the proposed project. None of the character-defining features of the building would be modified as a result of the proposed project. Specifically, all exterior features and finishes that are identified as character-defining would not be modified, nor would the inner landscaped courtyard or the two character-defining site features in the west setback (hexagonal planter, granite plinth).

The proposed project entails demolition of the City Hall Lawn and the surface parking lot to accommodate the new mixed-use development. It also entails modifications to existing landscaping adjacent to the outer perimeter of Norwalk City Hall. Neither the City Hall Lawn, the surface parking lot, nor the landscaping adjacent to the outer perimeter of Norwalk City Hall satisfy the definition of a “historical resource.” The proposed project may also entail vertical expansion of the parking structure with two additional parking levels. However, the parking structure also does not satisfy the definition of a “historical resource.” Therefore, changes to the City Hall Lawn, the surface parking lot, and the parking structure would not result in direct impacts to historical resources.

The proposed project includes construction of a new mixed-use residential and commercial development to the north and east of Norwalk City Hall. The new development would extend up to seven stories above grade. The conceptual site plan, which could vary, includes two seven-story buildings, which would contain two levels of parking, ground-floor commercial, and up to five stories of residential units. The development would contain up to 350 residential units, up to 110,000-square-feet of commercial space, and open space. The proposed project would incorporate ground-floor plazas and open space that would be publicly accessible but privately operated and maintained and would also include residential open space for residents. The publicly accessible open space could include outdoor dining areas, fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, booths, outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements.

The new development would be located adjacent to Norwalk City Hall and would be substantially larger than the historical resource; however, the new mixed-use buildings would be physically separated from the historical

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resource by a minimum distance of 50 feet on the north and minimum 50 feet on the east. This would ensure that there is an adequate physical buffer separating the footprint of the historical resource from that of the adjacent new mixed-use buildings, and would ensure that the historical resource's overall configuration, primary (west-facing) façade, and exterior character-defining features and associated site and landscape features (including the inner landscaped courtyard, hexagonal planter in the west setback, and polished granite plinth in the west setback) remain visible to the public.

The west façade of the historical resource has the most public visibility, and the building's primary vantage point comes from the west as viewed from Norwalk Boulevard. Construction of the new mixed-use development would not impair visibility of this façade or change how the building is experienced when it is viewed from Norwalk Boulevard. Because of its location on the project site, the new mixed-use buildings may limit public views of the historical resource's north and east façades and change how the building is seen from Imperial Highway and Avenida Manuel Salinas, respectively (as discussed in Section 5.1, *Aesthetics*). However, these façades read as secondary and are visually subservient to the primary (west) façade, and so adjacent new construction would not significantly change how the historical resource is experienced from public view. The east and north façades would be visible from within publicly accessible areas of the proposed project.

The aforementioned separation of the proposed project's new mixed-use development (not including kiosks or other open space features discussed above) from the historical resource (50 feet on the north and 50 feet on the east) would further ensure that character-defining features and spaces associated with the historical resource remain visible. There would be various improvements within this publicly accessible open space, including among other things outdoor dining areas, fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, booths, outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements. Features such as these are generally low in scale and would continue to allow views of the historical resource from publicly-accessible areas within the project site.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation generally guide the treatment of a historic building's significant spaces, features, materials, and environment. Because the proposed project will not include changes to the historical resource itself, Standards 1-8 do not apply to the proposed project. However, Standards 9 and 10 relate specifically to adjacent/related new construction and are applicable to the proposed project.

The proposed project would comply with Standards 9 and 10 as follows:

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

The proposed project does not include any construction activity on the Norwalk City Hall building itself, and therefore it would not destroy historic materials that characterize the resource. The historical resource would retain all of its exterior character-defining features and character-defining site and landscape features

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(specifically, its landscaped inner courtyard, hexagonal planter in the west setback, and polished granite plinth in the west setback).

The Norwalk City Hall building does not have a historically significant spatial relationship with other existing improvements on the project site including the parking structure, the surface parking lot, and perimeter landscaping including the City Hall Lawn and landscaping adjacent to the outer perimeter of the Norwalk City Hall building. Removal and replacement of these non-historic elements of the project site would therefore not result in the destruction of important spatial relationships.

Rising to a maximum height of seven stories, the new mixed-use buildings that would be constructed as part of the proposed project would be up to six stories taller than the Norwalk City Hall building, which is one story tall. However, the surrounding civic buildings are of similar height. Other existing six- and seven-story buildings include the Los Angeles Superior Courthouse adjacent to the project site; the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/Clerk building, approximately 560 feet east of the project site; an office building approximately 880 feet east of the project site; an office building approximately 1,260 feet east of the project site; and the Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, approximately 920 feet south of the project site). Additionally, as described above, the proposed project would include a minimum 50-foot setback on the north and east between the new mixed-use buildings and the historical resource to ease the visual transition in scale between existing and new. Though this setback would consist of publicly-accessible open space containing various improvements such as outdoor dining areas, fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, booths, outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements, these types of improvements are low in scale and would not compete with, and would continue to allow key views of, the historical resource. Setting back the massing of the mixed-use buildings in this way also has the effect of preserving views of the Norwalk City Hall building as it is viewed from the west (Norwalk Boulevard), which is a key view.

The new buildings would be differentiated from the Norwalk City Hall building such that they do not replicate any of the historic elements or features of the historical resource, or attempt to appear as historic construction. Rather, the new buildings would have a contemporary aesthetic that is easily differentiated from the historical resource. Though larger in scale than the Norwalk City Hall building, the new development is designed and sited in such a way that it would be compatible with the overall massing, size, scale, and features of the historical resource. From all vantage points, the new building would clearly read as separate, contemporary construction in relation to the Norwalk City Hall building.

For these reasons, the proposed project meets Standard No. 9.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The proposed project includes new construction adjacent to, but physically and visually separated from, the Norwalk City Hall building. It does not include any additions or modifications to the historical resource itself, or any related new construction.

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Within the 50-foot setback between Norwalk City Hall and the proposed new buildings would be a publicly-accessible open space improved with various features including outdoor dining areas, fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, booths, outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements. As they are adjacent to (and thereby separate from) the historical resource, their removal in the future would not result in any material impairment of the historical resource or its environment.

If the buildings that comprise the proposed mixed-use development were to be removed in the future, Norwalk City Hall would remain unchanged. Similarly, if any vertical additions that are made to the parking structure were to be removed in the future, Norwalk City Hall would remain unchanged. The historical resource would retain its essential form and integrity, and all of its character-defining features would remain intact.

For these reasons, the proposed project meets Standard No. 10.

Continued Eligibility

As described above, the proposed project meets the Standards as they apply to related and adjacent new construction to the Norwalk City Hall building, a historical resource.

Upon completion of the proposed project, Norwalk City Hall would continue to be eligible for designation in the National Register and California Register. Since the proposed project would not impose any changes to the historical resource itself, the historical resource would continue to appear as it did historically and retain its ability to materially convey its significant associations. It would retain all of its character-defining features.

Moreover, the proposed project would not diminish the integrity of Norwalk City Hall. As discussed in Section 7.3: *Evaluation of Integrity*, of the Historic Resources Technical Report (Appendix E) the historical resource retains all seven aspects of integrity, although its integrity of Design has been compromised because of modifications to the south and east façades.

As part of the proposed project, Norwalk City Hall would retain sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register and California Register, as it does currently.

City Hall would not be moved as part of the proposed project and will therefore retain its integrity of Location.

Because the proposed project does not involve any modifications to the Norwalk City Hall building itself, or to any of its character-defining site and landscape features (i.e., the landscaped inner courtyard, the hexagonal planter in the west setback, and the granite plinth in the west setback), the building would continue to retain its integrity of Materials and Workmanship. There would be no changes to its integrity of Design, which is currently intact but compromised due to prior modifications to the south and east façades. This would continue to be true upon completion of the proposed project.

As noted, the Norwalk City Hall building, its inner landscaped courtyard, and the two character-defining site features in the west setback (including the hexagonal planter and granite plinth) would not be modified as a result of the proposed project. The Norwalk City Hall building would retain all of its character-defining features and will therefore retain its integrity of Feeling and Association.

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The historical resource's integrity of Setting would be diminished by the proposed project. The removal of the unrelated, non-historic surface parking lot and perimeter landscaping (including the City Hall Lawn), and development of the proposed project's mixed-use buildings in their place would change the immediate setting of the historical resource by introducing buildings and improvements where they do not currently exist. Construction of the mixed-use buildings would also change the setting of the historical resource by introducing residential and commercial uses to a site that is currently developed entirely with civic and institutional buildings and their associated site features. However, while the building's integrity of setting would be diminished, this, in and of itself, would not diminish the building's overall integrity to the extent to which it would no longer be eligible for listing in the National Register and/or California Register since all other aspects of integrity would remain unchanged as a result of the proposed project.

Therefore, Norwalk City Hall would remain eligible for federal and state listing upon proposed project completion. The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of City Hall, a historical resource, pursuant to Section 15064.5, and a less than significant impact would occur.

Adjacent Resources

The proposed project would not have a significant impact on the potential historic district. No construction activity is proposed for any of its four contributing buildings, all of which would remain intact and in situ upon completion of the proposed project. The four contributing buildings would continue to be used as they currently are – for governmental and civic functions – and their related uses will continue to complement one another in such a manner that the potential district would continue to read as a hub of local government operations.

The setting of the potential historic district may be diminished as a result of the proposed project. Neither the surface parking lot nor the perimeter landscaping that would be removed as part of the proposed project contribute to the potential district, but they create lines of sight between some of the contributing buildings – specifically, Norwalk City Hall and the Norwalk Library. The construction of new buildings to the north and east of Norwalk City Hall would obscure these sightlines by introducing massing and bulk where they do not presently exist. However, this, in and of itself, would not diminish the setting of the potential district as to where its significance would be materially impaired. The potential district would continue to read as a complex comprising complementary civic and institutional buildings dating to the post-World War II period, and as noted above none of the buildings would be removed or modified as a part of the proposed project. Therefore, design and operation of the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5, and a **less than significant impact** would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

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Impact 5.4-2: Development of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5. [Threshold C-2]

The project site is developed with landscaping, hardscaping, buildings, and a parking structure and is in a highly urbanized area of the city. The project site has already been subjected to ground-disturbing activities associated with the existing development; therefore, archaeological sensitivity is considered low. Furthermore, as discussed above, the Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Assessment indicated that the project site does not contain any archaeological resources based on records search and an intensive pedestrian site survey by a qualified archaeologist.

No archaeological resources were identified during prior development activities in the project site and surrounding area—as concluded by the California Historical Resources Information System records search—and it is unlikely that any such resources would be uncovered or affected during project-related grading and construction activities. The project area and immediate surroundings are also not recognized as an area of potential sensitivity for archeological resources. Based on the results of the cultural records search conducted by Cogstone, the project area has a low sensitivity for prehistoric archaeological resources. Analysis of these data sources and historical US Department of Agriculture (USDA) aerial photographs, indicate that the project site also has low sensitivity for buried historical archaeological features, such as foundations or trash pits.

No prehistoric or historic archaeological resources were identified in the project site during the intensive pedestrian survey conducted by Cogstone or during any previous investigations. In addition, the record searches conducted for the proposed project indicate that no prehistoric archaeological or tribal resources have been previously recorded within the project site. These negative findings along with a review of historic USDA aerial photographs indicate that the potential for subsurface prehistoric or historic resource deposits is low. Nevertheless, since the proposed project involves earthwork and ground disturbance, the potential exists that unknown archaeological resources may be unearthed. For this reason, the proposed project would result in a **potentially significant impact** to archaeological resources.

Mitigation Measures:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| CUL-1 | If unanticipated cultural resources discoveries are made, all work must halt within 50 feet until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the significance of the find. Work may resume immediately outside of the 50-foot radius. |
| CUL-2 | If the qualified archaeologist determines that the find is significant, an archaeological treatment plan must be developed to mitigate harm to the resource and will include procedures for data recovery in the event that the resource cannot be avoided. |

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant with incorporation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2.

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Impact 5.4-3: Grading activities could potentially disturb human remains. [Threshold C-3]

The project site was developed with the existing buildings, parking lots, hardscape, and landscaping starting in 1965. In addition to previous ground-disturbing activities, the construction of the proposed project would involve ground disturbance to a depth of approximately 10 feet. Given the previous ground-disturbing activity at the project site and the expected depth of ground disturbance required for the proposed project, the likelihood of discovering unknown human remain is considered low.

However, earthwork activities associated with the construction of the project site still have the potential to unearth unknown human remains. In the event that human remains are discovered, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) require that there be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains. These regulations require the coroner to make a determination as to whether an investigation into the cause of death is required. If the coroner has reason to believe the remains are Native American, they must contact the NAHC by telephone within 24 hours. The NAHC will identify the most likely descendant, who can make recommendations for proper treatment and burial, which would be implemented in accordance with Section 15064.5(e) of the CEQA Guidelines. Compliance with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.05 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) would ensure that the proposed project's potential disturbance of human remains is **less than significant**. In addition, as described in Section 5.16, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, Mitigation Measures TCR-2 and TCR-3 would be incorporated as part of the proposed project which identifies procedures in the unlikely event of tribal human remains and funerary objects.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.4.4 Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project and the cumulative projects are located within areas that have been developed and disturbed over time. While implementation of the proposed project in conjunction with the cumulative projects could unearth unknown significant cultural resources, in such an event each cumulative project would be required to comply with applicable regulatory requirements.

In addition, the proposed project does not involve demolition of a historic resource, it is possible that cumulative projects could involve modifications to or demolition of existing buildings, some of which may be considered historic resources. However, under existing applicable law, site-specific cultural resources investigations would be required for other discretionary projects before permit ground disturbances or demolition or substantial alteration of existing structures can occur. Such investigations would include some degree of surface-level surveying and identify resources on the affected project sites that are or appear to be eligible for listing on the national or state registers for historic resources. Such investigations would also be required to mitigate impacts (where needed) to reduce impacts and protect and preserve any identified cultural and/or historic resources. As a part of the investigations, a cultural resources records search of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) and a Sacred Land Files search would also be required.

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Furthermore, as discussed above, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact to City Hall and does not propose any changes to off-site buildings that could contribute to a potential historic district. No cumulative project is adjacent to the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not alter historic resources in a manner that could combine with cumulative project to result in a cumulatively considerable impact to historic resources. As also demonstrated above, impacts to archaeological resources and human remains as a result of implementation of the proposed project were determined to be less than significant.

The proposed project's contribution to cumulative cultural resource impacts would be rendered **less than significant**, and therefore, the proposed project's impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impact.

5.4.5 References

Architectural Resources Group (ARG). 2022, June. Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Historic Resources Technical Report, DEIR Appendix E.

Cogstone. 2022, June. Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Assessment Report of The Norwalk Entertainment District–Civic Center Specific Plan Project, City of Norwalk, Los Angeles County, California. DEIR Appendix F.

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5.5 ENERGY

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential for energy-related impacts associated with the Norwalk Entertainment – Civic Center Specific Plan Project (proposed project) and ways in which it would reduce unnecessary energy consumption, consistent with the suggestions in Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines. Energy service providers to the site include Southern California Edison (SCE) for electrical service and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) for natural gas.

5.5.1 Environmental Setting

Section 21100(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an environmental impact report (EIR) include a detailed description of mitigation measures proposed to minimize significant effects on the environment, including but not limited to, measures to reduce the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy. Appendix F of the State CEQA Guidelines states that, to ensure that energy implications are considered in project decisions, the potential energy implications of a project shall be considered in an EIR, to the extent relevant and applicable to the project. Appendix F further states that a project's energy consumption and proposed conservation measures may be addressed, as relevant and applicable, in the project description, environmental setting, and impact analysis portions of technical sections as well as through mitigation measures and alternatives.

In accordance with Appendices F and G of the State CEQA Guidelines, this EIR includes relevant information and analyses that address the energy implications of the proposed project. This section summarizes the proposed project's anticipated energy needs, impacts, and conservation measures. Other aspects of the proposed project's energy implications are discussed elsewhere in this EIR, including Chapter 3, *Project Description*, and Sections 5.2, *Air Quality*; 5.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*; and 5.15, *Transportation*.

5.5.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal Regulations

Federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act

The Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) of 1975 was established in response to the 1973 oil crisis. The act created the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, established vehicle fuel economy standards, and prohibited the export of US crude oil (with a few limited exceptions). It also created Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for passenger cars starting in model year 1978. The CAFE standards are updated periodically to account for changes in vehicle technologies, driver behavior, and/or driving conditions.

The federal government issued new CAFE standards in 2012 for model years 2017 to 2025 that required a fleet average of 54.5 miles per gallon (mpg) for model year 2025. However, on March 30, 2020, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized an updated CAFE and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions standards for passenger cars and light trucks and established new standards covering model years 2021 through 2026, known as the Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Final Rule for Model Years 2021–2026. Under SAFE, the fuel economy standards will increase 1.5 percent per year compared to the five percent per

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year under the CAFE standards established in 2012. Overall, SAFE requires a fleet average of 40.4 miles per gallon (mpg) for model year 2026 vehicles (Federal Register 2020).

On December 21, 2021, under direction of Executive Order (EO) 13990 issued by President Biden, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration repealed Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient Vehicles Rule Part One, which had preempted state and local laws related to fuel economy standards. On August 5, 2021, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration announced new proposed fuel standards in response to EO 13990. Fuel efficiency under the standards proposed would increase eight percent annually for model years 2024 to 2026 and increase estimate fleetwide average by 12 mpg for model year 2026 relative to model year 2021 (NHTSA 2021).

Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007

The Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007 (Public Law 110-140) seeks to provide the nation with greater energy independence and security by increasing the production of clean renewable fuels; improving vehicle fuel economy; and increasing the efficiency of products, buildings, and vehicles. It also seeks to improve the energy performance of the federal government. The Act set higher CAFE standards; Renewable Fuel Standard; appliance energy efficiency standards; and building energy efficiency standards and accelerated research and development tasks on renewable energy sources (e.g., solar energy, geothermal energy), carbon capture, and sequestration (USEPA 2022).

State Regulations

Warren-Alquist Act

Established in 1974, the Warren-Alquist Act created the California Energy Commission (CEC) in response to the energy crisis of the early 1970s and the state's unsustainable growing demand for energy resources. The CEC's core responsibilities include advancing state energy policy, encouraging energy efficiency, certifying thermal power plants, investing in energy innovation, developing renewable energy, transforming transportation, and preparing for energy emergencies. The Warren-Alquist Act is updated annually to address current energy needs and issues. Its latest edition was in January 2022.

Renewables Portfolio Standard

Senate Bills 1078, 107, X1-2, and Executive Order S-14-08

The California Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) Program was established in 2002 under SB 1078 (Sher) and 107 (Simitian). The RPS program required investor-owned utilities, electric service providers, and community choice aggregators to increase the use of eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total procurement by 2020. Initially under the RPS, certain retail sellers of electricity were required to increase the amount of renewable energy each year by at least 1 percent in order to reach at least 20 percent by December 30, 2010. EO S-14-08 was signed in November 2008, which expanded the state's Renewable Energy Standard to 33 percent renewable power by 2020. This standard was adopted by the legislature in 2011 (SB X1-2). The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) is required to provide quarterly progress reports on progress toward RPS goals. This has accelerated the development of renewable energy projects throughout the

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state. For year 2020, the three largest retail energy utilities provided an average of 43 percent of their supplies from renewable energy sources. Community choice aggregators provided an average of 41 percent of their supplies from renewable sources (CPUC 2021).

Senate Bill 350

Senate Bill 350 (De Leon), was signed into law September 2015. SB 350 establishes tiered increases to the RPS of 40 percent by 2024, 45 percent by 2027, and 50 percent by 2030. SB 350 also set a new goal to double the energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas through energy efficiency and conservation measures.

Senate Bill 100

On September 10, 2018, Governor Brown signed SB 100, which replaces the SB 350 requirements. Under SB 100, the RPS for public-owned facilities and retail sellers consist of 44 percent renewable energy by 2024, 52 percent by 2027, and 60 percent by 2030. SB 100 also established a new RPS requirement of 50 percent by 2026. Furthermore, the bill establishes an overall state policy that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all state agencies by December 31, 2045. Under the bill, the state cannot increase carbon emissions elsewhere in the western grid or allow resource shuffling to achieve the 100 percent carbon-free electricity target.

Appliance Efficiency Regulations

California's Appliance Efficiency Regulations contain energy performance, energy design, water performance, and water design standards for appliances (including refrigerators, ice makers, vending machines, freezers, water heaters, fans, boilers, washing machines, dryers, air conditioners, pool equipment, and plumbing fittings) that are sold or offered for sale in California (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 20, Parts 1600–1608). These standards are updated regularly to allow consideration of new energy efficiency technologies and methods (CEC 2017).

Title 24, Part 6, Energy Efficiency Standards

Energy conservation standards for new residential and nonresidential buildings were adopted by the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (now the CEC) in June 1977 (24 CCR Part 6). Title 24 requires the design of building shells and building components to conserve energy. The standards are updated periodically to allow for consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which were adopted on May 9, 2018, went into effect starting January 1, 2020.

The 2019 standards move toward cutting energy use in new homes by more than 50 percent and require installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems for single-family homes and multifamily buildings of three stories and less (CBSC 2019a). The 2019 standards focus on four key areas: 1) smart residential PV systems; 2) updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to exterior and vice versa); 3) residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements; 4) and nonresidential lighting requirements (CEC 2018a). Under the 2019 standards, nonresidential buildings are generally 30 percent more energy efficient

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compared to the 2016 standards, and single-family homes are generally seven percent more energy efficient (CEC 2018b). When accounting for the electricity generated by the solar PV system, single-family homes will generally use 53 percent less energy compared to homes built to the 2016 standards (CEC 2018b).

Furthermore, on August 11, 2021, the CEC adopted the 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which were approved by the California Building Standards Commission in December 2021. The 2022 standards will become effective and replace the existing 2019 standards on January 1, 2023. The 2022 standards require mixed-fuel single-family homes to be electric-ready to accommodate replacement of gas appliances with electric appliances. In addition, the new standards also include prescriptive photovoltaic system and battery requirements for high-rise, multifamily buildings (i.e., more than three stories) and noncommercial buildings such as hotels, offices, medical offices, restaurants, retail stores, schools, warehouses, theaters, and convention centers (CEC 2021).

Title 24, Part 11, Green Building Standards

On July 17, 2008, the California Building Standards Commission adopted the nation's first green building standards. The California Green Building Standards Code (24 CCR, Part 11, known as "CALGreen") was adopted as part of the California Building Standards Code. It includes mandatory requirements for new residential and nonresidential buildings throughout California. CALGreen is intended to (1) reduce GHG emissions from buildings; (2) promote environmentally responsible, cost-effective, healthier places to live and work; (3) reduce energy and water consumption; and (4) respond to the directives by the governor. The mandatory provisions of CALGreen became effective January 1, 2011 and were most recently updated in 2019. The 2019 standards became effective on January 1, 2020.

Overall, the Code is established to reduce construction waste, make buildings more efficient in the use of materials and energy, and reduce environmental impact during and after construction. CALGreen contains requirements for construction site selection; storm water control during construction; construction waste reduction; indoor water use reduction; material selection; natural resource conservation; site irrigation conservation; and more. The Code allows the designer to determine how best to achieve compliance for a given site or building condition. The Code also requires building commissioning, which is a process for verifying that all building systems (e.g., heating and cooling equipment and lighting systems) are functioning at their maximum efficiency (CBSC 2019b).

Assembly Bill 1493

California vehicle GHG emission standards were enacted under AB 1493 (Pavley I). Pavley I is a clean-car standard that reduces GHG emissions from new passenger vehicles (light-duty auto to medium-duty vehicles) from 2009 through 2016 and is anticipated to reduce GHG emissions from new passenger vehicles by 30 percent in 2016. California implements the Pavley I standards through a waiver granted to California by the EPA. In 2012, the EPA issued a Final Rulemaking that sets even more stringent fuel economy and GHG emissions standards for model year 2017 through 2025 light-duty vehicles (see also the discussion on the update to the CAFE standards under *Federal*, above). In January 2012, the California Air Resources Board approved the Pavley Advanced Clean Cars program (formerly known as Pavley II) for model years 2017 through 2025. The program combines the control of smog, soot, and global warming gases and requirements for greater

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numbers of zero-emission vehicles into a single package of standards. Under California's Advanced Clean Car program, by 2025, new automobiles will emit 34 percent fewer global warming gases and 75 percent fewer smog-forming emissions (CARB 2017).

Executive Order N-79-20

On September 23, 2020, EO N-79-20 was issued to set a time frame for the transition to zero-emissions (ZE) passenger vehicles, trucks, and off-road equipment. It directs the California Air Resources Board to develop and propose:

- Passenger vehicle and truck regulations requiring increasing volumes of new ZEVs (zero-emission vehicles) sold in the California toward the target of 100 percent of in-state sales by 2035.
- Medium- and heavy-duty vehicle regulations requiring increasing volumes of new ZE trucks and buses sold and operated in California toward the target of 100 percent of the fleet transitioning to ZEVs by 2045 everywhere feasible, and for all drayage trucks to be ZE by 2035.
- Strategies to achieve 100 percent zero emissions from all off-road vehicles and equipment operations in California by 2035, in cooperation with other state agencies, the EPA, and local air districts.

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

The City of Norwalk General Plan includes the following policies with regards to energy:

Utility Infrastructure Element

Objectives

- To ensure that public infrastructure improvements are compatible with development.

Policies

- Continue to plan for and coordinate the implementation of infrastructure requirements to meet development demands.
- Discourage the approval of density bonuses in neighborhoods with inadequate infrastructure, especially in areas with inadequate sewers, water supply, and fire flow.

Natural Gas Objectives

- To ensure adequate natural gas service to meet present and future needs of the City.
- To minimize the risks associated with any gas leakage and exposure.

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Natural Gas Policies

- Coordinate with The Gas Company in upgrading or adding gas service lines to serve present and future needs of Norwalk.
- Encourage energy conservation in both public and private buildings.

Electricity Objectives

- To ensure adequate electricity service to meet present and future needs of Norwalk

Electricity Policies

- Coordinate with Southern California Edison in upgrading and adding electrical service to serve present and future needs of Norwalk.
- Encourage energy conservation in both public and private buildings.

Implementation Programs

- The City shall require all new developments to install all on-site utilities and connections to distribution systems underground, unless infeasible due to significant environmental or other constraints.
- Establish a structure by which the City can coordinate with Southern California Edison on the maintenance and expansion of electrical systems.
- Check new building projects for compliance with the State Energy Conservation Standards (Title 24, California State Administrative Code).
- Disseminate information to the community on practical ways to conserve energy
- Check new building projects for compliance with the State Energy Conservation Standards (Title 24, California State Administrative Code).
- Establish a structure by which the City can coordinate with the Gas Company on the maintenance and expansion of natural gas systems
- Disseminate information community on practical ways to conserve energy.
- Disseminate information to the community on the potential risk of methane gas leakage and available mitigation measures.
- Formulate and maintain police, fire, evacuation, hospitalization, and recovery programs in response to a natural gas leakage and/or explosion.

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Energy Action Plan

The Energy Action Plan (EAP) was adopted by the City of Norwalk November 2015 as a strategic plan to establish a 2010 baseline, to address California’s energy reduction goals by setting overall net energy consumption reduction targets (for years 2015, 2020, and 2025), and to identify programs/projects to achieve the targets over time (Norwalk 2015). The EAP focuses on reducing energy consumption from the City’s municipal operations, specifically its buildings. The EAP also identifies energy-saving regulations from current state and federal legislation, specifically Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the aim for statewide decrease of greenhouse gas emission to 1990 levels by the year 2020, and California’s Long-Term Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan (CEESP). The City has initiated energy efficiency policies based on the City’s Strategic Action Plan 6.B.1-3 2020 Vision, published by the Norwalk City Council. If all the projects and actions are implemented, this will reduce the City’s electrical energy usage by 25 percent from 2010 levels by 2025.

5.5.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Electricity

The project site is in SCE’s service area, which spans much of Southern California—from Orange and Riverside counties in the south to Santa Barbara County in the west to Mono County in the north (CEC 2022a). Total electricity consumption in SCE’s service area was 103,597 gigawatt-hours in 2020 (CEC 2022c).¹ Sources of electricity sold by SCE in 2020, the latest year for which data are available, were:

- 30.9 percent renewable, consisting mostly of solar and wind
- 3.3 percent large hydroelectric
- 15.2 percent natural gas
- 8.4 percent nuclear
- 0.3 percent other
- 42.0 percent unspecified sources—that is, not traceable to specific sources (CEC 2022d)²

Gas

SoCalGas provides gas service in the City of Norwalk and has facilities throughout the city, including the project site. The service area of SoCalGas spans much of the southern half of California, from Imperial County in the southeast to San Luis Obispo County in the northwest to part of Fresno County in the north to Riverside County and most of San Bernardino County in the east (CEC 2022b). Total natural gas consumption in SoCalGas’s service area was 691,096 million cubic feet for 2020 (CEC 2022e).

¹ One gigawatt-hour is equivalent to one million kilowatt-hours.

² The electricity sources listed reflect changes after the 2013 closure of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, which is owned by SCE.

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5.5.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to energy if the project would:

- E-1 Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation.
- E-2 Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

5.5.3 Environmental Impacts

5.5.3.1 METHODOLOGY

Based on CEQA Guidelines Appendix F, Energy Conservation, in order to ensure energy implications are considered in project decisions, CEQA requires that EIRs include a discussion of the potential impacts of proposed projects, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing wasteful, unnecessary, or inefficient use of energy resources. Environmental effects may include the proposed project's energy requirements and its energy use efficiencies by amount and fuel type during demolition, construction, and operation; the effects of the proposed project on local and regional energy supplies; the effects of the proposed project on peak and base period demands for electricity and other forms of energy; the degree to which the proposed project complies with existing energy standards; the effects of the proposed project on energy resources; and the proposed project's projected transportation energy use requirements and its overall use of efficient transportation alternatives, if applicable. The provided energy and fuel usage information provided in this section are based on the following:

- **Building Energy.** CalEEMod default electricity and natural gas rates, which are based on the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, are used to quantify the electricity and natural gas usage associated with building energy that would be generated by land uses accommodated under the proposed project. The proposed project's barbeques were calculated off-model assuming that these will consume 60,000 BTU/hr. The CalEEMod historical energy usage rates were used for the Norwalk City Hall and the existing parking structure building when modeling the existing conditions.
- **On-Road Vehicle Fuel Usage.** Fuel usage associated with operation-related vehicle trips in addition to construction-related vehicle trips (i.e., worker and vendor trips) are based on fuel usage data obtained from EMFAC2021, Version 1.0.1, and on vehicle trip generation and vehicle miles traveled data provided by Gibson Transportation Consulting Inc. (see Appendix M).
- **Off-Road Equipment Fuel Usage.** Fuel usage for construction-related off-road equipment is based on fuel usage data from OFFROAD2021, version 1.0.1, and on the equipment mix and operations anticipated for the proposed project.

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5.5.3.2 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.5-1: The project would not result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation. [Threshold E-1]

Short-Term Construction Impacts

Construction of the proposed project would create temporary increased demands for electricity and vehicle fuels compared to existing conditions and would result in short-term transportation-related energy use.

Electrical Energy

Construction activities associated with the land uses accommodated under the proposed project would require electricity to power the construction equipment. The electricity use during construction would vary during different phases of construction. The majority of construction equipment during demolition and grading would be gas or diesel powered, and the later construction phases would require electricity-powered equipment for interior construction and architectural coatings. Overall, the use of electricity would be temporary in nature and would fluctuate according to the phase of construction. Additionally, it is anticipated that the majority of electric-powered construction equipment would be hand tools (e.g., power drills, table saws, compressors) and lighting, which would result in minimal electricity usage during construction activities. Therefore, project-related construction activities would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary electricity demands, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Natural Gas Energy

It is not anticipated that construction equipment used for the proposed project would be powered by natural gas, and no natural gas demand is anticipated during construction. Therefore, **no impact** is anticipated with respect to natural gas usage.

Liquid Fuels and Transportation Energy

Transportation energy use depends on the type and number of trips, vehicle miles traveled, fuel efficiency of vehicles, and travel mode. Transportation energy used during construction of individual projects accommodated under the proposed project would come from the transport and use of construction equipment, delivery vehicles, haul trucks, and construction employee vehicles that would use diesel fuel and/or gasoline. It is anticipated that the majority of off-road construction equipment, such as that used during grading activities, would be gas or diesel powered. Fuel usage associated with construction of the proposed project (2023 through 2025) was calculated using fuel usage data from EMFAC2021, v. 1.0.1., and OFFROAD2021, v. 1.0.1., and the results are shown in Table 5.5-1, *Construction-Related Fuel Usage*.

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Table 5.5-1 Construction-Related Fuel Usage

Project Component	Gas		Diesel		Electricity	
	VMT	Gallons	VMT	Gallons	VMT	kWh
Construction Worker Commute	4,471,454	168,846	8,572	241	221,439	81,465
Construction Vendor Trips	72,079	13,989	502,369	71,120	0	0
Construction Soil Haul Trips	0	0	225,760	37,734	0	0
Construction Off-Road Equipment	N/A	100,296	N/A	134,977	N/A	0
Total	4,543,533	283,131	736,701	244,071	221,439	81,465

Source: CalEEMod v.2020.4.0; EMFAC2021 v.1.0.1; OFFROAD2021 v.1.0.1.

Notes: VMT=vehicle miles traveled; kWh=kilowatt hour

The use of energy resources by on-road vehicles and off-road equipment would fluctuate according to the phase of construction and would cease upon completion of project construction. Thus, impacts related to transportation energy use during construction would be temporary and would not require expanded energy supplies or the construction of new infrastructure. Also, to limit wasteful and unnecessary energy consumption, the construction contractors would minimize nonessential idling of construction equipment during construction in accordance with Section 2449 of the California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Chapter 9, Article 4.8. In addition, it is anticipated that electricity would be available for use during construction from existing power lines and connections, which could minimize or avoid the use of less-efficient generators. Furthermore, construction trips would not result in unnecessary use of energy since the project site is centrally located and is served by numerous regional freeway systems (e.g., Interstate 5) that provide the most direct and shortest routes from various areas of the region. Overall, it is expected that construction fuel associated with the buildout of the proposed project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than construction of development projects of similar type and land uses. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant** with respect to transportation energy.

Long-Term Impacts During Operation

Operation of the proposed project would create additional demands for electricity and natural gas compared to existing conditions and would result in increased transportation energy use. Operational use of energy would also include heating, cooling, and ventilation of buildings; water heating; operation of electrical systems, use of on-site equipment and appliances; and indoor and outdoor lighting.

Electrical Energy

Operation of the proposed project would consume electricity for various purposes, including but not limited to heating, cooling, and ventilation of buildings; water heating; operation of electrical systems; lighting; and use of on-site equipment and appliances. The proposed electricity consumption for the proposed mixed-use buildings and commercial parking garage addition are shown in Table 5.5-2, *Operation-Related Electricity Consumption*.

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Table 5.5-2 Operation-Related Electricity Consumption

Land Use	Electricity (kWh/year) ¹
Apartments Midrise	1,073,670
Parking Garage Building ²	1,123,740
Commercial Parking Garage Addition	916,478
High Turnover (Sit Down Restaurant)	483,627
Quality Restaurant	483,627
Strip Mall	183,852
Supermarket	1,200,800
Total	5,465,794

Source: See Appendix B.

Note: kWh=kilowatt-hour

¹ Assumed 81, 241 square feet of solar panels on the roof based on conceptual site plan. Calculated 2,462,382 kWh/year generated.

² Parking Garages are located underneath mixed-use buildings.

Electrical service to the proposed project would be provided by SCE through connections to existing off-site electrical lines and new on-site infrastructure. As shown in the table, electricity use associated with the proposed project would total 5,465,794 kilowatt-hours per year. While the proposed project would increase energy demand at the site compared to existing conditions, it would be required to comply with the applicable Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen requirements. Because the proposed project would comply with these regulations as well install solar panels on the rooftops to generate 2,462,382 kWh/yr, it would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary electricity demands.³ Therefore, operation of the proposed project would result in a **less than significant impact** related to electricity.

Natural Gas Energy

While the residential portion of the proposed project would be all-electrical appliances (refer to Mitigation Measure GHG-1) and only the commercial portion would utilize natural gas for cooking, the analysis estimates natural gas usage for residential and commercial to provide a conservative quantification of natural gas consumption. The natural gas consumption associated with the proposed project is shown in Table 5.5-3, *Operation-Related Natural Gas Consumption*. As seen in the table, natural gas demand would total 13,720,860 kilo-British thermal units per year with the proposed project consumption due to the residential units. The analysis assumes that there could be up to eight barbeques shared among residential uses, and that no fireplaces would be installed in the residential units. Because the proposed project would be built to meet the Building Energy Efficiency Standards, it would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary natural gas demands. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would result in **less than significant impacts** with respect to natural gas usage.

³ Based on assumption of 15% solar panel efficiency, 13.84 watts produced per square foot of solar panels, and 6 daylight hours to calculate kWh per year (see Appendix B).

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Table 5.5-3 Operation-Related Natural Gas Consumption

Land Use	Natural Gas (kBTU/year) ¹
Apartments Mid-Rise	4,573,310
Barbeques ¹	149,760
High Turnover (Sit Down Restaurant)	4,030,770
Quality Restaurant	4,030,770
Strip Mall	57,050
Supermarket	879,200
Total	13,720,860

Source: See Appendix C.

Note: kBTU=kilo-British thermal units.

¹ Assume weekend use only and that barbeques would consume 60,000 BTU/hr, which is the CalEEMod default BTU for a fireplace.

Transportation Energy

The proposed project would result in the consumption of transportation energy during operation from the use of motor vehicles. Because the efficiency of the motor vehicles in use with the proposed project is unknown—such as the average miles per gallon—estimates of transportation energy use are based on the overall vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and related transportation energy use. The project-related VMT would primarily come from future residents, and employees. Based on the numbers shown in Table 5.5-4, *Operation-Related Fuel Usage*, the annual VMT for the proposed project is estimated to be 35,449,285 miles per year. However, the proposed project would involve the construction of a mixed-use building of up to 350 multifamily dwelling units that would provide more housing opportunities in the city in close proximity to commercial opportunities, civic services, and transit. The proposed project’s location near public transit and bus stops along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard along with providing bicycle parking onsite supports multimodal transportation, which reduces the need for vehicle trips. These features and aspects of the proposed project would contribute to minimizing VMT and transportation-related fuel usage. In addition, the project will implement mitigation measure TRA-1 which requires a Transportation Demand Management program that will reduce vehicle trips and associated VMT. Thus, it is expected that operation-related fuel usage associated with the proposed project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than similar development projects. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation, and impacts would be **less than significant** with respect to operation-related fuel usage.

Table 5.5-4 Operation-Related Fuel Usage

Vehicle Type	Gas		Diesel		CNG		Electricity	
	VMT/year	Gallons/year	VMT/year	Gallons/year	VMT/year	Gallons/year	VMT/year	kWh/year
On-Road Vehicles	32,308,602	1,240,605	1,041,029	89,998	29,443	4,371	2,070,211	758,649

Source: EMFAC2021 v.1.0.1.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

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Impact 5.5-2: The project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. [Threshold E-2])

The following evaluates consistency of the proposed project with California’s RPS program and the energy-related goals and objectives of the City of Norwalk’s Energy Action Plan.

California Renewables Portfolio Standard Program

The state’s electricity grid is transitioning to renewable energy under California’s RPS Program. Renewable sources of electricity include wind, small hydropower, solar, geothermal, biomass, and biogas. The RPS goals have been updated since adoption of SB 1078 in 2002. In general, California has RPS requirements of 33 percent renewable energy by 2020 (SB X1-2), 44 percent by 2024, 50 percent by 2026, 52 percent by 2027, 60 percent by 2030, and 100 percent by 2045. The RPS requirements established under SB 100 are also applicable to publicly owned utilities. The statewide RPS requirements do not directly apply to individual development projects, but to utilities and energy providers such as SCE, whose compliance with RPS requirements would contribute to the state objective of transitioning to renewable energy. The residential land uses accommodated under the proposed project would comply with the current and future iterations of the Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen. Under the 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, future multifamily buildings (if permits are issued after January 1, 2023) in the specific plan area would be required to install solar PV systems. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct with implementation of California’s RPS Program. Therefore, a **less than significant impact** would occur.

City of Norwalk Energy Action Plan

The City’s EAP includes goals and measures that focus on increasing energy efficiency in municipal buildings and to establish energy reduction goal of 25 percent by 2025 (Norwalk 2015). The reduction goals were determined with reference to the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32), which requires a reduction of GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. In efforts to reach platinum status in the SCE Energy Leader Partnership Program, the City is required to adopt an EAP as well as continue to document completion of projects in the EAP. Under the City’s Strategic Plan Strategies Program, the City developed and implemented an Energy Benchmarking Policy that establishes guidelines for benchmarking municipal building energy consumption and integrating benchmarking data into City operations. The City uses the ENERGY STAR’s Portfolio Manager as a way to track and assess benchmarks for the City facilities.

While most of the policies apply specifically to existing structures, workplace energy efficiency, government operations, or public awareness measures, the proposed project is generally consistent with the overall objective of the EAP to increase energy efficiency. As stated, the proposed mixed-use buildings would have solar panels installed on the rooftops and would also meet the latest applicable Building Energy Efficiency standards. The proposed project does not propose any alterations to the Norwalk City Hall and therefore would not interfere with implementation of the City’s EAP regarding the existing Norwalk City Hall, and a **less than significant impact** would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

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Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.5.4 Cumulative Impacts

The areas considered for cumulative impacts to electricity and natural gas supplies are the service areas of SCE and SoCalGas, respectively, described above in Section 5.5.1. Other projects, including the cumulative projects identified in Table 4-3, *Cumulative Projects*, would generate increased electricity and natural gas demands. However, all projects within the SCE and SoCalGas service areas would be required to comply with the Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen, which would contribute to minimizing wasteful energy consumption. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be **less than significant**, and project impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than cumulatively considerable impacts.

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ENERGY

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This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential for implementation of the proposed project to impact geological and soil resources, paleontological resources, and unique geologic features in the project site. It is based in part on information contained in the following reports.

- *Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Report*, Cogstone, Inc. (June 2022)
- *Preliminary Geotechnical Subsurface Evaluation and Recommendations, Proposed Mixed-Use Development, Southeast Corner of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard, Norwalk, California*, LGC Geotechnical, Inc. (June 2022) (Geotechnical Report)

A complete copy of the Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Report and Geotechnical Report is in the technical appendices to this DEIR (Appendix G and H, respectively).

5.6.1 Environmental Setting

5.6.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines that are related to the protection and preservation of geologic and paleontological resources and applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Federal

There are no federal regulations directly applicable to the geotechnical conditions at the proposed project site. Nonetheless, installations of any underground utility lines are required to comply with industry standards specific to the type of utility (National Clay Pipe Institute for sewers; American Water Works Association for water lines, etc.), and the discharge of contaminants is required to be controlled through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program for management of construction and municipal stormwater runoff. These standards contain specifications for installation, design, and maintenance to reflect site-specific geotechnical conditions.

Clean Water Act

Under the Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1977, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) seeks to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. The statute employs a variety of regulatory and nonregulatory tools to reduce direct pollutant discharges into waterways, finance municipal wastewater treatment facilities, and manage polluted runoff. The CWA authorizes the EPA to implement water quality regulations. Please see Chapter 5.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, of this Draft EIR for more detail.

National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

The NPDES permit program was established by the CWA to regulate municipal and industrial discharges to surface waters of the United States from their municipal separate storm sewer systems.

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Paleontological Resources Preservation Act

The federal Paleontological Resources Preservation Act of 2002 limits the collection of vertebrate fossils and other rare and scientifically significant fossils to qualified researchers who have obtained a permit from the appropriate state or federal agency. These researchers must agree to donate any materials recovered to recognized public institutions where they will remain accessible to the public and other researchers. The act incorporates key findings of a report, “Fossils on Federal Land and Indian Lands,” issued by the Secretary of the Interior in 2000, which establishes that most vertebrate fossils and some invertebrate and plant fossils are considered rare resources.

State

California Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The California Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was signed into state law in 1972, and amended, with its primary purpose being to mitigate the hazard of fault rupture by prohibiting the location of structures for human occupancy across the trace of an active fault. This state law was a direct result of the 1971 San Fernando Earthquake, which was associated with extensive surface fault ruptures that damaged numerous homes, commercial buildings, and other structures. The act requires the State Geologist of the California Geologic Survey to delineate regulatory zones known as “earthquake fault zones” along faults that are “sufficiently active” and “well defined” and to issue and distribute appropriate maps to all affected cities, counties, and state agencies for their use in planning and controlling new or renewed construction. Pursuant to this act and as stipulated in the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, Section 3603(a), structures for human occupancy are not permitted to be placed across the trace of an active fault. The act also prohibits structures for human occupancy within 50 feet of the trace of an active fault, unless proven by an appropriate geotechnical investigation and report that the development site is not underlain by active branches of the active fault, as stipulated in 14 CCR Section 3603(a). Furthermore, the act requires that cities and counties withhold development permits for sites within an earthquake fault zone until geologic investigations demonstrate that the sites are not threatened by surface displacement from future faulting, as stipulated in 14 CCR Section 3603(d).

Seismic Hazard Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazard Mapping Act was adopted by the state in 1990 to protect the public from the effects of earthquake hazards other than surface fault rupture, such as strong ground shaking, liquefaction, seismically induced landslides, or other ground failure. The goal of the act is to minimize loss of life and property by identifying and mitigating seismic hazards. The California Geologic Survey prepares and provides local governments with seismic hazard zone maps that identify areas susceptible to amplified shaking, liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides, and other ground failures. Section 2697(a) of the Act states that “cities and counties shall require, prior to the approval of a project located in a seismic hazard zone, a geotechnical report defining and delineating any seismic hazard.”

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Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act was adopted by the state in 2014 to establish a statewide framework to help protect groundwater resources over the long term. The act established a priority framework for all 515 groundwater basins in California, categorizing them into very low, low, medium, and high priority based on eight components. The act requires local agencies to form groundwater sustainability agencies for the high and medium priority basins. These agencies develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans to avoid undesirable results and mitigate overdraft within 20 years. The project site is within the Coastal Basin of Los Angeles Groundwater Basin, Central Subbasin, which is classified as a very low priority basin.

California Building Code

Current law states that every local agency enforcing building regulations, such as cities and counties, must adopt the provisions of the California Building Code (CBC) within 180 days of its publication. The publication date of the CBC is established by the California Building Standards Commission, and the code is under Title 24, Part 2, of the CCR. The CBC provides minimum standards to protect property and public safety by regulating the design and construction of excavations, foundations, building frames, retaining walls, and other building elements to mitigate the effects of seismic shaking and adverse soil conditions. The CBC contains provisions for earthquake safety based on factors including occupancy type, the types of soil and rock on-site, and the strength of ground shaking with a specified probability at a site.

Chapter 16 and 16A of the CBC deal with structural design requirements governing seismically resistant construction (Section 1604), including factors and coefficients used to establish seismic site class and seismic occupancy category for the soil/rock at the building location and the proposed building design (Sections 1610). Chapter 18 and 18A include the requirements for foundation and soil investigations (Section 1803); excavation, grading, and fill (Section 1804); allowable load-bearing values of soils (Section 1806); retaining walls (Section 1807); the design of footings, foundations, and slope clearances (Sections 1808); and pier, pile, driven, and cast-in-place foundation support systems (Section 1810). Chapter 33 includes requirements for safeguards at work sites to ensure stable excavations and cut or fill slopes (Section 3304). Appendix J of the CBC includes grading requirements for the design of excavations and fills (Sections J106 and J107) and for erosion control (Sections J110). Construction activities are subject to occupational safety standards for excavation, shoring, and trenching as specified in Cal-OSHA regulations (CCR Title 8). The CBC is revised every three years. The 2019 CBC took effect on January 1, 2020.

Soils Investigation Requirements

Requirements for soils investigations for new construction are in California Health and Safety Code Sections 17953 to 17955, and in Section 1803 of the California Building Code. Testing of samples from subsurface investigations is required, such as from borings or test pits. Studies must be done as needed to evaluate slope stability, soil strength, position and adequacy of load-bearing soils, the effect of moisture variation on load-bearing capacity, compressibility, liquefaction, differential settlement, and expansiveness which are included as part of the geotechnical evaluation required by the California Building Code.

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California Public Resources Code

Paleontological sites are protected under a wide variety of state policies and regulations in the California Public Resources Code (PRC). In addition, paleontological resources are recognized as nonrenewable resources and receive protection under the PRC and CEQA. PRC Division 5, Chapter 1.7, Section 5097.5, and Division 20, Chapter 3, Section 30244 states:

No person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure or deface any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands. Violation of this section is a misdemeanor.

This statute prohibits the removal, without permission, of any paleontological site or feature from lands under the jurisdiction of the state or any city, county, district, authority, or public corporation, or any agency thereof. As a result, local agencies are required to comply with PRC 5097.5 for their own activities, including construction and maintenance, as well as for permit actions (e.g., encroachment permits) undertaken by others. PRC Section 5097.5 establishes the removal of paleontological resources as a misdemeanor and requires reasonable mitigation of adverse impacts to paleontological resources from developments on public (state, county, city, and district) lands.

Statewide General Construction Permit

Construction projects of one acre or more are regulated under the General Construction Permit, Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ, issued by the State Water Resources Control Board in 2012. Projects obtain coverage by developing and implementing a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan estimating sediment risk from construction activities to receiving waters and specifying best management practices (BMPs) that would be used by the project to minimize pollution of stormwater.

Regional

Los Angeles County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, Public Law 106-390 (Section 322(a–d)) requires that local governments, as a condition of receiving federal disaster mitigation funds, adopt a mitigation plan that describes the process for identifying hazards, vulnerabilities, and risks; identifies and prioritizes mitigation actions; encourages the development of local mitigation; and provides technical support for those efforts. In response to this and the requirements of the California Office of Emergency Services, the County prepared the Los Angeles County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan to reduce and/or eliminate the effects of hazards through well-organized public education and awareness efforts, preparedness, and mitigation.

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Local

City of Norwalk Municipal Code

The City of Norwalk Municipal Code (NMC) Title 15, Chapters 15.04 and 18.04, are relevant to potential geological impacts of the proposed project. Chapter 15.04, Building Code, establishes the adoption of the California Building Code for the City of Norwalk with amendments. Chapter 18.04 provides minimum requirements to control the discharge of pollutants into the City's municipal storm drain system and to ensure that discharges from the municipal storm drain system comply with the current NPDES Permit No. CAS004001, including amendments and California Regional Water Quality Control Board approvals.

City of Norwalk General Plan

The Safety Element of the City of Norwalk General Plan (Norwalk 1996) identifies policies pertaining to minimizing the exposure to geologic hazards, and the following policies are applicable to the proposed project:

- Consider seismic requirements when determining the location and design of critical, sensitive and high-occupancy facilities.
- New development and other land use entitlements should be reviewed by emergency response agencies to ensure that public safety can be adequately provided.
- Ensure that emergency preparedness is the mutual responsibility of City agencies, residents and the business community.
- Promote improved cooperation with nonprofit and private sector emergency response organizations.
- Develop a mechanism for the removal or rehabilitation of hazardous or substandard structures which may be expected to collapse in the event of an earthquake including, but not limited to unreinforced masonry buildings.
- Require geotechnical evaluation, prior to site development in seismically hazardous areas as mandated by state law.
- Develop standards and restrictions such as limits on allowable land uses, density standards, and subdivision design policies for sites subject to seismically induced liquefaction or soil compaction.

5.6.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Geologic Setting

LGC Geotechnical conducted a subsurface exploration of the project site in April of 2022. The exploration program consisted of the excavation of five hollow-stem auger borings, taken from 5 to 50 feet below existing grade, and advancing four CPT soundings, taken from approximately 75 feet below existing grade, to characterize subsurface soils and evaluate onsite geotechnical conditions. Additionally, two field infiltration tests

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were performed in order to evaluate the preliminary infiltration rate of the subsurface soils. The following is based on the site-specific investigation conducted by LGC Geotechnical, as well as a literature review.

Regional Geology

Based on a review of the United States Geological Survey 7.5-minute Topographic Series, Whittier, California Quadrangle Map, the property is located in the Central Plain of the Los Angeles Basin within the northern part of the Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province (USGS 2015). The Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province extends approximately 900 miles southward from the Los Angeles Basin to Baja California, Mexico, and is characterized by elongated northwest-trending mountain ranges separated by sediment-floored valleys (Yerkes et al. 1965). The most dominant structural features of the province are the northwest-trending fault zones, most of which die out, merge with, or are terminated by the steep reverse faults at the southern margin of the San Gabriel Mountains within the Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province north of the site. The site contains up to approximately 7.5 feet of previously placed undocumented artificial fill over Quaternary Alluvial deposits. Older artificial fill soils encountered were silty sands to sandy silts. Alluvial deposits, where encountered, are primarily medium dense to very dense sands with varying amounts of fine-grained soils to medium stiff to very stiff sandy clays and silts, to the maximum explored depth of approximately 50 feet below existing grade (LGC Geotechnical 2022).

The project site is located within a coastal sedimentary basin called the Downey Plain, within the Peninsular Range Geomorphic Province. The project site is located on a laterally extensive young alluvial fan deposits interpreted to be approximately Holocene and late Pleistocene age (LGC Geotechnical, 2022). The sediments are primarily derived from the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River drainages that run south from the San Gabriel Valley through the northwest trending Puente Hills an area called the Whittier Narrows. The project site is located about five miles south of the Puente Hills and Whittier Narrows, and about two miles east of the San Gabriel River Channel. The Puente Hills were uplifted and deformed along the Whittier Fault, a section of the Elsinore Fault Zone. The region has a complex geologic history influenced by periods of uplift, folding, faulting, and alluvial deposition; however, no faults are known to transect the site (LGC Geotechnical 2022).

Groundwater

The project site is in the Groundwater Basin of the Los Angeles County coastal plain aquifer system. Groundwater was not encountered in the borings to the maximum explored depth of approximately 75 feet below existing grade. Historic high groundwater is estimated to be about 10 feet or greater below existing grade (LGC Geotechnical 2022).

Seismic Setting

Regional Faulting

The project site is located within a seismically active region adjacent to major geologic structures (active faults) and affected by historic large earthquakes. Because the site is in a seismically active region adjacent to active faults, it is reasonable to assume that it will be subjected to future severe seismic shaking that may occur along one or more of these local or regional faults. The earthquake characteristics of the most significant active faults

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within 20 miles of the project site are listed in Table 5.6-1. The State of California (Hart and Bryant 1997) defines an “active fault” as one that has had surface displacement within Holocene time (approximately the last 11,000 years). “Potentially Active” faults are defined as faults that show evidence of surface displacement during Quaternary time (within the last 1.6 million years).

There are no known active or potentially active faults passing through or immediately adjacent to the project site, and the project site is not within or immediately adjacent to a fault-rupture hazard zone (Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone) (LGC Geotechnical 2022).

Secondary effects of seismic shaking resulting from large earthquakes on the major faults in the Southern California region, which may affect the project site, include ground lurching and shallow ground rupture, soil liquefaction, and dynamic settlement. These secondary effects of seismic shaking are a possibility throughout the Southern California region and are dependent on the distance between the site and causative fault and the onsite geology (LGC Geotechnical 2022).

The most important structural features in the area from a seismic shaking standpoint are the San Andreas fault zone to the southwest, the Cucamonga fault to the south, and the Sierra Madre fault zone to the southwest (Jennings and Bryant 2010). Other active and potentially active faults exist within 100 kilometers of the project site, but their earthquake effects observed at the project site would likely be equal to or less than effects from the 11 faults in Table 5.6-1 (CGS 2003).

Table 5.6-1 Distances and Directions to Active Faults

Fault	Approx. Distance and Direction from Site	Fault Length (miles)	Maximum Magnitude	Slip Rate (mm/yr)
Puente Hills Blind Thrust	1.5 miles north	27	7.1	0.7
Whittier (Elsinore)	5.7 miles northeast	24	6.8	2.5
Newport-Inglewood (L.A. Basin)	9.3 miles southwest	41	7.1	1.0
Upper Elysian Park Blind Thrust	11 miles northwest	12	6.4	1.3
San Jose	13 miles northeast	12	6.4	0.5
Raymond	14 miles northwest	14	6.5	1.5
Verdugo	15 miles northwest	18	6.9	0.5
Palos Verdes	16 miles southwest	60	7.3	3.0
Sierra Madre	17 miles north	35	7.2	2.0
Hollywood	18 miles northwest	11	6.4	1.0
Clamshell-Sawpit	19 miles north	10	6.5	0.5

Source: California Geological Survey 2003.

Note: Distances are approximate.

Fault Rupture

Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zones are regulatory zones surrounding the surface traces of active faults in California. Wherever an active fault exists, if it has the potential for surface rupture, a structure for human

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occupancy cannot be placed over the fault and must be a minimum distance from the fault (generally 50 feet). An active fault, for the purposes of the Alquist-Priolo Act, is one that has ruptured in the last 11,000 years.

The project site is not within or immediately adjacent to an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone (LGC Geotechnical 2022). Based on a review of the readily available geologic literature, there are no known active or potentially active faults on or immediately adjacent to the project site (Jennings and Bryant 2010; Saucedo et al. 2008).

Earthquake Ground Shaking

Southern California is a seismically active region. Impacts from ground shaking could occur many miles from an earthquake epicenter. The potential severity of ground shaking depends on many factors, including the size and type of the earthquake, the distance of the site from the earthquake epicenter, and the nature of the earth materials beneath a given site. The Los Angeles Basin region has experienced several large earthquakes through recorded history, with the last most sizable event being the magnitude 6.7 Northridge Earthquake in 1994. The earthquake occurred on a blind thrust fault centered in the San Fernando Valley community of Northridge.

Liquefaction and Related Ground Failure

Liquefaction refers to loose, saturated sand or gravel deposits that lose their load-supporting capability when subjected to intense shaking. Liquefaction potential varies based upon three main contributing factors: 1) cohesionless, granular soils having relatively low densities (usually of Holocene age);¹ 2) shallow groundwater (generally less than 50 feet); and 3) moderate to high seismic ground shaking. Cohesionless and granular soils are sand or gravel, typically with little or no clay content. Soil liquefaction generally occurs in submerged granular soils and non-plastic silts during or after strong ground shaking.

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (1990) directed the State Geologist to delineate regulatory “zones of required investigation” to reduce the threat to public health and safety and to minimize the loss of life and property posed by earthquake-triggered ground failures. Zones of required investigation, referred to as "Seismic Hazard Zones" in CCR Article 10, Section 3722, are areas shown on Seismic Hazard Zone Maps where site investigations are required to determine the need for mitigation of potential liquefaction and/or earthquake-induced landslide ground displacements.

Lateral spreading involves lateral ground movements caused by seismic shaking. These lateral ground movements are often associated with a weakening or failure of an embankment or soil mass overlying a layer of liquefied sands or weak soils. Shallow groundwater, liquefiable, cohesionless soils and the presence of a free-face such as a stream bank are all contributing factors in determining the likelihood of lateral spreading. Thick (likely approaching 3,000 feet at a minimum) deposits of younger and older Quaternary alluvium underlie the project site. The static groundwater level is reported to be about 60 below ground surface (SWRCB 2022). The project site is within a Zone of Required Investigation for liquefaction due to the historical high groundwater elevation being about 10 feet below ground surface (CGS 1998, 1999). The geotechnical evaluation required by

¹ The Holocene epoch began 12,000 to 11,500 years ago.

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the California Building Code prior to construction would address liquefaction and lateral spreading and provide recommendations identified in the geotechnical evaluation, if necessary, to ensure building safety.

Geologic Hazards

Landslides

Natural landslides occur when soils or bedrock lose strength in a sloping area (often during heavy rains or an earthquake), and gravity causes the materials to slide downhill. Human activities can also cause landslides; these activities include undercutting a hill, placing a heavy weight like fill at the top of a slope, or substantially increasing the amount of water in a hillside. However, since the project site and surrounding properties are nearly flat, these areas are not subject to landslides.

Expansive Soils

Expansive soils are silts and clays that swell and shrink as the amount of water in the soil increases and decreases, respectively. This change in water content primarily occurs in the near-surface environment, and deeper soils may undergo much less change in water content; also, the weight of overlying soils minimizes swelling uplift. Soils on the project site are anticipated to have “Very Low” to “Low” expansion potential (LGC Geotechnical 2022).

Erosion

Erosion is a normal and inevitable geologic process whereby earthen materials are loosened, worn away, decomposed, or dissolved; removed from one place; and transported to another. Precipitation, running water, and wind are all agents of erosion. Ordinarily, erosion proceeds imperceptibly, but when the natural equilibrium of the environment is changed, the rate of erosion can be greatly accelerated. Accelerated erosion in a developed area can cause damage by undermining structures; blocking storm drains; and depositing silt, sand, or mud on roads and in tunnels. Eroded materials can eventually be deposited in local waters, where the carried silt remains suspended in the water for some time, constituting a pollutant and altering the normal balance of plant and animal life.

Erosion can occur when rainfall or other sources result in the placement of a significant amount of water on a sloping, bare-earth surface. Eroded soils can cause damage if they enter a waterway or a storm drain facility that deposits the collected water and entrained sediment into San Pedro Bay. Soils throughout the project site are developed and paved or already vegetated, leading to minimal erosion. Of the 13.2-acre project site, an estimated 7.7 acres are considered developed/paved impervious surfaces, and the remaining 5.5 acres consist of maintained landscaped areas, including the approximately 4.3-acre City Hall Lawn, which are pervious surfaces.

Topsoil is the thin, rich layer of soil where most nutrients for plants are found and where most land-based biological activity takes place. The loss of topsoil through erosion is a major agricultural and water quality problem.

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Subsidence

Subsidence of the ground surface has been reported in alluvial basins where significant amounts of groundwater (often in an overdraft condition) or petroleum are withdrawn over long periods. The primary cause of nontectonic subsidence has been the alluvial compaction by closing of porosity due to removal of large quantities of groundwater or petroleum and a significant lowering of the groundwater levels.

Ground cracking from subsidence in the future would be expected to occur along the boundaries of groundwater basins, such as a contact between alluvium and bedrock, or overprominent geologic structures, i.e., faults.

Paleontological Setting

Paleontological resources are fossils—that is, organisms or fragments, impressions, or traces of organisms preserved in rock. The project site is on the Central Plain of the Los Angeles Basin. It is situated southeast of Los Angeles in the northern portion of the Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province. As noted earlier under “Regional Geology,” the project site is situated on a broad alluvial plain, and surface deposits consist of Holocene- and late Pleistocene-age alluvium.

A multilevel ranking system was developed by professional resource managers within the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as a practical tool to assess the sensitivity of sediments for fossils. The Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) system has a multi-level scale based on demonstrated yield of fossils. The PFYC system provides additional guidance regarding assessment and management for different fossil yield rankings (Cogstone 2022). The probability for finding significant fossils in a project area can be broadly predicted from previous records of fossils recovered from the geologic units present in and/or adjacent to the project site. The geological setting and the number of known fossil localities help determine the paleontological sensitivity according to PFYC criteria (Cogstone 2022).

Using the PFYC system, geologic units are classified according to the relative abundance of vertebrate fossils or scientifically significant invertebrate or plant fossils and their sensitivity to adverse impacts within the known extent of the geological unit. Although significant localities may occasionally occur in a geologic unit, a few widely scattered important fossils or localities do not necessarily indicate a higher PFYC value; instead, the relative abundance of localities is intended to be the major determinant for the value assignment (Cogstone 2022).

The project site is mapped entirely as late Pleistocene to Holocene young alluvium (unit 2). A records search revealed that all of the fossils previously recovered within a ten-mile radius were a minimum of five feet deep in deposits mapped as Pleistocene at the surface. Sediments with a Holocene component at the surface, such as the sediments found within the project site, have produced fossils starting at 24 feet deep. As such, the project site sediments less than 20 feet below the modern surface are assigned a low potential for fossils (PFYC 2). Sediments more than 20 feet below the modern surface are assigned a moderate potential for fossils (PFYC 3) due to similar deposits producing fossils at that depth near to the project site. Based on the project site investigation, the potential for significant fossil discoveries in shallow soils at the project site is low (Cogstone 2022).

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5.6.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to geologic and paleontological resources if the project would:

- G-1 Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
 - i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault. (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.)
 - ii) Strong seismic ground shaking.
 - iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.
 - iv) Landslides.
- G-2 Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.
- G-3 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.
- G-4 Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.
- G-5 Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.
- G-6 Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

5.6.3 Environmental Impacts

5.6.3.1 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the threshold of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.6-1: Project residents (or occupants, visitors, etc.) would be subject to potential seismic-related hazards. [Threshold G-1i through G-1iv]

Southern California is a seismically active region. Impacts from ground shaking could occur many miles from an earthquake epicenter. The potential severity of ground shaking depends on many factors, including the distance from the originating fault, the earthquake magnitude, and the nature of the earth materials beneath a given site. Secondary effects of seismic shaking resulting from large earthquakes on the major faults in the

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Southern California region, which may affect the project site, include ground lurching and shallow ground rupture, soil liquefaction, and dynamic settlement. These secondary effects of seismic shaking are a possibility throughout the Southern California region and are dependent on the distance between the site and causative fault and the onsite geology. A discussion of these secondary effects is provided in the following sections (LGC Geotechnical 2022).

- i. There is no identified fault-rupture hazard zone as defined by the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones Act within the City of Norwalk, including the project site (CGS 2022, LGC Geotechnical 2022). Based on there being no known active surface faults in Norwalk, fault rupture is considered unlikely and impacts related fault rupture would be **less than significant**.
- ii. As described above, the project site as well as the larger region are in a seismically active area that is subject to earthquake induced ground shaking. Any future development within the project site is required to be designed in compliance with seismic requirements of the CBC and Title 24 CCR criteria for seismic safety. Additionally, future development would be required to comply with established NMC and CBC standards regulating grading and building construction for seismic safety. This includes preparation of a geotechnical evaluation based on final project design prior to any construction activity that would identify seismic and other geotechnical hazards and how to avoid them. Any recommendations provided within the geotechnical evaluation to ensure compliance with the NMC and CBC standards would be implemented during project construction and design. Compliance with established standards would ensure impacts related to structural collapse or other shaking related hazards are **less than significant**.
- iii. The project site is within the Whittier 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Seismic Hazard Zone map and is in an area designated as susceptible to liquefaction (CGS 1999, LGC Geotechnical 2022). However, the fact that a site is in a liquefaction hazard zone does not mean it has significant liquefaction potential. Liquefaction is dependent, in part, on the groundwater table since it requires saturated soil. Susceptibility to liquefaction is considered low when depth to groundwater is greater than 50 feet. Groundwater was not encountered in five onsite borings to the maximum explored depth of approximately 75 feet below existing grade (LGC Geotechnical 2022).

Subsurface soil borings indicate that the project site contains isolated sandy and fine-grained layers of soil that are susceptible to liquefaction. The observed groundwater elevation of more than 75 feet below existing grade and a historic high groundwater elevation of 10 feet below existing grade were used in the liquefaction analysis. Based on site-specific testing, total seismic settlement is estimated on the order of approximately one inch (LGC Geotechnical 2022). Differential seismic settlement can be estimated as half of the total estimated settlement over a horizontal span of about 40 feet. The preliminary geotechnical report includes initial considerations regarding structural design; however, as part of the design process, a final geotechnical report based on final design will include recommendations for structural design regarding structural pad footings to minimize dynamic settlement (LGC Geotechnical 2022). Additionally, future development would be required to comply with established NMC and CBC standards regulating grading and building construction for seismic

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and liquefaction potential safety. Therefore, the proposed project would not subject people or structures to substantial liquefaction hazards, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

- iv. Landslides are a type of erosion in which masses of earth and rock move down slope as a single unit. Susceptibility of slopes to landslides and lurching (earth movement at right angles to a cliff or steep slope during ground shaking) depend on several factors that are usually present in combination—steep slopes, condition of rock and soil materials, presence of water, formational contacts, geologic shear zones, and seismic activity. The project site and adjacent properties are flat and exhibit no substantial elevation changes or unusual geographic features. In the absence of significant ground slopes, the potential for landslides is considered negligible. **No impact** related to landslides would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant.

Impact 5.6-2: Substantial erosion and the loss of topsoil would not result from development of the project. [Threshold G-2]

Soils are particularly prone to erosion during the grading phase of development, especially during heavy rains. Construction projects of one acre or more are regulated under the General Construction Permit, Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ, issued by the State Water Resources Control Board in 2012. Projects obtain coverage by developing and implementing a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan estimating sediment risk from construction activities to receiving waters and specifying BMPs that would be used by the project to minimize pollution of stormwater. The use of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which specifies BMPs for temporary erosion controls, reduces the potential for erosion during construction period activities. Standard erosion control measures would be implemented as part of a SWPPP for proposed development within the project site to minimize the risk of erosion or sedimentation during construction. The SWPPP must include an erosion control plan that prescribes measures such as phasing grading, limiting areas of disturbance, designating restricted-entry zones, diverting runoff from disturbed areas, protective measures for sensitive areas, outlet protection, and provisions for revegetation or mulching.

Any future development within the proposed project is required to be designed in compliance with existing regulations, including the preparation and submittal of a SWPPP and a geotechnical evaluation, would identify project- and site-specific requirements to ensure compliance with established NMC and CBC standards regulating grading, building construction, and erosion. A comprehensive discussion of erosion and water quality from rain events can be found in Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*. Therefore, impacts related to erosion would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant.

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Impact 5.6-3: Unstable geologic unit or soils conditions would not result from development of the project. [Threshold G-3]

LGC Geotechnical conducted a subsurface investigation of the project site in April of 2022. The exploration program consisted of the excavation of five hollow-stem auger borings and advancing four CPT soundings to characterize subsurface soils and evaluate onsite geotechnical conditions. Additionally, two field infiltration tests were performed in order to evaluate the preliminary infiltration rate of the subsurface soils. Two of the hollow-stem auger borings were taken north of the City Hall building, two were taken within the parking lot, and one was taken in the northeast corner of the City Hall Lawn. Two of the CPT soundings were taken north of the City Hall building in the City Hall Lawn and two were taken within the parking lot.

Based on LGC's geotechnical report, subsurface evaluation, the project site contains up to approximately 7.5 feet of previously placed undocumented artificial fill over Quaternary Alluvial deposits. Older artificial fill soils encountered were silty sands to sandy silts. Alluvial deposits, where encountered, are primarily medium dense to very dense sands with varying amounts of fine-grained soils to medium stiff to very stiff sandy clays and silts, to the maximum explored depth of approximately 50 feet below existing grade. Overall, the evaluation does not identify unstable geologic units or soil conditions.

As described above, the project site and adjacent properties are flat and exhibit no substantial elevation changes or unusual geographic features. In the absence of significant ground slopes, the potential for landslides is considered negligible; therefore, **no impact** would occur.

The City of Norwalk is underlain by alluvial fan deposits predominantly composed of sand. Settlement and collapse are likely to exist in areas with alluvial soils. Areas of large settlement can damage or, in extreme cases, destroy structures. The presence of compressible soils in the city represents a hazard to structures and people. CBC design code has been adopted by the NMC and requires that structures be designed to mitigate compressible soils. A preliminary geotechnical evaluation was conducted and identified that near-surface soils are generally loose and compressible and would require temporary removal and recompaction. Subsequent geotechnical evaluation would identify engineering recommendations based on final project design, and mandatory compliance with the recommendations of the geotechnical evaluation would ensure impacts associated with compressible soils are **less than significant**.

As stated in Impact 5.6-1, the geotechnical evaluation did not encounter groundwater in the borings advanced to a maximum depth of approximately 75-feet below existing grade. Historic high groundwater is estimated to be about 10 feet or greater below existing grade (LGC Geotechnical, 2022). Compliance with regulatory requirements, including the recommendations outlined in the preliminary geotechnical evaluation as well as future engineering recommendations based on a final project design, would ensure that impacts related to unstable soils would be **less than significant**.

As discussed in Impact 5.17-2 under *Utilities and Service Systems*, the proposed project would be served by the existing water systems and would not directly pump groundwater. As such, the proposed project would not substantially increase the amount of groundwater pumped from beneath the project site and thus would not exacerbate potential hazard from subsidence. The statutorily required sustainable groundwater management

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practices of the Water Replenishment District of Southern California pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 would ensure that the impact of subsidence would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.6-4: Soil conditions would not result in risks to life or property. [Threshold G-4]

Expansive soils swell when they become wet and shrink when they dry out, resulting in the potential for cracked building foundations and, in some cases, structural distress of the buildings themselves. Based on a review of the geologic map by Saucedo et al. (2003), the project site is located on alluvial fan deposits predominantly composed of sand. Laboratory testing of project site soil samples showed that the project site soils have “Very Low” to “Low” expansion potential (LGC Geotechnical 2022). Furthermore, standard grading technologies and compliance with current grading requirements in accordance with the seismic requirements of the CBC would ensure impacts from expansive soils to **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.6-5: The proposed project would not require the use of septic tanks. [Threshold G-5]

The project would not involve the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. The project would utilize the local sewer system. **No impacts** would result from project implementation.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: No impact.

Impact 5.6-6: The project could destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature. [Threshold G-6]

A paleontological resource is a natural resource characterized as faunal or floral fossilized remains but may also include specimens of non-fossil material dating to any period preceding human occupation. These resources are valued for the information they yield about the history of the earth and its past ecological settings. The resources are found in geologic strata conducive to their preservation, typically sedimentary formations. Often they appear as simply small outcroppings visible on the surface; other times they are below the ground surface and may be encountered during grading.

The project site is entirely flat and previously developed with no unique geologic features. It is underlain by sandy alluvial fan deposits, which are considered Holocene to early Pleistocene in age at the surface. Based on the Geotechnical Report, the project site contains up to approximately 7.5 feet of undocumented artificial fill over alluvial deposits. Shallow excavations are not likely to contain fossil specimens and the sandy alluvial soils are not conducive to the optimal conditions for fossils to be preserved. Construction associated with the

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proposed project would include removal and recompaction of up to approximately 10 feet below ground surface in areas of the building footprints. An Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Assessment conducted for the project site concludes that sediments with Holocene components, such as those found at the project site, produce fossils starting approximately 24 feet bgs (Cogstone 2022). Therefore, it is unlikely that ground disturbing activities resulting from the proposed project would destroy unique paleontological resources. However, in the inadvertent event of discovery of paleontological resources, impacts could be **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measures:

- GEO-1 If unanticipated fossil discoveries are made, all work must halt within 50 feet until a qualified paleontologist can evaluate the find. Work may resume immediately outside of the 50-foot radius. Mitigation Measures GEO-2 and GEO-3 shall be implemented.
- GEO-2 If the discoveries are determined to be significant, full-time paleontological monitoring will be recommended for the remainder of ground disturbance for the project. Paleontological monitoring shall entail the visual inspection of excavated or graded areas and trench sidewalls. In the event that a paleontological resource is discovered, the monitor shall have the authority to temporarily divert the construction equipment around the find until it is assessed for scientific significance and collected, if warranted. Monitoring efforts can be reduced or eliminated at the discretion of the project paleontologist.
- GEO-3 Upon completion of fieldwork, all significant fossils collected shall be prepared in a properly equipped paleontology laboratory to a point ready for curation. Following laboratory work, all fossil specimens shall be identified to the most specific taxonomic level possible, cataloged, analyzed, and offered to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County for permanent curation and storage. At the conclusion of laboratory work and museum curation, a final Paleontological Monitoring Report (PMR) shall be prepared describing the results of the paleontological mitigation monitoring efforts associated with the project. The report shall include a summary of the field and laboratory methods, an overview of the project area geology and paleontology, a list of taxa recovered, an analysis of fossils recovered and their scientific significance, and recommendations. A copy of the report shall also be submitted to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

Significance After Mitigation: Implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1 through GEO-3 would ensure that any unanticipated encounter of paleontological resources during ground disturbing activities would be reduced to less than significant.

5.6.4 Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative setting for geologic resources is typically site specific. As discussed previously, implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to geology and soils. Although the project site may be subject to potentially significant hazards of strong ground shaking, liquefaction or lateral

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spreading, mandatory compliance with state and city regulations would ensure these impacts would be **less than significant**.

The identified cumulative development listed in Chapter 4, *Environmental Setting*, Table 4-2, would be subject to the same federal, state, and local regulations. Since impacts associated with geology and soils are by their nature focused on specific sites or areas, the less-than-significant impacts within the project site to avoid impacts to geologic resources from the proposed project, would not contribute to a cumulative increase in hazards in the immediate vicinity of the project site. Similarly, impacts to paleontological resources are considered site-specific in nature, and the project's proposed mitigation would ensure impacts from the project are reduced to less than significant and would not contribute to a larger cumulative impact. Therefore, cumulative impacts associated with geology and soils would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.6.5 References

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5.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential for implementation of the Norwalk Entertainment – Civic Center Specific Plan Project (proposed project) to cumulatively contribute to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions impacts. Because no single project is large enough to result in a measurable increase in global concentrations of GHG, climate change impacts of a project are considered on a cumulative basis.

This evaluation is based on the methodology recommended by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD). GHG emissions modeling was conducted using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2020.4.0, and model outputs are included in Appendix B of this DEIR. Transportation-sector impacts are based on trip generation and vehicle miles traveled as provided by Gibson Transportation Consulting Inc. (see Appendix M). Cumulative impacts related to GHG emissions are based on the regional boundaries of the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB) and California.

Terminology

The following are definitions for terms used throughout this section.

- **Greenhouse gases (GHG).** Gases in the atmosphere that absorb infrared light, thereby retaining heat in the atmosphere and contributing to a greenhouse effect.
- **Global warming potential (GWP).** Metric used to describe how much heat a molecule of a greenhouse gas absorbs relative to a molecule of carbon dioxide (CO₂) over a given period of time (20, 100, and 500 years). CO₂ has a GWP of 1.
- **Carbon-dioxide equivalent (CO₂e).** The standard unit to measure the amount of greenhouse gases in terms of the amount of CO₂ that would cause the same amount of warming. CO₂e is based on the GWP ratios between the various GHGs relative to CO₂.
- **MTCO₂e.** Metric ton of CO₂e.
- **MMTCO₂e.** Million metric tons of CO₂e.

5.7.1 Environmental Setting

5.7.1.1 GREENHOUSE GASES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Scientists have concluded that human activities are contributing to global climate change by adding large amounts of heat-trapping gases, known as GHGs, to the atmosphere. The primary source of these GHGs is fossil fuel use. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has identified four major GHGs—water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and ozone (O₃)—that are the likely cause of an increase in global average temperatures observed in the 20th and 21st centuries. Other GHGs identified by the IPCC that contribute to global warming to a lesser extent are nitrous oxide (N₂O), sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆),

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hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and chlorofluorocarbons (IPCC 2001).^{1,2} The major GHGs applicable to the proposed project are briefly described below:

- **Carbon dioxide (CO₂)** enters the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, and coal), solid waste, trees and wood products, and respiration, and also as a result of other chemical reactions (e.g., manufacture of cement). Carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere (sequestered) when it is absorbed by plants as part of the biological carbon cycle.
- **Methane (CH₄)** is emitted during the production and transport of coal, natural gas, and oil. Methane emissions also result from livestock and other agricultural practices and from the decay of organic waste in landfills and water treatment facilities.
- **Nitrous oxide (N₂O)** is emitted during agricultural and industrial activities as well as during the combustion of fossil fuels and solid waste.

GHGs are dependent on the lifetime, or persistence, of the gas molecule in the atmosphere. Some GHGs have stronger greenhouse effects than others. These are referred to as high GWP gases. The GWP of GHG emissions are shown in Table 5.7-1, *GHG Emissions and Their Relative Global Warming Potential Compared to CO₂*. The GWP is used to convert GHGs to CO₂-equivalence (CO₂e) to show the relative potential that different GHGs have to retain infrared radiation in the atmosphere and contribute to the greenhouse effect. For example, under IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) GWP values for CH₄, a project that generates 10 MT of CH₄ would be equivalent to 280 MT of CO₂.

Table 5.7-1 GHG Emissions and Their Relative Global Warming Potential Compared to CO₂

GHGs	Second Assessment Report Global Warming Potential Relative to CO ₂ ¹	Fourth Assessment Report Global Warming Potential Relative to CO ₂ ¹	Fifth Assessment Report Global Warming Potential Relative to CO ₂ ¹
Carbon Dioxide (CO ₂)	1	1	1
Methane (CH ₄) ²	21	25	28
Nitrous Oxide (N ₂ O)	310	298	265

Source: IPCC 1995, 2007, 2013.

Notes: The IPCC published updated GWP values in its Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) that reflect new information on atmospheric lifetimes of GHGs and an improved calculation of the radiative forcing of CO₂. However, GWP values identified in AR4 are used by South Coast AQMD to maintain consistency in statewide GHG emissions modeling. In addition, the 2017 Scoping Plan Update was based on the GWP values in AR4.

¹ Based on 100-year time horizon of the GWP of the air pollutant compared to CO₂.

² The methane GWP includes direct effects and indirect effects due to the production of tropospheric ozone and stratospheric water vapor. The indirect effect due to the production of CO₂ is not included.

¹ Water vapor (H₂O) is the strongest GHG and the most variable in its phases (vapor, cloud droplets, ice crystals). However, water vapor is not considered a pollutant because it is considered part of the feedback loop rather than a primary cause of change.

² Black carbon contributes to climate change both directly, by absorbing sunlight, and indirectly, by depositing on snow (making it melt faster) and by interacting with clouds and affecting cloud formation. Black carbon is the most strongly light-absorbing component of particulate matter (PM) emitted from burning fuels such as coal, diesel, and biomass. Reducing black carbon emissions globally can have immediate economic, climate, and public health benefits. California has been an international leader in reducing emissions of black carbon, with close to 95 percent control expected by 2020 due to existing programs that target reducing PM from diesel engines and burning activities (CARB 2017a). However, state and national GHG inventories do not include black carbon due to ongoing work resolving the precise global warming potential of black carbon. Guidance for CEQA documents does not yet include black carbon.

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Human Influence on Climate Change

For approximately 1,000 years before the Industrial Revolution, the amount of GHGs in the atmosphere remained relatively constant. During the 20th century scientists observed a rapid change in the climate and the quantity of climate change pollutants in the Earth's atmosphere that is attributable to human activities. The amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere has increased by more than 35 percent since preindustrial times and has increased at an average rate of 1.4 parts per million per year since 1960, mainly due to the combustion of fossil fuels and deforestation (IPCC 2007). These recent changes in the quantity and concentration of climate change pollutants far exceed the extremes of the ice ages, and the global mean temperature is warming at a rate that cannot be explained by natural causes alone. Human activities are directly altering the chemical composition of the atmosphere through the buildup of climate change pollutants (CAT 2006). In the past, gradual changes in the Earth's temperature changed the distribution of species, availability of water, etc. Human activities are accelerating this process so that environmental impacts associated with climate change no longer occur in a geologic time frame but within a human lifetime (IPCC 2007).

Like the variability in the projections of the expected increase in global surface temperatures, the environmental consequences of gradual changes in the Earth's temperature are hard to predict. Projections of climate change depend heavily upon future human activity. Therefore, climate models are based on different emission scenarios that account for historical trends in emissions and on observations of the climate record that assess the human influence of the trend and projections for extreme weather events. Climate-change scenarios are affected by varying degrees of uncertainty. For example, there are varying degrees of certainty on the magnitude of the trends for:

- Warmer and fewer cold days and nights over most land areas.
- Warmer and more frequent hot days and nights over most land areas.
- An increase in the frequency of warm spells and heat waves over most land areas.
- An increase in frequency of heavy precipitation events (or proportion of total rainfall from heavy falls) over most areas.
- Larger areas affected by drought.
- Intense tropical cyclone activity increases.
- Increased incidence of extreme high sea level (excluding tsunamis).

Potential Climate Change Impacts for California

Observed changes over the last several decades across the western United States reveal clear signs of climate change. Statewide, average temperatures increased by about 1.7°F from 1895 to 2011, and warming has been greatest in the Sierra Nevada (CCCC 2012). The years from 2014 through 2016 showed unprecedented temperatures, with 2014 being the warmest (OEHHA 2018). By 2050, California is projected to warm by

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approximately 2.7°F above 2000 averages, a threefold increase in the rate of warming over the last century. By 2100, average temperatures could increase by 5.6 to 8.8°F, depending on emissions levels (CNRA 2019).

In California and western North America, observations of the climate have shown: 1) a trend toward warmer winter and spring temperatures; 2) a smaller fraction of precipitation falling as snow; 3) a decrease in the amount of spring snow accumulation in the lower- and middle-elevation mountain zones; 4) advanced shift in the timing of snowmelt of five to 30 days earlier in the spring; and 5) a similar shift (five to 30 days earlier) in the timing of spring flower blooms (CAT 2006). Overall, California has become drier over time, with five of the eight years of severe to extreme drought occurring between 2007 and 2016, and unprecedented dry years in 2014 and 2015 (OEHHA 2018). Statewide precipitation has become increasingly variable from year to year, with the driest consecutive four years from 2012 to 2015 (OEHHA 2018). According to the California Climate Action Team—a committee of state agency secretaries and the heads of agencies, boards, and departments, led by the California Environmental Protection Agency—even if actions could be taken to immediately curtail climate change emissions, the potency of emissions that have already built up, their long atmospheric lifetimes (see Table 5.7-1), and the inertia of the Earth’s climate system could produce as much as 0.6°C (1.1°F) of additional warming. Consequently, some impacts from climate change are now considered unavoidable. Global climate change risks to California are shown in Table 5.7-2, *Summary of GHG Emissions Risks to California*, and include impacts to public health, water resources, agriculture, coastal sea level, forest and biological resources, and energy.

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Table 5.7-2 Summary of GHG Emissions Risks to California

Impact Category	Potential Risk
Public Health Impacts	Heat waves will be more frequent, hotter, and longer Fewer extremely cold nights Poor air quality made worse Higher temperatures increase ground-level ozone levels
Water Resources Impacts	Decreasing Sierra Nevada snowpack Challenges in securing adequate water supply Potential reduction in hydropower Loss of winter recreation
Agricultural Impacts	Increasing temperature Increasing threats from pests and pathogens Expanded ranges of agricultural weeds Declining productivity Irregular blooms and harvests
Coastal Sea Level Impacts	Accelerated sea level rise Increasing coastal floods Shrinking beaches Worsened impacts on infrastructure
Forest and Biological Resource Impacts	Increased risk and severity of wildfires Lengthening of the wildfire season Movement of forest areas Conversion of forest to grassland Declining forest productivity Increasing threats from pests and pathogens Shifting vegetation and species distribution Altered timing of migration and mating habits Loss of sensitive or slow-moving species
Energy Demand Impacts	Potential reduction in hydropower Increased energy demand

Sources: CEC 2006; CEC 2009; CCCC 2012; CNRA 2014.

Specific climate change impacts that could affect the proposed project include:

- **Water Resources Impacts.** By late this century, all projections show drying, and half of the projections suggest 30-year average precipitation will decline by more than 10 percent below the historical average. This drying trend is caused by an apparent decline in the frequency of rain and snowfall. Even in projections with relatively small or no declines in precipitation, central and southern parts of the state can be expected to be drier from the warming effects alone—the spring snowpack will melt sooner, and the moisture in soils will evaporate during long dry summer months (CCCC 2012).
- **Wildfire Risks.** Earlier snowmelt, higher temperatures, and longer dry periods over a longer fire season will directly increase wildfire risk. Indirectly, wildfire risk will also be influenced by potential climate-related changes in vegetation and ignition potential from lightning. Human activities will continue to be the biggest factor in ignition risk. The number of large fires statewide is estimated to increase from 58 percent to 128

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percent above historical levels by 2085. Under the same emissions scenario, estimated burned area will increase by 57 percent to 169 percent, depending on location (CCCC 2012).

- **Health Impacts.** Many of the gravest threats to public health in California stem from the increase of extreme conditions—principally, more frequent, more intense, and longer heat waves. Particular concern centers on the increasing tendency for multiple hot days in succession and simultaneous heat waves in several regions throughout the state. Public health could also be affected by climate change impacts on air quality, food production, the amount and quality of water supplies, energy pricing and availability, and the spread of infectious diseases. Higher temperatures also increase ground-level ozone levels. Furthermore, wildfires can increase particulate air pollution in the major air basins of California (CCCC 2012).
- **Increase Energy Demand.** Increases in average temperature and higher frequency of extreme heat events combined with new residential development across the state will drive up the demand for cooling in the increasingly hot and longer summer season and decrease demand for heating in the cooler season. Warmer, drier summers also increase system losses at natural gas plants (reduced efficiency in the electricity generation process at higher temperatures) and hydropower plants (lower reservoir levels). Transmission of electricity will also be affected by climate change. Transmission lines lose seven percent to eight percent of transmitting capacity in high temperatures while needing to transport greater loads. This means that more electricity will need to be produced to make up for both the loss in capacity and the growing demand (CCCC 2012).

5.7.1.2 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to greenhouse gases that are applicable to the proposed project are summarized in this section.

Federal

United States Environmental Protection Agency

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced on December 7, 2009, that GHG emissions threaten the public health and welfare of the American people and that GHG emissions from on-road vehicles contribute to that threat. The EPA's final findings respond to the 2007 U.S. Supreme Court decision that GHG emissions fit within the Clean Air Act definition of air pollutants. The findings do not impose any emission reduction requirements, but allow the EPA to finalize the GHG standards proposed in 2009 for new light-duty vehicles as part of the joint rulemaking with the Department of Transportation (USEPA 2009).

To regulate GHGs from passenger vehicles, the EPA was required to issue an endangerment finding. The finding identified emissions of six key GHGs—CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and SF₆—that have been the subject of scrutiny and intense analysis for decades by scientists in the United States and around the world. The first three are applicable to the proposed project's GHG emissions inventory because they constitute the majority of GHG emissions, and according to guidance by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD), are the GHG emissions that should be evaluated as part of a project's GHG emissions inventory.

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US Mandatory Reporting Rule for GHGs (2009)

In response to the endangerment finding, the EPA issued the Mandatory Reporting of GHG Rule that requires substantial emitters of GHG emissions (large stationary sources, etc.) to report GHG emissions data. Facilities that emit 25,000 MTCO₂e or more per year are required to submit an annual report.

Update to Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards (2021 to 2026)

The federal government issued new Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards in 2012 for model years 2017 to 2025, which required a fleet average of 54.5 miles per gallon in 2025. On March 30, 2020, the EPA finalized an updated CAFE and GHG emissions standards for passenger cars and light trucks and established new standards covering model years 2021 through 2026, known as the Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Final Rule for Model Years 2021 to 2026. However, in response to Executive Order (EO) 13990 by President Biden, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announced new proposed fuel standards on August 5, 2021. On December 21, 2021, under the direction of EO 13990, the NHTSA repealed SAFE Vehicles Rule Part One, which had preempted state and local laws related to fuel economy standards. Fuel efficiency under the new standards proposed will increase eight percent annually for model years 2024 to 2026 and increase estimate fleetwide average by 12 mpg for model year 2026 compared to model year 2021 (NHTSA 2021).

EPA Regulation of Stationary Sources under the Clean Air Act (Ongoing)

Pursuant to its authority under the Clean Air Act, the EPA has developed regulations for new, large, stationary sources of emissions, such as power plants and refineries. Under former President Obama's 2013 Climate Action Plan, the EPA was directed to develop regulations for existing stationary sources as well. On June 19, 2019, the EPA issued the final Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule, which became effective on August 19, 2019. The ACE rule was crafted under the direction of former President Trump's Energy Independence executive order. It officially rescinded the Clean Power Plan rule issued during the Obama Administration which would have set new emissions guidelines for states in developing plans to limit CO₂ emissions from coal-fired power plants. The Affordable Clean Energy rule was vacated by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit on January 19, 2021. The Biden Administration is assessing options on potential future regulations.

State

Current State of California guidance and goals for reductions in GHG emissions are generally embodied in EO S-03-05 and EO B-30-15, EO B-55-18, Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), Senate Bill 32 (SB 32), and SB 375.

Executive Order S-03-05

EO S-03-05 was signed June 1, 2005, and set the following GHG reduction targets for the state:

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- 2000 levels by 2010
- 1990 levels by 2020
- 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050

Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act (2006)

AB 32 was passed by the California state legislature on August 31, 2006, to place the state on a course toward reducing its contribution of GHG emissions. AB 32 follows the 2020 tier of emissions reduction targets established in EO S-03-05. CARB prepared the 2008 Scoping Plan to outline a plan to achieve the GHG emissions reduction targets of AB 32.

Executive Order B-30-15

EO B-30-15, signed April 29, 2015, set a goal of reducing GHG emissions within the state to 40 percent of 1990 levels by year 2030. EO B-30-15 also directed CARB to update the Scoping Plan to quantify the 2030 GHG reduction goal for the state and requires state agencies to implement measures to meet the interim 2030 goal as well as the long-term goal for 2050 in EO S-03-05. It also requires the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) to conduct triennial updates of the California adaptation strategy, “Safeguarding California,” in order to ensure climate change is accounted for in state planning and investment decisions.

Senate Bill 32 and Assembly Bill 197

In September 2016, Governor Brown signed SB 32 and AB 197 into law, making the EO B-30-15 goal for year 2030 into a statewide mandated legislative target. AB 197 established a joint legislative committee on climate change policies and requires CARB to prioritize direct emissions reductions rather than the market-based cap-and-trade program for large stationary, mobile, and other sources.

2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update

EO B-30-15 and SB 32 required CARB to prepare another update to the Scoping Plan to address the 2030 target for the state. On December 24, 2017, CARB adopted the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update, which outlined potential regulations and programs, including strategies consistent with AB 197 requirements, to achieve the 2030 target. The 2017 Scoping Plan established a new emissions limit of 260 MMTCO_{2e} for the year 2030, which corresponds to a 40 percent decrease in 1990 levels by 2030 (CARB 2017b).

California’s climate strategy will require contributions from all sectors of the economy, including enhanced focus on zero- and near-zero emission (ZE/NZE) vehicle technologies; continued investment in renewables such as solar roofs, wind, and other types of distributed generation; greater use of low carbon fuels; integrated land conservation and development strategies; coordinated efforts to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (methane, black carbon, and fluorinated gases); and an increased focus on integrated land use planning to support livable, transit-connected communities and conservation of agricultural and other lands. Requirements for GHG reductions at stationary sources complement local air pollution control efforts by the local air districts to tighten criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants emissions limits across a broad spectrum of industrial sources. Major elements of the 2017 Scoping Plan framework include:

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- Implementing and/or increasing the standards of the Mobile Source Strategy, which include increasing ZE buses and trucks.
- Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), with an increased stringency (18 percent by 2030).
- Implementation of SB 350, which expands the Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) to 50 percent RPS and doubles energy efficiency savings by 2030.
- California Sustainable Freight Action Plan, which improves freight system efficiency, utilizes near-zero emissions technology, and deployment of ZE trucks.
- Implementing the Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Strategy, which focuses on reducing methane and hydrofluorocarbon emissions by 40 percent and anthropogenic black carbon emissions by 50 percent by year 2030.
- Continued implementation of SB 375 (discussed below).
- Post-2020 Cap-and-Trade Program that includes declining caps.
- Development of a Natural and Working Lands Action Plan to secure California’s land base as a net carbon sink.

In addition to the statewide strategies listed above, the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan identified local governments as essential partners in achieving the state’s long-term GHG reduction goals and recommended local actions to reduce GHG emissions. Part of the recommended actions are statewide targets of no more than six MTCO_{2e} or less per capita by 2030 and two MTCO_{2e} or less per capita by 2050. CARB recommends that local governments evaluate and adopt robust and quantitative locally appropriate goals that align with the state’s per capita targets and sustainable development objectives and develop plans to achieve the local goals. The statewide per capita goals were developed by applying the percentage reduction necessary to reach the 2030 and 2050 climate goals (i.e., 40 percent and 80 percent, respectively) to the state’s 1990 emissions limit established under AB 32.

For CEQA projects, CARB states that lead agencies have the discretion to develop evidenced-based numeric thresholds (mass emissions, per capita, or per service population) consistent with the Scoping Plan and the state’s long-term GHG goals. To the degree a project relies on GHG mitigation measures, CARB recommends that lead agencies prioritize on-site design features that reduce emissions, especially from VMT, and direct investments in GHG reductions within the project’s region that contribute potential air quality, health, and economic co-benefits. Where further project design or regional investments are infeasible or not proven to be effective, CARB recommends mitigating potential GHG impacts through purchasing and retiring carbon credits.

The 2017 Scoping Plan scenario is set against what is called the “business as usual” yardstick—that is, what would the GHG emissions look like if the state did nothing at all beyond the existing policies that are required and already in place to achieve the 2020 limit, as shown in Table 5.7-3, *2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Emissions*

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Reductions Gap. It includes the existing renewables requirements, advanced clean cars, the “10 percent” LCFS, and the SB 375 program for more vibrant communities, among others. However, it does not include a range of new policies or measures that have been developed or put into statute over the past two years (2015-2017). Also shown in Table 5.7-3, the known commitments are expected to result in emissions that are 60 MMTCO_{2e} above the target in 2030. If the estimated GHG reductions from the known commitments are not realized due to delays in implementation or technology deployment, the post-2020 Cap-and-Trade Program would deliver the additional GHG reductions in the sectors it covers to ensure the 2030 target is achieved.

Table 5.7-3 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Emissions Reductions Gap

Modeling Scenario	2030 GHG Emissions MMTCO _{2e}
Reference Scenario (Business-as-Usual)	398
With Known Commitments	320
2030 GHG Target	260
Gap to 2030 Target	60

Source: CARB 2017b.

Table 5.7-4, *2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Emissions Change by Sector*, provides estimated GHG emissions by sector at 1990 levels, and the range of emissions for each sector estimated for 2030. The following sectors would be applicable to the proposed project: residential and commercial, electric power, recycling and waste, and transportation.

Table 5.7-4 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Emissions Change by Sector

Scoping Plan Sector	1990 MMTCO _{2e}	2030 Proposed Plan Ranges MMTCO _{2e}	% Change from 1990
Agricultural	26	24-25	-4% to -8%
Residential and Commercial	44	38-40	-9% to -14%
Electric Power	108	30-53	-51% to -72%
High GWP	3	8-11	267% to 367%
Industrial	98	83-90	-8% to -15%
Recycling and Waste	7	8-9	14% to 29%
Transportation (including TCU)	152	103-111	-27% to -32%
Net Sink ¹	-7	TBD	TBD
Sub Total	431	294-339	-21% to -32%
Cap-and-Trade Program	NA	34-79	NA
Total	431	260	-40%

Source: CARB 2017b

Notes: TCU = Transportation, Communications, and Utilities; TBD: To Be Determined.

¹ Work is underway through 2017 to estimate the range of potential sequestration benefits from the natural and working lands sector.

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Executive Order B-55-18

EO B-55-18, signed September 10, 2018, sets a goal “to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, and no later than 2045, and achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter.” EO B-55-18 directs CARB to work with relevant state agencies to ensure future Scoping Plans identify and recommend measures to achieve the carbon neutrality goal. The goal of carbon neutrality by 2045 is in addition to other statewide goals, meaning not only should emissions be reduced to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, but that, by no later than 2045, the remaining emissions be offset by equivalent net removals of CO₂e from the atmosphere, including through sequestration in forests, soils, and other natural landscapes.

2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update

CARB released the Draft 2022 Scoping Plan on May 10, 2022. The Scoping Plan was updated to address the carbon neutrality goals of EO B-55-18. Previous Scoping Plans focused on specific GHG reduction targets for our industrial, energy, and transportation sectors—to meet 1990 levels by 2020, and then the more aggressive 40 percent below that for the 2030 target. Carbon neutrality takes it one step further by expanding actions to capture and store carbon including through natural and working lands and mechanical technologies, while drastically reducing anthropogenic sources of carbon pollution at the same time. The measures in the Scoping Plan would achieve 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Final adoption of the 2022 Scoping Plan is anticipated in late fall 2022 (CARB 2022).

CARB’s 2022 Scoping Plan identifies strategies that would be most impactful at the local level for ensuring substantial progress towards the state’s carbon neutrality goals (see Table 5.7-5, *Priority Strategies for Local Government Climate Action Plans*).

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Table 5.7-5 Priority Strategies for Local Government Climate Action Plans

Priority Area	Priority Strategies
Transportation Electrification	Convert local government fleets to zero-emission vehicles (ZEV).
	Create a jurisdiction-specific ZEV ecosystem to support deployment of ZEVs statewide (such as permit streamlining, infrastructure siting, consumer education, or preferential parking policies).
VMT Reduction	Reduce or eliminate minimum parking standards in new developments,
	Adopt and implement Complete Streets policies and investments, consistent with general plan circulation element requirements,
	Increase public access to shared clean mobility options (such as planning for and investing in electric shuttles, bike share, car share, transit).
	Implement parking pricing or transportation demand management pricing strategies.
	Amend zoning or development codes to enable mixed-use, walkable, and compact infill development (such as increasing allowable density of the neighborhood).
	Preserve natural and working lands.
Building Decarbonization	Adopt policies and incentive programs to implement energy efficiency retrofits (such as weatherization, lighting upgrades, replacing energy intensive appliances and equipment with more efficient systems, etc.).
	Adopt policies and incentive programs to electrify all appliances and equipment in existing buildings.
	Adopt policies and incentive programs to reduce electrical loads from equipment plugged into outlets (such as purchasing Energy Star equipment for municipal buildings, occupancy sensors, smart power strips, equipment controllers, etc.).
	Facilitate deployment of renewable energy production and distribution and energy storage.

Source: CARB 2022

For CEQA projects for proposed land use developments, CARB recommends demonstrating that they are aligned with state climate goals based on the attributes of land use development that reduce operational GHG emissions while simultaneously advancing fair housing. Attributes that accommodate growth in a manner consistent with the GHG and equity goals of SB 32 have all the following attributes:

- At least 20 percent of the units are affordable to lower-income residents;
- Result in no net loss of existing affordable units;
- Utilize existing infill sites that are surrounded by urban uses, and reuse or redevelop previously developed, underutilized land presently served by existing utilities and essential public services (e.g., transit, streets, water, sewer);
- Include transit-supportive densities (minimum of 20 residential dwelling units/acre), or are in proximity to existing transit (within ½ mile), or satisfy more detailed and stringent criteria specified in the region’s Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), for “SCS consistency” that would go further to reduce emissions;
- Do not result in the loss or conversion of the state’s natural and working lands;
- Use all electric appliances, without any natural gas connections, and would not use propane or other fossil fuels for space heating, water heating, or indoor cooking;

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- Provide EV charging infrastructure at least in accordance with the California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen) Tier 2 standards; and
- Relax parking requirements by:
 - Eliminating parking requirements or including maximum allowable parking ratios.
 - Providing residential parking supply at a ratio of <1 parking space per unit;
 - Unbundling residential parking costs from costs to rent or lease (CARB 2022).

The second approach to project-level alignment with state climate goals is net zero GHG emissions. The third approach to demonstrating project-level alignment with state climate goals is to align with GHG thresholds of significance, which many local air quality management (AQMDs) and air pollution control districts (APCDs) have developed or adopted (CARB 2022).

Senate Bill 375

SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, was adopted in 2008 to connect the GHG emissions reduction targets established in the 2008 Scoping Plan for the transportation sector to local land use decisions that affect travel behavior. Its intent is to reduce GHG emissions from light-duty trucks and automobiles (excludes emissions associated with goods movement) by aligning regional long-range transportation plans, investments, and housing allocations to local land use planning to reduce VMT and vehicle trips. Specifically, SB 375 required CARB to establish GHG emissions reduction targets for each of the 18 metropolitan planning organizations (MPO). The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the MPO for the Southern California region, which includes Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, and Imperial counties. Pursuant to the recommendations of the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, CARB adopted per capita reduction targets for each of the MPOs rather than a total magnitude reduction target.

2017 Update to the SB 375 Targets

CARB is required to update the targets for the MPOs every eight years. CARB adopted revised SB 375 targets for the MPOs in March 2018. The updated targets became effective in October 2018. All SCSs adopted after October 1, 2018, are subject to these new targets. CARB's updated SB 375 targets for the SCAG region were an eight percent per capita GHG reduction in 2020 from 2005 levels (unchanged from the 2010 target) and a 19 percent per capita GHG reduction in 2035 from 2005 levels (compared to the 2010 target of 13 percent) (CARB 2018).

The targets consider the need to further reduce VMT, as identified in the 2017 Scoping Plan Update (for SB 32), while balancing the need for additional and more flexible revenue sources to incentivize positive planning and action toward sustainable communities. Like the 2010 targets, the updated SB 375 targets are in units of “percent per capita” reductions in GHG emissions from automobiles and light trucks relative to 2005; this excludes reductions anticipated from implementation of state technology and fuels strategies and any potential future state strategies, such as statewide road user pricing. The proposed targets call for greater per-capita GHG

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emission reductions from SB 375 than are currently in place, which for 2035 translate into proposed targets that either match or exceed the emission reduction levels in the MPOs' currently adopted SCSs to achieve the SB 375 targets. CARB foresees that the additional GHG emissions reductions in 2035 may be achieved from land use changes, transportation investment, and technology strategies (CARB 2018).

SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

SB 375 requires each MPOs to prepare a sustainable communities strategy in its regional transportation plan. For the SCAG region, the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, Connect SoCal, was adopted on September 3, 2020, and is an update to the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS (SCAG 2020). In general, the RTP/SCS outlines a development pattern for the region that, when integrated with the transportation network and other transportation measures and policies, would reduce VMT from automobiles and light duty trucks and thereby reduce GHG emissions from these sources.

Connect SoCal focuses on the continued efforts of the previous RTP/SCSs to integrate transportation and land use strategies in development of the SCAG region through the horizon year 2045 (SCAG 2020). Connect SoCal forecasts that the SCAG region will meet its GHG per capita reduction targets of 8 percent by 2020 and 19 percent by 2035. It also forecasts that implementation of the plan will reduce VMT per capita in year 2045 by 4.1 percent compared to baseline conditions for that year. Connect SoCal includes a "Core Vision" that centers on maintaining and better managing the transportation network for moving people and goods, while expanding mobility choices by locating housing, jobs, and transit closer together; and increasing investments in transit and complete streets (SCAG 2020).

Transportation Sector-Specific Regulations

Assembly Bill 1493 (Pavley I)

California vehicle GHG emission standards were enacted under AB 1493 (Pavley I). Pavley I is a clean-car standard that reduces GHG emissions from new passenger vehicles (light-duty auto to medium-duty vehicles) from 2009 through 2016 and was anticipated to reduce GHG emissions from new passenger vehicles by 30 percent in 2016. California implements the Pavley I standards through a waiver granted to California by the EPA. In 2012, the EPA issued a Final Rulemaking that sets even more stringent fuel economy and GHG emissions standards for model years 2017 through 2025 light-duty vehicles (see also the discussion on the update to the Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards under "Federal," above). In January 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars program (formerly known as Pavley II) for model years 2017 through 2025. The program combined the control of smog, soot, and GHGs with requirements for greater numbers of ZE vehicles into a single package of standards. Under California's Advanced Clean Car program, by 2025 new automobiles will emit 34 percent less GHG emissions and 75 percent less smog-forming emissions.

Executive Order S 01 07

On January 18, 2007, the state set a new LCFS for transportation fuels sold in the state. EO S 01 07 set a declining standard for GHG emissions measured in grams of CO_{2e} per unit of fuel energy sold in California. The LCFS required a reduction of 2.5 percent in the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels by 2015 and a reduction of at least 10 percent by 2020. The standard applied to refiners, blenders, producers, and

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importers of transportation fuels, and used market-based mechanisms to allow these providers to choose the most economically feasible methods for reducing emissions during the “fuel cycle.”

Executive Order B 16 2012

On March 23, 2012, the state identified that CARB, the California Energy Commission (CEC), the Public Utilities Commission, and other relevant agencies to work with the Plug-in Electric Vehicle Collaborative and the California Fuel Cell Partnership to establish benchmarks to accommodate ZE vehicles in major metropolitan areas, including infrastructure to support them (e.g., electric vehicle charging stations). EO B-16-2012 also directed the number of ZE vehicles in California’s state vehicle fleet to increase through the normal course of fleet replacement, so that at least 10 percent of fleet purchases of light-duty vehicles are ZE by 2015 and at least 25 percent by 2020. The EO also established a target for the transportation sector of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels.

Executive Order N-79-20

On September 23, 2020, Governor Newsom signed EO N-79-20, whose goal is that 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be ZE by 2035. Additionally, the fleet goals for truck are that 100 percent of drayage trucks are ZE by 2035 and 100 percent of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in the state are ZE by 2045, where feasible. The EO identifies a goal for the state to transition to 100 percent ZE off-road vehicles and equipment by 2035, where feasible.

Renewables Portfolio: Carbon Neutrality Regulations

Senate Bills 1078, 107, and X1-2, and Executive Order S 14 08

A major component of California’s Renewable Energy Program is the RPS established under SBs 1078 (Sher) and 107 (Simitian). Under the RPS, certain retail sellers of electricity were required to increase the amount of renewable energy each year by at least one percent in order to reach at least 20 percent by December 30, 2010. EO S 14 08 was signed in November 2008, which expanded the state’s RPS to 33 percent renewable power by 2020. This standard was adopted by the legislature in 2011 (SB X1-2). Renewable sources of electricity include wind, small hydropower, solar, geothermal, biomass, and biogas. The increase in renewable sources for electricity production decreases indirect GHG emissions from development projects, because electricity production from renewable sources is generally considered carbon neutral.

Senate Bill 350

Senate Bill 350 (De Leon), was signed into law in September 2015 and establishes tiered increases to the RPS—40 percent by 2024, 45 percent by 2027, and 50 percent by 2030. SB 350 also set a new goal to double the energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas through energy efficiency and conservation measures.

Senate Bill 100

On September 10, 2018, Governor Brown signed SB 100. Under SB 100, the RPS for publicly owned facilities and retail sellers consists of 44 percent renewable energy by 2024, 52 percent by 2027, and 60 percent by 2030. SB 100 also established a new RPS requirement of 50 percent by 2026. Furthermore, the bill establishes an overall state policy that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of

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all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all state agencies by December 31, 2045. Under the bill, the state cannot increase carbon emissions elsewhere in the western grid or allow resource shuffling to achieve the 100 percent carbon-free electricity target.

Energy Efficiency Regulations

California Building Code: Building Energy Efficiency Standards

Energy conservation standards for new residential and nonresidential buildings were adopted by the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (now the CEC) in June 1977 (Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations [CCR]). Title 24 requires the design of building shells and building components to conserve energy. The standards are updated periodically to allow for consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards were adopted on May 9, 2018, and went into effect on January 1, 2020.

The 2019 standards move toward cutting energy use in new homes by more than 50 percent and require installation of solar photovoltaic systems for single-family homes and multifamily buildings of three stories and less. The 2019 standards focus on four key areas: 1) smart residential photovoltaic systems; 2) updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to exterior and vice versa); 3) residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements; and 4) nonresidential lighting requirements (CEC 2018b). Under the 2019 standards, nonresidential buildings are generally 30 percent more energy efficient than under the 2016 standards, and single-family homes are generally seven percent more energy efficient (CEC 2018a). When accounting for the electricity generated by the solar photovoltaic system, single-family homes would generally use 53 percent less energy compared to homes built to the 2016 standards (CEC 2018a).

Furthermore, on August 11, 2021, the CEC adopted the 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which were subsequently approved by the California Building Standards Commission in December 2021. The 2022 standards become effective and replace the existing 2019 standards on January 1, 2023. The 2022 standards will require mixed-fuel single-family homes to be electric-ready to accommodate replacement of gas appliances with electric appliances. The new standards also include prescriptive photovoltaic system and battery requirements for high-rise, multifamily buildings (i.e., more than three stories) and noncommercial buildings such as hotels, offices, medical offices, restaurants, retail stores, schools, warehouses, theaters, and convention centers (CEC 2021).

California Building Code: CALGreen

On July 17, 2008, the California Building Standards Commission adopted the nation's first green building standards. The California Green Building Standards Code (24 CCR, Part 11, known as "CALGreen") was adopted as part of the California Building Standards Code. CALGreen established planning and design standards for sustainable site development, energy efficiency (in excess of the California Energy Code requirements), water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants. CALGreen is comprised of mandatory measures, requirements applicable to all residential and non-residential projects, and voluntary measures (Tier 1 and Tier 2 requirements), which may be mandated based on local ordinances. The mandatory provisions of CALGreen became effective January 1, 2011, and were last updated in 2019. The 2019 CALGreen standards became effective January 1, 2020.

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2006 Appliance Efficiency Regulations

The 2006 Appliance Efficiency Regulations (20 CCR secs. 1601–1608) were adopted by the CEC on October 11, 2006, and approved by the California Office of Administrative Law on December 14, 2006. The regulations include standards for both federally regulated appliances and non–federally regulated appliances. Though these regulations are now often viewed as “business as usual,” they exceed the standards imposed by all other states, and they reduce GHG emissions by reducing energy demand.

Solid Waste Diversion Regulations

AB 939: Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989

California’s Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939, Public Resources Code secs. 40050 et seq.) set a requirement for cities and counties throughout the state to divert 50 percent of all solid waste from landfills by January 1, 2000, through source reduction, recycling, and composting. In 2008, the requirements were modified to reflect a per capita requirement rather than tonnage. To help achieve this, the act required that each city and county prepare and submit a source reduction and recycling element. AB 939 also established the goal for all California counties to provide at least 15 years of ongoing landfill capacity.

AB 341

AB 341 (Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011) increased the statewide goal for waste diversion to 75 percent by 2020 and requires recycling of waste from commercial and multifamily residential land uses. Section 5.408 of CALGreen also requires that at least 65 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition waste from nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse.

AB 1327

The California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act (AB 1327, Public Resources Code secs. 42900 et seq.) required areas to be set aside for collecting and loading recyclable materials in development projects. The act required the California Integrated Waste Management Board to develop a model ordinance for adoption by any local agency requiring adequate areas for collection and loading of recyclable materials as part of development projects. Local agencies are required to adopt the model or an ordinance of their own.

AB 1826

In October 2014 Governor Brown signed AB 1826 requiring businesses to recycle their organic waste on and after April 1, 2016, depending on the amount of waste they generate per week. This law also requires that on and after January 1, 2016, local jurisdictions across the state implement an organic waste recycling program to divert organic waste generated by businesses and multifamily residential dwellings with five or more units. Organic waste means food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, nonhazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed with food waste.

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Water Efficiency Regulations

SBX7-7

The 20x2020 Water Conservation Plan was issued by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) in 2010 pursuant to Senate Bill 7, which was adopted during the 7th Extraordinary Session of 2009–2010 and therefore dubbed “SBX7-7.” SBX7-7 mandated urban water conservation and authorized the DWR to prepare a plan implementing urban water conservation requirements (20x2020 Water Conservation Plan). In addition, it required agricultural water providers to prepare agricultural water management plans, measure water deliveries to customers, and implement other efficiency measures. SBX7-7 required urban water providers to adopt a water conservation target of 20 percent reduction in urban per capita water use by 2020 compared to 2005 baseline use.

AB 1881: Water Conservation in Landscaping Act

The Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006 (AB 1881) requires local agencies to adopt the updated DWR model ordinance or an equivalent. AB 1881 also required the CEC to consult with the DWR to adopt, by regulation, performance standards and labeling requirements for landscape irrigation equipment, including irrigation controllers, moisture sensors, emission devices, and valves to reduce the wasteful, uneconomic, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy or water.

Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy

Senate Bill 1383

On September 19, 2016, the Governor signed SB 1383 to supplement the GHG reduction strategies in the Scoping Plan to consider short-lived climate pollutants, including black carbon and CH₄. Black carbon is the light-absorbing component of fine particulate matter produced during the incomplete combustion of fuels. SB 1383 required the state board, no later than January 1, 2018, to approve and begin implementing a comprehensive strategy to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants to achieve a reduction in methane by 40 percent, hydrofluorocarbon gases by 40 percent, and anthropogenic black carbon by 50 percent below 2013 levels by 2030. The bill also established targets for reducing organic waste in landfills. On March 14, 2017, CARB adopted the Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy, which identifies the state’s approach to reducing anthropogenic and biogenic sources of short-lived climate pollutants. Anthropogenic sources of black carbon include on- and off-road transportation, residential wood burning, fuel combustion (charbroiling), and industrial processes. According to CARB, ambient levels of black carbon in California are 90 percent lower than in the early 1960s, despite the tripling of diesel fuel use (CARB 2017a). In-use on-road rules were expected to reduce black carbon emissions from on-road sources by 80 percent between 2000 and 2020. South Coast AQMD is one of the air districts that requires air pollution control technologies for chain-driven broilers, which reduces particulate emissions from these char broilers by over 80 percent (CARB 2017a). Additionally, South Coast AQMD Rule 445 limits installation of new fireplaces in the South Coast Air Basin.

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Local

Energy Action Plan

The Energy Action Plan (EAP) was adopted November 2015 as a strategic plan to establish a 2010 baseline, to address California’s energy reduction goals by setting overall net energy consumption reduction target (for years 2015, 2020, and 2025) and identify programs/projects to achieve the targets over time (Norwalk 2015). The EAP builds upon existing energy conservation efforts in the City’s policies and addresses energy consumption from purchased electricity for the City’s municipal operations, specifically its buildings. This Plan also identifies energy saving regulations from current state and Federal legislation, specifically AB 32, the aim for statewide decrease of greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020, and California’s Long-Term Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan. The City has initiated energy efficiency policy based on the City’s Strategic Action Plan 6.B.1-3 2020 Vision published by the Norwalk City Council. Furthermore, the City has partnered with Southern California Edison’s Energy Leader Partnership Program to increase community awareness and participation in community-wide energy efficiency programs to achieve “Gold” level, which requires an additional 186,365 kWh of municipal savings. If all the projects and actions are implemented, this will reduce the city’s electrical energy usage by 25 percent from 2010 levels by 2025.

5.7.1.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project site is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard in Norwalk. The 13.2-acre project site encompasses three parcels with Assessor’s Parcel Numbers (APN) 8047-006-922, -924, and -925, which are owned by the City of Norwalk, and a portion of one parcel with APN 8047-006-927, which is owned by the County of Los Angeles. Existing land uses on the project site are the City Hall Lawn, Norwalk City Hall, a portion of an accessory building to the County Superior Court property, a public surface parking lot, and a three-level parking garage. The project site currently generates GHG emissions from transportation (employee and visitor vehicle trips), area sources (consumer products and cleaning supplies), energy use, water use/wastewater generation, and solid waste disposal. Emissions associated with existing mobile sources from the City Hall and seasonal events are excluded from the analysis because there would be no net change between the proposed project and existing conditions for this land use or events. Existing emissions associated with the project site are estimated and shown in Table 5.7-6, *Existing GHG Emissions Inventory*.

Table 5.7-6 Existing GHG Emissions Inventory

Sectors ¹	GHG Emissions
	MTCO _{2e} per Year
Area	<1
Energy ²	522
Solid Waste Disposal	18
Water/Wastewater	42
Plan Area Total All Sectors	582

Source: CalEEMod, version 2020.4.0.

Notes: Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

¹ Mobile emissions not modeled since Norwalk City Hall building will remain after buildout.

² Utilizes CalEEMod historical energy rates.

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5.7.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to GHG if the project would:

- GHG-1 Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.
- GHG-2 Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

South Coast Air Quality Management District

South Coast AQMD adopted a significance threshold of 10,000 MTCO_{2e} per year for permitted (stationary) sources of GHG emissions for which South Coast AQMD is the designated lead agency. To provide guidance to local lead agencies on determining significance for GHG emissions in their CEQA documents, South Coast AQMD convened a GHG CEQA Significance Threshold Working Group. Based on the last Working Group meeting in September 2010 (Meeting No. 15), the South Coast AQMD Working Group identified a tiered approach for evaluating GHG emissions for development projects where South Coast AQMD is not the lead agency (South Coast AQMD 2010a). The following tiered approach has not been formally adopted by South Coast AQMD.

- **Tier 1.** If a project is exempt from CEQA, project-level and contribution to significant cumulative GHG emissions are less than significant.
- **Tier 2.** If the project complies with a GHG emissions reduction plan or mitigation program that avoids or substantially reduces GHG emissions in the project's geographic area (e.g., city or county), project-level and contribution to significant cumulative GHG emissions are less than significant.
- **Tier 3.** If GHG emissions are less than the screening-level criterion, project-level and contribution to significant cumulative GHG emissions are less than significant.

For projects that are not exempt or where no qualifying GHG reduction plans are directly applicable, South Coast AQMD Working Group requires an assessment of GHG emissions. Project-related GHG emissions include on-road transportation, energy use, water use, wastewater generation, solid waste disposal, area sources, off-road emissions, and construction activities. The South Coast AQMD Working Group decided that because construction activities would result in a "one-time" net increase in GHG emissions, construction activities should be amortized into the operational phase GHG emissions inventory based on the service life of a building. For buildings in general, it is reasonable to look at a 30-year time frame, since this is a typical interval before a new building requires the first major renovation. South Coast AQMD Working Group identified a screening-level threshold of 3,000 MTCO_{2e} annually for all land use types. The bright-line screening-level criteria are based on a review of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research database of CEQA projects. Based on review of 711 CEQA projects, 90 percent of CEQA projects would exceed the bright-line thresholds. Therefore, projects that do not exceed the bright-line

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threshold would have a nominal and less than cumulatively considerable impact on GHG emissions. South Coast AQMD Working Group recommends use of the 3,000 MTCO_{2e} interim bright-line screening-level criterion for all project types (South Coast AQMD 2010b).

- **Tier 4.** If emissions exceed the screening threshold, a more detailed review of the project’s GHG emissions is warranted.

The South Coast AQMD Working Group’s bright-line screening-level criterion of 3,000 MTCO_{2e} per year is used as the significance threshold for the proposed project. If the project operation-phase emissions exceed this criterion, GHG emissions would be considered potentially significant without mitigation measures.

5.7.3 Environmental Impacts

5.7.3.1 METHODOLOGY

This GHG evaluation was prepared in accordance with the requirements of CEQA to determine if significant GHG impacts are likely in conjunction with the proposed project. South Coast AQMD has published guidelines that are intended to provide local governments with guidance for analyzing and mitigating environmental impacts, and they were used in this analysis. The analysis in this section is based on buildout of the proposed project as modeled using CalEEMod, version 2020.4.0, for the following sectors:

- **Transportation.** The average daily trips for weekday, Saturday, and Sunday trips were provided by Gibson Transportation Consulting Inc. Project-related on-road criteria air pollutant emissions are based on year 2022 emission rates for existing conditions and 2025 emission rates for the project buildout year. The primary source of mobile criteria air pollutant emissions is tailpipe exhaust emissions from the combustion of fuel (i.e., gasoline and diesel). Mobile sources from the existing City Hall are excluded because there would be no net change between the proposed project and existing conditions for this land use.
- **Area Sources.** Area sources generated from use of consumer products and cleaning supplies are based on CalEEMod default emission rates and on the assumed building and land use square footages. For gas barbeques, it is assumed that there would be eight barbeques shared among all residential uses.
- **Energy.** Emissions of GHG from energy use (electricity and natural gas) are based on the CalEEMod defaults for electricity and natural gas usage. For purposes of this analysis, new buildings are modeled using the default CalEEMod energy rates, which are based on the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Existing building are modeled using the CalEEMod historical energy rates, which are based on the 2005 Building Energy Efficiency Standards.
- **Solid Waste Disposal.** Indirect emissions from waste generation are based on the CalEEMod defaults for all existing uses and proposed mixed-uses.
- **Water/Wastewater.** Emissions of GHG are associated with the embodied energy used to supply, treat, and distribute water. Indoor water use is based on information provided in Section 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*. Existing outdoor water use is based on using the Estimated Total Water Use methodology, as

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described in the 2015 Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance Guidebook; proposed indoor water demand was based on Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County's wastewater generation rates; and proposed outdoor water use was calculated using an annual precipitation of 12.8 inches, per the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan.

- **Construction.** For purposes of this analysis, development of the proposed project is anticipated to begin in June 2023 and be completed by May 2025. Emissions of GHG would primarily be from operation of off-road construction equipment and construction worker, vendor, and haul vehicles. The construction schedule and equipment used in the analysis represents a conservative scenario because vertical building construction was split into three overlapping construction components. The three overlapping components are composed of the expansion of the existing commercial parking garage, northeast building and associated parking garage, and eastern building and associated parking garage building.

Life cycle emissions are not included in the GHG analysis, consistent with California Resources Agency directives.³ Black carbon emissions are not included in the GHG analysis because CARB does not include this short-lived climate pollutant in the state's AB 32/SB 32 inventory but treats it separately.⁴ GHG modeling is included in Appendix B of this DEIR.

5.7.3.2 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.7-1: Implementation of the proposed project would generate a net increase in GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that would have a significant impact on the environment. [Threshold GHG-1]

Implementation of a development project could contribute to global climate change through direct emissions of GHGs from on-site area sources and vehicle trips generated by the project, and indirectly through off-site energy production required for on-site activities, water use, and waste disposal. Because no single project is large enough to result in a measurable increase in global concentrations of GHG emissions, climate change impacts of a project are considered on a cumulative basis.

The proposed project includes development standards and guidelines that promote energy efficiency and water efficiency, such as selecting architectural materials and technologies that reduce energy and emphasizing water-

³ Life cycle emissions include indirect emissions associated with materials manufacture. However, these indirect emissions involve numerous parties, each of which is responsible for GHG emissions of their particular activity. The California Resources Agency, in adopting the CEQA Guidelines Amendments on GHG emissions found that lifecycle analysis was not warranted for project-specific CEQA analysis in most situations, for a variety of reasons, including lack of control over some sources, and the possibility of double-counting emissions (see Final Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action, December 2009). Because the amount of materials consumed during the operation or construction of the proposed project is not known, the origin of the raw materials purchased is not known, and manufacturing information for those raw materials is also not known, calculation of life cycle emissions would be speculative. A life-cycle analysis is not warranted (OPR 2008).

⁴ Particulate matter emissions, which include black carbon, are analyzed under *Air Quality*. Black carbon emissions have sharply declined due to efforts to reduce on-road and off-road vehicle emissions, especially diesel particulate matter. The state's existing air quality policies will virtually eliminate black carbon emissions from on-road diesel engines within 10 years (CARB 2017a).

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efficient and drought tolerant plants. Under the Urban Design Concepts of the specific plan, native California plants would be used to conserve water usage and reduce water runoff within the urban context. The proposed project provides for the development of a mixed-use project that allows for residential and commercial uses on the same project site thus promoting interactive use of onsite facilities which reduces the need for vehicle trips. The project site is also located near existing civic buildings and commercial uses, therefore additional housing may also reduce the need for vehicle trips. In addition, the proposed project supports multimodal transportation by providing bicycle parking onsite and walking paths that connect to the surrounding community and public transportation (such as bus stops along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard). The project's proximity to public transportation along with its active transportation facilities (i.e. bicycle parking) would help reduce long-term GHG emissions associated with operation of the proposed project.

Annual GHG emissions were calculated for construction and operation of the proposed project and are shown in Table 5.7-7, *Operational Phase GHG Emissions*. The project operational phase emissions are from operation of the proposed land uses, off-road equipment used for daily operations, and project-related vehicle trips. Construction emissions were amortized into the operational phase in accordance with South Coast AQMD's proposed methodology (South Coast AQMD 2009).

Table 5.7-7 Operational Phase GHG Emissions

Source	Existing Conditions MTCO _{2e}	Proposed Project MTCO _{2e}	Percentage of Proposed Project Total Emissions	Net Change (Proposed Project) MTCO _{2e}
Area	0	14	<1%	14
Energy ^{1,4}	522	1,871	14%	1,349
Mobile ²	0	10,700	80%	10,700
Solid Waste	18	554	4%	536
Water	42	150	1%	107
30-Year Amortized Construction ³	NA	135	1%	135
Total Emissions	582	13,423	100%	12,841
South Coast AQMD Bright Line Threshold	NA	NA	NA	3,000 MTCO _{2e}
Exceeds South Coast AQMD Bright Line Threshold	NA	NA	NA	Yes

Sources: CalEEMod Version 2020.4.0.

Note: NA: not applicable

¹ Existing conditions for energy uses historic rates based on CalEEMod Defaults. For project buildout conditions, the default electricity and natural gas rate in CalEEMod was adjusted to reflect 'blended' energy efficiency associated with the existing Norwalk City Hall that would remain (using historic rates in CalEEMod) and new structures that would be constructed to achieve the 2019 Building and Energy Efficiency Standards (see Appendix B).

² Mobile emissions for existing conditions were not modeled since the land use with remain after buildout. Transportation emissions associated with buildout are based on trip generation data provided by Gibson Transportation Consulting Inc. (see Appendix M). VMT and vehicle fleet mix based on CalEEMod default rates.

³ Construction emissions are amortized over a 30-year project lifetime per recommended South Coast AQMD methodology.

⁴ Based on conceptual site plans, an estimated 81,241 square feet of solar panels would be installed on the rooftops of each proposed building and would offset approximately 571 MTCO_{2e} per year (see Appendix B).

The primary sources of project-related emissions (80 percent of total emissions) would be from mobile-source emissions generated by the project-related vehicle trips, followed by energy sector emissions (14 percent) and solid waste sector emissions (four percent). The proposed project has development standards and design features that contribute to reducing GHG emissions; however, because of its scale and the amount of vehicle

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miles traveled associated with project operation, the proposed project would generate annual GHG emissions of 12,841 MTCO_{2e}/yr and would exceed the bright-line threshold of 3,000 MTCO_{2e}/yr. Therefore, GHG emissions generated by the proposed project would cumulatively contribute to statewide GHG emissions, and impacts are **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measures:

In addition to Mitigation Measure TRA-1, found in Section 5.15, *Transportation*, of this EIR, which would reduce VMT through implementation of a TDM program the following mitigation measure would reduce project-related GHG emissions:

- GHG-1 The project developer(s) shall design and build all multifamily residential units to meet/include the following:
- a) Tier 2 requirements for Division A5.1, Planning and Design, as outlined under Sections A5.106.5.1.2 and A5.106.5.1.3 of Appendix A5, Nonresidential Voluntary Measures, of the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code for Designated Parking for Clean Air Vehicles.
 - b) Tier 2 requirements for Division A5.1, Planning and Design, as outlined under Sections A5.106.5.3.2, A5.106.5.3.3, and A5.106.5.3.4 of Appendix A5, Nonresidential Voluntary Measures, of the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code for Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging.
 - c) Tier 2 requirements for Division A5.2, Energy Efficiency, as outlined under Section A5.203.1.1.2.2 of Appendix A5, Nonresidential Voluntary Measures, of the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code.
 - d) Tier 2 requirements for Division A5.211, Renewable Energy, of Appendix A5, Nonresidential Voluntary Measures, of the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code.
 - e) Tier 2 requirements for Division A5.3, Water Efficiency and Conservation, as outlined under Section A5.303.2.3.2 of Appendix A5, Nonresidential Voluntary Measures, of the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code.
 - f) No wood-burning or gas-powered fireplaces shall be installed in any of the dwelling units.
 - g) All buildings shall be electric, meaning that electricity is the primary source of energy for water heating; mechanical; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) (i.e., space-heating and space cooling); cooking; and clothes-drying.
 - h) All major appliances provided/installed (e.g., dishwashers, refrigerators, clothes washers and dryers, and water heaters) shall be electric-powered EnergyStar-certified or of equivalent energy efficiency, where applicable.

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Prior to the issuance of building permits for new development projects within the project site, the project developer(s) shall provide documentation (e.g., building plans, site plans) to the City of Norwalk Planning Division to verify implementation of the design requirements specified in this mitigation measure. Prior to the issuance of the certificate of occupancy, the City shall verify implementation of these design requirements.

GHG-2 The project developer(s) shall design the public-use parking garage for the non-residential portion of the project (not within the existing parking structure that would also be used for parking) to:

- a) Provide electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. At minimum, the number of EV charging stations shall equal the Tier 2 Nonresidential Voluntary Measures of the California Green Building Standards Code.
- b) Provide parking for low-emitting, fuel-efficient, and carpool/van vehicles. At minimum, the number of preferential parking spaces shall equal the Tier 2 Nonresidential Voluntary Measures of the California Green Building Standards.

Prior to the issuance of building permits for new development projects on the project site, the project developer(s) shall provide documentation (e.g., site plans) to the City of Norwalk Planning Division to verify implementation of the of the design requirements specified in this mitigation measure. Prior to the issuance of the certificate of occupancy, the City shall verify implementation of these design requirements.

Significance After Mitigation: Mitigation Measures GHG-1 and GHG-2 would require installation of electric-vehicle-capable charging spaces in the residential building and public garage to be developed as part of the project (not the existing parking structure that would also be used for parking) to meet the Tier 2 voluntary standards of CALGreen and would require that the new residential uses be 100 percent electric. With implementation of fuel switching from natural gas to electricity for residential heating, cooking, and water heating, GHG emissions would be slightly reduced, but would continue to exceed the South Coast AQMD Working Group bright-line threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e as a result of mobile-source emissions generated by the nonresidential and residential land uses (see Table 5.7-8, *Mitigated Operational Phase GHG Emissions*). Mobile source emissions would also be reduced through implementation of mitigation measure TRA-1 found in Section 5.15, *Transportation*, of this EIR, which would reduce VMT through the implementation of a TDM program; however no additional mitigation is feasible that would reduce the magnitude of emissions from the project's transportation sector. Consequently, despite implementation of GHG-1 and GHG-2, project-related GHG impacts would continue to be **significant and unavoidable**.

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Table 5.7-8 Mitigated Operational Phase GHG Emissions

Source	Existing Conditions MTCO _{2e}	Proposed Project MTCO _{2e}	Percentage of Proposed Project Total Emission	Net Change (Proposed Project) MTCO _{2e}
Area	<1	14	<1%	14
Energy ¹	522	1,810	16%	1,288
Mobile ²	<1	8,558	76%	8,558
Solid Waste	18	554	5%	536
Water	42	150	1%	108
30-Year Amortized Construction ³	NA	135	1%	135
Total Emissions	582	11,221	100%	10,639
South Coast AQMD Bright Line Threshold	NA	NA	NA	3,000 MTCO _{2e}
Exceeds South Coast AQMD Bright Line Threshold	NA	NA	NA	Yes

Sources: CalEEMod Version 2020.4.0.

Note: NA: not applicable

¹ Existing conditions for energy uses historic rates based on CalEEMod Defaults. For project buildout conditions, the default electricity and natural gas rate in CalEEMod was adjusted to reflect 'blended' energy efficiency associated with the existing Norwalk City Hall that would remain (using historic rates in CalEEMod) and new structures that would be constructed to achieve the 2019 Building and Energy Efficiency Standards (see Appendix M). Includes implementation of Mitigation Measure GHG-1, which requires 100 percent electric buildings for residential component.

² Mobile emissions for existing conditions were not modeled since the land use will remain after buildout. Transportation emissions associated with buildout are based on trip generation data provided by Gibson Transportation Consulting Inc. including 20% TDM reductions (see Appendix M). VMT and vehicle fleet mix based on CalEEMod default rates.

³ Construction emissions are amortized over a 30-year project lifetime per recommended South Coast AQMD methodology.

Impact 5.7-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. [Threshold GHG-2]

Applicable plans adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions include CARB's Scoping Plan, SCAG's RTP/SCS, and the City's Energy Action Plan. A consistency analysis with these plans is presented below.

CARB Scoping Plan

CARB's adopted 2017 Scoping Plan is California's GHG reduction strategy to achieve the state's GHG emissions reduction target established by SB 32, which is to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 emission levels by year 2030. CARB recently released a draft of the 2022 Scoping Plan to achieve the state's carbon neutrality goals under EO B-55-18. The CARB Scoping Plan is applicable to state agencies and is not directly applicable to cities/counties or individual projects (i.e., the Scoping Plan does not require the City to adopt policies, programs, or regulations to reduce GHG emissions). However, new regulations adopted by the state agencies in the Scoping Plan result in GHG emissions reductions at the local level. As a result, local jurisdictions benefit from reductions in transportation emissions rates, increases in water efficiency in the building and landscape codes, and other statewide actions that affect a local jurisdiction's emissions inventory from the top down. Statewide strategies to reduce GHG emissions include the LCFS and changes in the corporate average fuel economy standards (e.g., Pavley I and Pavley California Advanced Clean Cars program).

Buildout of the proposed project would be required to adhere to the programs and regulations identified by the Scoping Plan and implemented by state, regional, and local agencies to achieve the statewide GHG

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reduction goals of AB 32, SB 32, and EO B-55-18. The proposed project would comply with these statewide GHG emissions reduction measures. For example, new buildings are required to comply with the latest applicable Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen. Project GHG emissions shown in Table 5.7-7 include reductions associated with statewide strategies that have been adopted since AB 32, SB 32, and EO B-55-18. Therefore, the proposed project would not obstruct implementation of the CARB Scoping Plan, and impacts are considered **less than significant**.

SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy

SCAG adopted the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS (Connect SoCal) in September 2020. Connect SoCal finds that land use strategies that focus on new housing and job growth in areas rich with destinations and mobility options are consistent with a land use development pattern that supports and complements the proposed transportation network. The overarching strategy in Connect SoCal is to plan for the Southern California region to grow in more compact communities in transit priority areas and priority growth areas; provide neighborhoods with efficient and plentiful public transit; establish abundant and safe opportunities to walk, bike, and pursue other forms of active transportation; and preserve more of the region's remaining natural lands and farmlands (SCAG 2020). Connect SoCal's transportation projects help more efficiently distribute population, housing, and employment growth, and forecast development is generally consistent with regional-level general plan data to promote active transportation and reduce GHG emissions. The projected regional development, when integrated with the proposed regional transportation network in Connect SoCal, would reduce per-capita GHG emissions related to vehicular travel and achieve the GHG reduction per capita targets for the SCAG region.

The RTP/SCS does not require that local general plans, specific plans, or zoning be consistent with the SCS, but provides incentives for consistency to governments and developers. The proposed project would result in a mixed-use project with multifamily residential and commercial development near civic facilities (including City Hall onsite) and commercial and entertainment opportunities that would serve the proposed project's population and the existing local population. This would contribute to reducing the VMT between residential, commercial, and service needs. Since the project site is centrally located near civic facilities, this would potentially provide more incentive to develop improved public transportation routes to provide greater access to the project site and surrounding uses. As discussed in Section 5.10, *Land Use and Planning*, and Table 5.10-3, *SCAG Connect SoCal Goals*, the proposed project is consistent with Connect SoCal, which focuses on transit, transportation, and mobility and protection of the environment and health of residents. Therefore, the proposed project would not interfere with SCAG's ability to implement the regional strategies in the RTP/SCS, and impacts are considered **less than significant**.

Energy Action Plan

The City adopted the Energy Action Plan (EAP) in November 2015 to establish the 2010 electricity baseline and to establish target energy reduction goals for existing municipal energy of 25 percent by 2025 (Norwalk 2015). The reduction goals were determined with reference to the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32), which requires a reduction in GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. In efforts to reach Platinum level status in Southern California Edison's Energy Leader Partnership Program, the City is required to adopt an EAP and document completion of projects in the EAP. Under its Strategic Plan Strategies Program, the City

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developed and implemented an Energy Benchmarking Policy that establishes guidelines for benchmarking City-owned building energy consumption and integrating benchmarking data into City operations. The City will initially use Energy Star's Portfolio Manager as a way to track and assess benchmarks for the City facilities.

Several energy conservation measures were identified during a walk through the Norwalk City Hall facility in January 2015 and this facility has been benchmarked in the EPA's Energy Star Portfolio Manager. There have been previous energy efforts to improve the energy usage at Norwalk City Hall, including upgrading the indoor and outdoor lighting systems, upgrading old, inefficient HVAC units, and installation of a Cool Roof, which is designed to reflect more sunlight than a conventional roof. The proposed project does not alter the existing Norwalk City Hall and would provide new mixed-use buildings that would meet the current Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Therefore, the proposed project would not interfere with the EAP to continue to improve the energy usage of City Hall and to meet the City's long-term energy efficiency goals. Therefore, the proposed project impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.7.4 Cumulative Impacts

Project-related GHG emissions are not confined to a particular air basin, but are dispersed worldwide. Therefore, impact 5.7-1 is not a project-specific impact related global warming, but the proposed project's contribution to this a cumulative impact. Implementation of the proposed project would exceed the significance threshold associated with mobile emissions with and without mitigation. Thus, the proposed project's GHG emissions and contribution to global climate change impacts are considered **cumulatively considerable, and significant**.

Mitigation Measures: Implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-1 and GHG-2.

Significance After Mitigation: Significant and Unavoidable.

5.7.5 References

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GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

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5.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This section evaluates the proposed project’s potential impacts on human health and the environment due to exposure to hazardous materials or conditions associated with the project site, project construction, and project operations. The analysis in this section is based, in part, upon the following source(s):

- *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment: Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan Project*, PlaceWorks, March 2022 (“Phase 1 ESA”).

A complete copy of this study is included in the Technical Appendices to this Draft EIR (Appendix I).

5.8.1 Environmental Setting

5.8.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to hazards and hazardous materials that apply to the proposed project are summarized in this section.

Federal

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 (42 US Code sec. 6901 et seq.) is the principal federal law regulating waste generation, management, and transportation. Hazardous waste management includes storage creating, storing, or disposal of hazardous waste. RCRA gave the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the authority to control hazardous waste from “cradle to grave”— from generation to transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal—at active and future facilities. It does not address abandoned or historical sites. RCRA also set up a framework for managing non-hazardous wastes. Later amendments required phasing out land disposal of hazardous waste and added underground tanks storing petroleum and other hazardous substances.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) protects water, air, and soil resources from the risks created by past chemical disposal practices. This law is also called the Superfund Act and regulates sites on the National Priority List (NPL), which are called Superfund sites. The act was intended to encompass the prevention of and response to uncontrolled hazardous substances releases. It provides mechanisms for reacting to emergencies and chronic hazardous material releases. In addition to procedures to prevent and remedy problems, it established a system for compensating appropriate individuals and assigning appropriate liability. It is designed to plan for and respond to failure in other regulatory programs and remedy problems resulting from action taken before the era of comprehensive regulatory protection.

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Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act

Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) authorized the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) (42 US Code sec. 11001 et seq.) to inform communities and citizens of chemical hazards in their areas. It requires businesses to report: the locations and quantities of chemicals stored on-site to state and local agencies; releases to the environment of more than six hundred designated toxic chemicals; off-site transfers of waste; and pollution prevention measures and activities and to participate in chemical recycling. EPA maintains and publishes an online, publicly available, national database of toxic chemical releases and other waste management activities by specific industry groups and federal facilities—the Toxics Release Inventory.

To implement EPCRA, each state appoints a state emergency response commission to coordinate planning and implementation activities associated with hazardous materials. The commissions divide their states into emergency planning districts and name each district's local emergency planning committee. The federal EPCRA program is implemented and administered in California by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, a state commission, six district committees, and 81 Certified Unified Program agencies (CUPA). The Office of Emergency Services coordinates and provides staff support for the commission and district committees.

Toxic Substances Control Act

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976 gives the EPA the authority to require reporting, record-keeping, testing requirements, and restrictions related to chemical substances and/or mixtures. TSCA addresses the production, importation, use, and disposal of specific chemicals, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), asbestos, radon, and lead-based paint. Title IV of the TSCA directs the EPA to regulate lead-based paint hazards.

TSCA's sections 402/404 require those engaged in lead abatements, risk assessments, and inspections in homes or child-occupied facilities before 1978 (such as in daycare centers and kindergartens) to be trained and certified in specific practices to ensure accuracy and safety. TSCA Section 403, Residential Hazard Standards for Lead in Paint, Dust, and Soil, sets standards for dangerous lead levels in paint, household dust, and residential soil.

Hazardous Materials Transportation Act

The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) regulates hazardous materials transportation to reduce risks to life and property from hazards associated with the transport of hazardous materials under Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which reflects laws passed by Congress as of January 2, 2006, last amended April 15, 2022 (CFR 2022). State agencies responsible for enforcing federal and state regulations and responding to hazardous materials transportation emergencies are the California Highway Patrol and the California Department of Transportation. These agencies also govern permitting for hazardous materials transportation.

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State

California Health and Safety Code and Code of Regulations

California Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.95 and California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Section 2729 set out the minimum requirements for business emergency plans and chemical inventory reporting. A business that uses hazardous materials or a mixture containing hazardous materials must establish and implement a business plan if the hazardous material is handled in certain quantities. These regulations require businesses to provide emergency response plans and procedures, training program information, and a hazardous material chemical inventory disclosing hazardous materials stored, used, or handled on-site.

California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 4.5

Title 22, Division 4.5, of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) sets forth the requirements for hazardous waste generators; transporters; and owners or operators of treatment, storage, or disposal facilities. These regulations include the requirements for packaging, storage, labeling, reporting, and general management of hazardous waste prior to shipment. In addition, the regulations identify standards applicable to transporters of hazardous waste. These regulations specify the requirements for transporting loads of hazardous waste, including manifesting, vehicle registration, and accidental emergency discharges during transportation.

Asbestos-Containing Materials Regulations

In conjunction with the EPA and California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA), state-level agencies regulate removal, abatement, and transport procedures for asbestos-containing materials. These regulations prohibit asbestos releases from industrial, demolition or construction activities, and medical evaluation and monitoring are required for employees performing activities that could expose them to asbestos. The regulations include warnings and practices needed to reduce the risk of asbestos emissions and exposure. For example, 8 CCR Section 1529 provides for exposure limits, exposure monitoring, respiratory protection, and good working practices for workers exposed to asbestos. Finally, federal, state, and local agencies must be notified prior to the onset of demolition or construction activities with the potential to release asbestos.

Polychlorinated Biphenyls Regulations

The EPA prohibited the use of PCBs in most of the new electrical equipment starting in 1979 and initiated a phase-out for much of the existing PCB-containing equipment. The provisions of the TSCA regulate the inclusion of PCBs in electrical equipment and the handling of PCBs. Relevant regulations include labeling and periodic inspection requirements for certain types of PCB-containing equipment and outline safety procedures for their disposal. The state likewise considers PCB-laden electrical equipment and materials contaminated above a certain threshold as hazardous waste and regulates them; accordingly, these regulations require that such materials be treated, transported, and disposed of as hazardous waste. At lower concentrations for nonliquids, regional water quality control boards may exercise discretion over classifying such wastes.

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Lead Regulations

Cal/OSHA's "Lead in Construction Standard" is contained in 8 CCR Section 1532.1. This section applies to all construction work where an employee may be exposed to lead. The regulations address these areas: permissible exposure limits; exposure assessment; compliance methods; respiratory protection; protective clothing and equipment; housekeeping; medical surveillance; medical removal protection; employee information, training, and certification; signage; record keeping; monitoring; and agency notification.

Hazardous Materials Disclosure Programs

The Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program (Unified Program) administered by the State of California consolidates, coordinates, and makes consistent the administrative requirements, permits, inspections, and enforcement activities for environmental and emergency management programs, which include Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventories (business plans), the California Accidental Release Prevention Program, and the Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program. The Unified Program is implemented at the local government level by CUPAs. The Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD) is the designated CUPA for hazardous materials in Los Angeles County. Under the Unified Program, the LACFD's Health Hazardous Materials Division consolidates, coordinates, and makes consistent the administrative requirements, permits, inspection, and enforcement activities associated with several regulatory programs.

Underground Storage Tank Program

The purpose of the UST Program is to protect people and the environment from releases of petroleum and other hazardous substances from tanks. The statutes govern the UST Program in the Solid Waste Disposal Act (1965). Because of the localized nature of USTs, the EPA shifts enforcement and oversight authority to local governments. California laws and regulations authorize the State Water Board to implement the UST program. The State Water Board then delegates the field implementation to CUPAs.

There are four program elements related to USTs: 1) Leak Prevention includes requirements for tank installation, construction, testing, leak detection, spill containment, and overfill protection. The state issues CUPAs as the overseer for the Leak Prevention Program. Within the City of Norwalk, the CUPA responsible for implementing this program element is the Los Angeles County CUPA. 2) Cleanup of leaking tanks includes groundwater and soil testing followed by remediation. The Los Angeles County CUPA oversees the cleanup of "soils-only" contamination cases. The local CUPA refers sites with groundwater contamination to the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control District. 3) Enforcement of existing regulations is delegated by the State Water Resources Control Board to local agencies enforcing UST requirements (LA County CUPAs) for everything except cleanup of groundwater contamination. 4) Tank Tester Licensing tests the integrity of tanks and is required by law and administered by the Office of Tank Tester Licensing within the State Water Board.

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code is contained in 24 CCR Part 9. The Code is updated every three years, and includes provisions and standards for emergency planning and preparedness, fire service features, fire protection

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systems, hazardous materials, fire flow requirements, fire hydrant locations and distribution, and the clearance of debris and vegetation within a prescribed distance from occupied structures in wildlife hazard areas.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is dedicated to the fire protection and stewardship of over 31 million acres of California's wildlands. The Office of the State Fire Marshal supports CAL FIRE's mission to protect life and property through fire prevention engineering programs, law and code enforcement, and education. The State Fire Marshal provides for fire prevention by enforcing fire-related laws in state-owned or -operated buildings; investigating arson fires in California; licensing those who inspect and service fire protection systems; approving fireworks for use in California; regulating the use of chemical flame retardants; evaluating building materials against fire safety standards; regulating hazardous liquid pipelines, and tracking incident statistics for local and state government emergency response agencies. The California Fire Plan is the state's road map for reducing wildfire risk through planning and prevention to reduce firefighting costs and property losses, increase firefighter safety, and contribute to ecosystem health. The California Fire Plan is a cooperative effort between the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and CAL FIRE.

LACFD provides emergency management and fire protection for the City of Norwalk. LACFD has 176 fire stations, 251 engine companies, 73 paramedic units, and 34 truck companies to provide services to all unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and 60 cities. It has specialized resources, including three hazardous material squads, five swift water rescue units, two urban search and rescue squads, two fireboats, and various additional specialized equipment (LACFD 2021a). Also see Section 5.13, *Public Services*. The LACFD is responsible for fire response, vehicle accidents, public assistance, medical emergencies, water rescue, and hazardous material response. In addition, the LACFD is also responsible for disaster preparedness and other services, such as building plan review, fire prevention, and fire hydrant testing.

Regional

South Coast Air Quality Management District

South Coast Air Quality Management District's Rule 1403 governs the demolition of buildings containing asbestos materials. Rule 1403 specifies work practices to minimize asbestos emissions during building demolition and renovation activities, including the removal and associated disturbance of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs). The requirements for demolition and renovation activities include asbestos surveying, notification, ACM removal procedures, and time schedules, ACM handling and cleanup procedures, and storage and disposal requirements for asbestos-containing waste materials.

Los Angeles County Operational Area Emergency Response Plan

The Los Angeles County Operational Area Emergency Response Plan establishes the County's coordinated emergency management system, which includes prevention, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation within the operational area. When a county proclaims a local emergency pursuant to Section 8630 of the Government Code, based upon conditions that include both incorporated and unincorporated territory of the county, it is not necessary for the cities to also proclaim the existence of a local emergency independently. Further, cities within a county are bound by county rules and regulations adopted by the county under Section 8634 of the Government Code during a county proclaimed local emergency when the local emergency includes

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both incorporated and unincorporated territory of the county, even if the cities do not independently proclaim the existence of a local emergency. The plan describes:

- Emergency organization.
- Authorities and responsibilities of the emergency organization.
- Mutual aid process during emergencies to ensure effective coordination of needed resources. (LA County 2012).

Local

Norwalk Municipal Code

The City of Norwalk Municipal Code addresses hazards and hazardous materials in chapters of Titles 8, 17, and 18:

- Chapter 8.16, Capping of Abandoned Wells
- Chapter 8.48, Solid Waste Handling and Recycling Services
- Chapter 17.02, Article II, Consistency with Hazardous Waste Management Plan
- Chapter 18.04, Stormwater Management and Discharge Control

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City of Norwalk adopted a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) in 2022. An active LHMP is required to maintain FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) funding eligibility to support pre-disaster and post-disaster mitigation activities. The plan documents the natural and artificial hazards and identifies reduction strategies to reduce the impact of future disasters. The Norwalk Emergency Management Office oversees the planning and implementation process of the LHMP.

The purpose of the LHMP is to:

- Identify the City of Norwalk's top hazards;
- Assess the risks to the residents, buildings, and critical facilities; and
- Develop mitigation strategies to reduce the risk of exposure and allow a swift and organized recovery should a disaster occur.

Airports

Airport authorities and other agencies regulate aircraft activity. The State Aeronautics Act of the California Public Utilities Code establishes statewide requirements for airport land use compatibility planning. It requires nearly every county to create an Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) or an alternative. Los Angeles County opted for an ALUC. There are 15 airports under LA County ALUC's jurisdiction. Five are county-owned, other public entities own nine, and one is privately owned. The airport land use compatibility plan is primarily

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concerned with land uses near Los Angeles International Airport, Long Beach Municipal Airport, Bob Hope Airport, and Torrance Airport. The project site is not located within an airport influence area or protection zone.

5.8.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Current Use of the Project Site

The project site consists of approximately 13.2 acres located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard in the civic center area of Norwalk. The project site is currently developed with the approximately 39,000-square-foot Norwalk City Hall building, the approximately 4.3-acre City Hall Lawn, part of an accessory building associated with the County Superior Court property (the County accessory building), a surface parking lot, and a three-level parking structure. The project site includes a monument sign on the northeast corner of the project site near Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway, and two memorials, one on the northeast side of the project site and one in the surface parking lot entrance at City Hall. The project site includes landscaped medians with mature trees throughout the surface parking lot, landscaping around City Hall, and landscaping near the monument sign on the northwest corner of the project site. The City Hall Lawn is mainly grass with dispersed mature trees and walking paths. The project site is currently zoned Institutional, has a corresponding general plan land use designation of Institutional, and is also in a Public Facilities Overlay Zone.

Historical Uses of the Project Site

The earliest documentation reviewed for site usage was a historical topographic map dated 1896 and a historical aerial photograph dated 1928. Based on a review of historical information, the project site appears to have been used for row-crop agriculture with associated agricultural buildings from at least 1928 to around 1963. In 1964-1965, Norwalk City Hall was constructed, and the parking structure near the southeast corner of the site was built in 1996.

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Findings

A recognized environmental condition is defined by the ASTM E 1527-13 Standard as

... the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products in, on, or at a property: (1) due to any release to the environment; (2) under conditions indicative of a release to the environment; or (3) under conditions that pose a material threat of a future release to the environment.

The Phase I ESA prepared by PlaceWorks for the project site found no recognized environmental conditions. One diesel underground storage tank (UST) is present at the site (within the basement of City Hall) and is used to fuel an emergency generator in City Hall. The Phase 1 ESA found that this diesel UST is not associated with a release and is not likely to have a release due to the age, inspections, and oversight by appropriate regulatory agencies; therefore, the diesel UST is not a recognized environmental condition. (PlaceWorks 2022)

A historical recognized environmental condition is defined by the ASTM E 1527-13 Standard as:

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... a past release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products that has occurred in connection with the property and has been addressed to the satisfaction of the applicable regulatory authority or meeting unrestricted use criteria established by a regulatory authority, without subjecting the property to any required controls (for example, property use restrictions, activity and use limitations, institutional controls, or engineering controls).

One historical recognized environmental condition was identified for the project site. In 1999, an 8,000-gallon capacity diesel UST that had leaked was removed from the project site. The area was cleaned up under the oversight of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. LA County Public Works found that the site met closure criteria on August 16, 1999, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board concurred on August 15, 2000 and issued a closure letter (PlaceWorks 2022).

Regulatory Agency Environmental Database Listings

The Phase I ESA included a review of the computer-generated environmental records search database provided by Environmental Data Resources (EDR). The project site was listed on the following due to the presence of the UST for the emergency generator: permitted UST and closed leaking UST. The site was listed on Facility Index System (FINDS), Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO), California Integrated Water Quality System Project (CIWQS), California Environmental Reporting System (CERS) because the site has gone through assessment and cleanup due to the former leaking UST. A listing was also identified for HAZNET due to the lawful disposal of hazardous materials.

Asbestos-Containing Materials and Lead-Based Paint

State and federal agencies regulate removal, abatement, and transport procedures for asbestos-containing materials (ACM). These regulations prohibit releases of asbestos from industrial, demolition, or construction activities not permitted, and medical evaluation and monitoring are required for employees performing actions that could expose them to asbestos. Additionally, the rules include warnings and practices that must be followed to reduce the risk of asbestos emissions and exposure. Finally, federal, state, and local agencies must be notified before the onset of demolition or construction activities with the potential to release asbestos.

ACMs were commonly used in a wide variety of building products before 1980, such as roofing shingles, composite siding, linoleum flooring, acoustic ceiling tiles, furnace, and water heater exhaust piping and insulation, glues and mastics, stucco, joint compounds, and composite wallboards. ACMs can be divided into friable materials (easily crumbled or reduced to powder) and nonfriable. Friable ACMs are regulated as hazardous materials due to respiratory exposure's elevated long-term risk of developing lung cancer. They must be properly removed before the renovation or demolition of any structure containing them. No buildings would be demolished as part of the project; however, demolition activities would occur to remove surface parking lot areas and potentially some demolition associated with the parking structure addition.

Lead-based paints (LBP) were commonly used until 1978, when they were phased out. Likely, ACMs, LBP, and other building materials containing lead (e.g., ceramic tile) were used to construct the City Hall building in the 1960s. The parking structure was built in the late 1990s and is not expected to have ACMs or LBP.

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Polychlorinated Biphenyls

Before the 1970s, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were used in fluids for insulation and cooling. PCBs are considered toxic environmental contaminants, and the EPA banned the manufacture of PCBs in 1979. PCBs have been demonstrated to cause cancer and various adverse effects on the immune system, reproductive system, nervous system, and endocrine system. According to the Phase I ESA, no PCBs associated with equipment were found to occur on the project site (PlaceWorks 2022).

Radon

The Indoor Radon Abatement Act of 1988 directs the EPA to identify and lists areas of the United States with the potential for elevated indoor radon levels. Radon is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, and radioactive gas produced as a natural decay product of uranium. Because of its radioactivity, studies have shown a link between elevated concentrations of radon and lung cancer. Persons living in a building with high radon concentrations may have an increased risk of contracting lung cancer. The Phase I ESA indicates that the site is in Zone 2, which is below the radon action level of the California Department of Health Services.

5.8.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to hazards and hazardous materials if the project would:

- H-1 Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.
- H-2 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.
- H-3 Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.
- H-4 Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials compiled pursuant to under Government Code Section 65962.5 and as a result, it would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.
- H-5 For a project located within an airport land use plan or where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.
- H-6 Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.
- H-7 Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

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5.8.3 Environmental Impacts

5.8.3.1 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the threshold of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

IMPACT 5.8.1: Project construction and operations would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment involving the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. [Thresholds H-1]

Following is a discussion of the proposed project's potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

Construction

The construction of the proposed project would involve grading, excavation, and new buildings. Potentially hazardous materials used during construction include paints, sealants, solvents, adhesives, cleaners, and diesel fuel. Temporary bulk aboveground storage tanks (e.g., 55-gallon drums) may also be used for fueling and maintenance purposes. There is potential for hazardous materials to spill or to create hazardous conditions. However, the materials used would not be in such quantities or stored in such a manner as to pose a significant safety hazard. These activities would also be short-term or one-time in nature.

To prevent spills or hazardous conditions, to exist local, state, and federal laws must be enforced at the construction sites, such as those applicable conditions listed under Section 5.8.1.2, Regulatory Background. Compliance with existing regulations would ensure that construction workers and the general public are not exposed to risks related to hazardous materials during construction activities. Cal/OSHA is the primary agency responsible for worker safety in the handling and using of chemicals in the workplace. The project developer must monitor worker exposure to listed hazardous substances and notify workers of exposure (8 CCR Sections 337–340). Regulations specify requirements for employee training, availability of safety equipment, accident-prevention programs, and hazardous substance exposure warnings. For example, any spills or leakage of petroleum products during construction activities must be immediately contained, the dangerous material identified, and the material remediated in compliance with applicable state and local regulations for the cleanup and disposal of that contaminant. Any contaminated waste encountered would be required to be collected and disposed of at an appropriately licensed disposal or treatment facility. Furthermore, strict adherence to all emergency response requirements set forth by LACFD would be required throughout project construction.

Additionally, any project-related hazardous materials and hazardous wastes would be transported to and/or from the project site in compliance with any applicable state and federal requirements, including the U.S. Department of Transportation regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations (Title 49, Hazardous Materials Transportation Act), California Department of Transportation standards, and Cal/OSHA standards.

Any project-related hazardous waste generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal would be conducted in compliance with Subtitle C of RCRA (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, Part 263), including

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the management of nonhazardous solid wastes. The proposed project would be designed and constructed by the specifications and regulations of the LACFD, which is the designated CUPA and implements state and federal regulations for the following programs: (1) Hazardous Waste Generator, (2) Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Program, (3) California Accidental Release Prevention Program, (4) Aboveground Storage Tank Program, and (5) Underground Storage Tank Program.

Additionally, the use, transport, and disposal of construction-related hazardous materials would be required to conform to existing laws and regulations, ensuring that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled appropriately and would minimize the potential for accidental releases.

Furthermore, strict adherence to all emergency response plan requirements set forth by LACFD would be required throughout the construction of each development project. Therefore, substantial hazards to the public or the environment arising from the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials, or reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions, during project construction would not occur, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Operation

Proposed project uses include residential, restaurant, retail, and grocery land uses. The development or operation of industrial uses or other land uses involving the storage, use, transport, and disposal of large amounts of hazardous wastes are not proposed and would not be permitted under the proposed specific plan. Manufacturing, industrial, or other uses utilizing large quantities of hazardous materials are not part of the proposed project.

During operation of the proposed residential uses would involve using small quantities of hazardous materials for cleaning and maintenance purposes, such as paints, household cleaners, fertilizers, and pesticides. Project operation would not constitute a significant generator of hazardous materials and/or wastes. Hazardous material consumption within the proposed project primarily would relate to ordinary household hazardous wastes. Household hazardous wastes are products typical of household usage labeled toxic, poisonous, combustible, corrosive, flammable, or irritant and are disposed of through the routine operation of any residential use. Some examples include antifreeze, batteries, cleaning supplies, unused and non-controlled pharmaceuticals, fluorescent light bulbs, TVs, computers, and cell phones. By law, these products must be properly recycled or disposed of at a hazardous waste facility. Additionally, a typical residence would routinely contain various household hazardous products used for cleaning, painting, beautifying, lubricating, and disinfecting the house, yard, workshop, and garage. The County operates a "Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program" providing county residents with a free program for the collection and off-site disposal of household hazardous wastes. The types of hazardous materials that could be used during nonresidential uses (commercial/retail and supportive services) are anticipated to include cleaning and maintenance products, paints, solvents, and degreasers.

The operation of the proposed land uses under the proposed project would not involve the routine use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials; however, should such activities occur within the project area, they would be governed by existing regulations of several agencies. Regulations that would be required of those uses that involve transporting, using, or disposing of hazardous materials include RCRA, which provides

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“cradle to grave” regulation of hazardous wastes; the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, which regulates closed and abandoned hazardous waste sites; the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, which governs hazardous materials transportation on U.S. roadways; International Fire Code (IFC), which creates procedures and mechanisms to ensure the safe handling and storage of hazardous materials; CCR Title 22, which regulates the generation, transportation, treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous waste; and CCR Title 27, which governs the treatment, storage and disposal of solid wastes. For development within the State of California, Government Code Section 65850.2 requires for businesses that no final certificate of occupancy or its substantial equivalent be issued unless there is verification that the owner or authorized agent has met or is meeting the applicable requirements of the Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.95, Article 2, Sections 25500 through 25520.

LACFD is the CUPA for the City and is responsible for enforcing Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory (Chapter 6.95 of the Health and Safety Code). The CUPA is required to regulate hazardous materials business plans and chemical inventory, hazardous waste and tiered permitting, underground storage tanks, and risk management plans. The Hazardous materials business plans are required to contain basic information on the location, type, quantity, and health risks of hazardous materials stored, used, or disposed of on development sites. The plan also contains an emergency response plan that describes the procedures for mitigating a hazardous release, procedures, and equipment for minimizing the potential damage of a hazardous materials release, and provisions for immediate notification of the CUPA and other emergency response personnel, such as the local fire agency having jurisdiction. Implementation of the emergency response plan facilitates rapid response in the event of an accidental spill or release, thereby reducing potential adverse impacts. Furthermore, the CUPA must conduct ongoing routine inspections to ensure compliance with existing laws and regulations, identify safety hazards that could cause or contribute to an accidental spill or release, and suggest preventive measures to minimize the risk of a spill or release of hazardous substances.

Compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials would ensure that all potentially hazardous materials associated with future development proposed by the project are used and handled appropriately and would minimize the potential for safety impacts. Compliance with these laws and regulations is ensured through the City’s building plan check process and any discretionary entitlement review.

Based on the preceding, hazards to the public or the environment arising from the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials, or reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions, during project operation would not occur, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

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IMPACT 5.8-2: The proposed project would not 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. [Threshold H-2]

The Phase I ESA prepared in 2022 did not identify any RECs for the project site. The presence of a diesel UST to fuel an emergency generator is not a REC because the UST is not associated with a release and is not likely to have a release due to the age, inspections, and oversight by appropriate regulatory agencies (PlaceWorks 2022). One historical REC was identified; an 8,000-gallon capacity diesel UST was removed from the project site under the supervision of LACDPW. LACDPW concurred that the site met closure criteria on August 16, 1999, and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board concurred on August 15, 2000 and issued a closure letter. The Phase I ESA also indicated that based on the age of the City Hall building is possible that ACM and lead-based paint are present in building materials.

The Norwalk City Hall is listed as a chemical storage facility because of the UST. The UST is 3,000 to 5,999 gallons used to store diesel fuel and is permitted through the LACFD CUPA program. The UST was last inspected on March 3, 2021, and violations were recorded during the inspection. The violations included:

- Failure to submit designated underground storage tank operator identification Form G within 30 days of installing a UST system or within 30 days of a change in designated operator.
- Failure to submit as-built plans for the location and orientation of the tanks and appurtenant piping systems for new installations and/or with the permit application.
- No flapper valve without fill tube in the riser.

Additional violations due to submittals of forms to the state were noted. Violations have been resolved and are not a threat to the environment (PlaceWorks 2022).

Hazardous materials during construction could potentially include fuels, lubricants, greases, and coatings. After construction, the use of hazardous materials could contain cleaning solvents, fertilizers, pesticides, and other materials used in the regular maintenance and operation of the proposed uses. An accidental release of any of these materials could pose a health hazard to the public.

Existing laws, regulations, policies, and procedures that would serve to prevent the release of hazardous materials include applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations described in Section 5.8.1.1, *Regulatory Framework*, of this chapter. Compliance with these existing laws, regulations, policies, and procedures would help to ensure that future development activities would not create a significant hazard to the public. Therefore, the impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

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IMPACT 5.8-3: The proposed project would not emit emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substance, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. [Threshold H-3]

There is one school within one-quarter mile of the project site. Paddison Elementary School is located at 12100 Crewe Street and is 0.20 miles to the northwest. It is not situated along a significant haul route used for construction vehicles. When completed, the new mixed-use development would involve using small amounts of hazardous materials, such as cleansers, paints, fertilizers, and pesticides, for cleaning and maintenance purposes. The proposed land use is not associated with the use, generation, storage, or transport of large quantities of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials; such uses generally include manufacturing, industrial, medical (e.g., hospital), and similar uses. Therefore, the proposed project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 miles of an existing or proposed school. The impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

IMPACT 5.8-4: The project site is not on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. [Threshold H-4]

California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency's Department of Toxic Substances Control to compile a list (updated at least annually) of the following sites and submit the list to the Secretary for Environmental Protection, including:

- (a) (1) All hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
- (2) All land designated as hazardous waste property or border zone property pursuant to former Article 11 (commencing with Section 25220) of Chapter 6.5 of Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code.
- (3) All information received by the Department of Toxic Substances Control pursuant to Section 25242 of the Health and Safety Code on hazardous waste disposals on public land.
- (4) All sites listed pursuant to Section 25356 of the Health and Safety Code.

Government Code Section 65962.5 also requires that:

- (b) The State Department of Health Services shall compile and update as appropriate, but at least annually, and shall submit to the Secretary for Environmental Protection a list of all public drinking water wells that contain detectable levels of organic contaminants and that are subject to water analysis pursuant to Section 116395 of the Health and Safety Code.
- (c) The State Water Resources Control Board shall compile and update as appropriate, but at least annually, and shall submit to the Secretary for Environmental Protection, a list of all the following:

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- (1) All underground storage tanks for which an unauthorized release report is filed under Section 25295 of the Health and Safety Code.
- (2) All solid waste disposal facilities have a migration of hazardous waste and for which a California regional water quality control board has notified the Department of Toxic Substances Control pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 13273 of the Water Code.
- (3) All cease-and-desist orders issued after January 1, 1986, under Section 13301 of the Water Code, and all cleanup or abatement orders issued after January 1, 1986, under Section 13304 of the Water Code, that concern the discharge of wastes that are hazardous materials.
- (d) The local enforcement agency, as designated under Section 18051 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, shall compile as appropriate, but at least annually, and shall submit to the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, a list of all solid waste disposal facilities from which there is a known migration of hazardous waste. The Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery shall compile the local lists into a statewide list, which shall be submitted to the Secretary for Environmental Protection and shall be available to any person who requests the information.

Five environmental lists that include multiple cleanup programs were searched for hazardous materials information for the project site.

- GeoTracker. State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB 2022)
- EnviroStor. Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2022).
- EJScreen. US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA 2022).
- EnviroMapper. US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA 2022).
- Solid Waste Information System. California Department of Resources Recovery and Recycling (CalRecycle 2020).

The site is not listed on the Cortese Hazardous Waste and Substance Site List (EnviroStor 2022). Therefore, the project site is included on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and would not create a hazard to the public or the environment and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

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Impact 5.8-5: The project site is not within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. [Threshold H-5]

The nearest airport to the project site is the Fullerton Municipal Airport, approximately 5.7 miles southeast of the project site. Long Beach Airport is approximately 7.5 miles southwest of the project site. The project site is not within an airport land use plan and not within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. There would be **no impact** on safety hazards or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: No impact.

Impact 5.8-6: Project development would not impair or physically interfere with the implementation of implementing an emergency response or evacuation plan. [Threshold H-6]

Major emergencies and disasters can occur anytime and could significantly impact day-to-day activities for some or all residents. The Norwalk Office of Emergency Management focuses on providing education, training, and guidance to minimize impacts and bring the city back to normalcy effectively and as soon as possible after a major emergency or disaster. The Norwalk Office of Emergency Management works directly with the Los Angeles County Fire and Sheriff's departments and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services to identify disaster risks and hazards and develop strategies to prepare, respond, and recover from devastating events. Emergency Management staff are active in advocating the importance of whole community preparedness through presentations, events, and outreach efforts. Community Preparedness programs have been developed specifically for Norwalk residents, schools, and businesses to educate and empower the community (Norwalk 2022). The City of Norwalk adopted an LHMP in February 2022. The LHMP aims to identify the City of Norwalk's top hazards, assess the risks to the residents, buildings and critical facilities; and develop mitigation strategies to reduce the risk of exposure and allow a swift and organized recovery should a disaster occur. The LHMP does not identify specific evacuation routes in the City. There are procedures in place overseen by the Norwalk Office of Emergency Management that would guide emergency response and would not impair or interfere with such efforts during construction or operation.

Construction

The construction phase would include employees, vendors, and equipment traveling to and from the project site, which may temporarily divert traffic along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard. Temporary traffic diversion, truck haul routes, and impacts to the roadway would be coordinated with the City and applicable emergency response agencies, including the LACoFD and Los Angeles County Sheriff Department (LASD), to ensure adequate access along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard during construction of the proposed project.

Construction of the proposed project would maintain emergency access and emergency egress routes during project construction. In addition, as identified in Section 5.15, *Transportation*, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure TRA-2, which requires the preparation of a Construction Management Plan.

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This plan would identify the processes for establishing construction signage to advise motorists of reduced construction zone speed limits and flag persons to ensure safe traffic operations. Construction Management Plan of the proposed project would be reviewed and inspected by LACoFD and LASD to ensure all requirements are met, such as adequate emergency access to the project site during construction. Therefore, temporary construction of the proposed project would not affect the implementation of an emergency responder or evacuation plan, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Operation

The Los Angeles County Public Works Department identifies Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard as disaster routes, which border the project site to the north and west, respectively (LACPW 2008). Imperial Highway provides access out of Norwalk eastbound and allows access to I-5, which is also identified as an evacuation route in both north and south directions. Norwalk Boulevard provides access out of Norwalk northbound to I-5 and would continue to do so for the proposed project.

The development of the proposed residential and commercial uses at the project site would increase persons at the project site and increase the volume of vehicles entering and leaving the project site. However, future development associated with the proposed project would not interfere with the daily operations of emergency responders. The City's Building and Safety department, along with the Los Angeles County Fire Department and Sheriff Department, would review building plans during plan check to ensure adequate site access is maintained, roadway improvements (such as the project's proposed relocation of the bus turnout on Imperial Highway), and that project driveways would not interfere with circulation on adjacent streets, including Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard. Therefore, the proposed project would not impair the implementation of or physically interfere with adopted emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or use of these evacuation routes. Project-related impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.8-7: The project site is not in a designated fire hazard zone and would not expose structures and/or residences to danger from wildland fires. [Threshold H-7]

A wildland fire hazard area is typically characterized by areas with limited access, rugged terrain, limited water supply, and combustible vegetation. The City of Norwalk and the project site are in a local area and are not within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (CALFIRE 2011). The proposed project site is already developed. The construction and operation of the proposed project would not expose structures or residences to substantial hazards from wildland fires (see also Chapter 8, *Impacts not Significant*). Therefore, there would be **no impact** related to wildland fires.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: No impact.

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5.8.4 Cumulative Impacts

The assessment of potential cumulative impacts regarding hazards and hazardous materials refers to the potential for on-site and off-site hazardous materials to have a cumulative effect on the public or the environment. No Project-related significant impacts were identified regarding hazards and hazardous materials.

The project site is within a quarter one-quarter mile of one school but would not handle large quantities of hazardous or acutely hazardous waste; therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulative impact associated with schools.

The project site is not within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a private airstrip and would not contribute to a cumulative impact associated with a public or private airport.

The proposed project site is not within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and would be required to comply with the provisions of local and state regulations for fire safety.

The Project and cumulative projects would be required to comply with any applicable regulations prior to issuing permits, which would address potential impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials. Therefore, the project would not contribute to the effects of the cumulative impact regarding hazards and hazardous materials, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.8.5 References

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5.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential impacts of the Norwalk Entertainment District–Civic Center Specific Plan Project to hydrology and water quality conditions in the City of Norwalk. Hydrology deals with the distribution and circulation of water on land and underground. Water quality deals with the quality of surface- and groundwater. Surface water includes lakes, rivers, streams, and creeks; groundwater is under the earth’s surface. The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical report:

- *Water Supply and Demand Analysis Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan Project*, PlaceWorks, June 2022

A complete copy of this study is included in the Technical Appendices to this Draft EIR (Appendix J).

5.9.1 Environmental Setting

5.9.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to hydrology and water quality that are applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Federal Regulations

Section 401 of the Clean Water Act

The federal Water Pollution Control Act (or Clean Water Act [CWA]) is the principal statute governing water quality. It establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States and gives the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)—or in the case of California, the State Water Resources Control Board (or State Water Board [SWRCB]) and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (or Regional Water Board [RWQCB])—authority to implement pollution control programs. The statute’s goal is to restore, maintain, and preserve the integrity of the nation’s waters. The CWA regulates direct and indirect discharge of pollutants; sets water quality standards for all contaminants in surface waters; and makes it unlawful for any person to discharge any pollutant from a point source into navigable waters unless a permit is obtained under its provisions. The CWA mandates permits for wastewater and stormwater discharges; requires states to establish site-specific water quality standards; and regulates other activities that affect water quality, such as dredging and the filling of wetlands.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program was established by the CWA to regulate municipal and industrial discharges to surface waters of the United States, including discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4). Federal NPDES permit regulations have been established for broad categories of discharges, including point-source municipal waste discharges and nonpoint-source stormwater runoff. NPDES permits generally identify effluent and receiving water limits on allowable concentrations and/or mass emissions of pollutants in the discharge; prohibitions on discharges not specifically

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allowed under the permit; and provisions that describe required actions by the discharger, including industrial pretreatment, pollution prevention, self-monitoring, and other activities.

Under the NPDES program, all facilities that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States are required to obtain an NPDES permit. Requirements for stormwater discharges are also regulated under this program. In California, the NPDES permit program is administered by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) through the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB). The project site lies within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles RWQCB (Region 4).

National Flood Insurance Program

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the National Flood Insurance Program, which provides subsidized flood insurance to communities that comply with FEMA regulations limiting development in flood plains. FEMA also issues Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that identify which land areas are subject to flooding. These maps provide flood information and identify flood hazard zones in the community. The design standard for flood protection established by FEMA is the 100-year flood event, also described as a flood that has a 1-in-100 chance of occurring in any given year. The project site is mapped on FIRM No. 06037C1837F issued September 26, 2008.

State Regulations

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act (Water Code sections 13000 et seq.) is the basic water quality control law for California. Under this Act, the SWRCB has ultimate control over state water rights and water quality policy. In California, the EPA has delegated authority to issue NPDES permits to the SWRCB. The SWRCB, through its nine RWQCBs carries out the regulation, protection, and administration of water quality in each region. Each regional board is required to adopt a Water Quality Control Plan (or Basin Plan [WQCP]) that designates beneficial uses and water quality objectives for the region's surface water and groundwater basins.

SWRCB Construction General Permit

Construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land must comply with the requirements of the SWRCB Construction General Permit (CGP)—2009-0009-DWQ, as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-0006-DWQ. Due to the proposed project exceeding one acre of land, it would be required to conform to the requirements of the SWRCB. Under the terms of the permit, applicants must file Permit Registration Documents (PRDs) with the SWRCB prior to the start of construction. The PRDs include a Notice of Intent, risk assessment, site map, Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), annual fee, and a signed certification statement. The PRDs are submitted electronically to the SWRCB via the Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System (SMARTS) website. On May 28, 2021, the SWRCB issued a draft of the revised Statewide CGP that, when approved, will supersede Order 2009-0009-DWQ and its amendments.

Applicants must also demonstrate conformance with applicable best management practices (BMP) and prepare a SWPPP containing a site map that shows the construction site perimeter, existing and proposed buildings, lots, roadways, stormwater collection and discharge points, general topography both before and after

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construction, and drainage patterns across the project site. A BMP is defined by the Stormwater Quality Task Force as any program, technology, process, siting criteria, operating method, measure, or device that controls, prevents, removes, or reduces storm water pollution. The SWPPP must list BMPs that would be implemented to prevent soil erosion and discharge of construction-related pollutants that could contaminate nearby water resources. Additionally, the SWPPP must contain a visual monitoring program for all risk levels and a stormwater sampling and analysis program for Risk Levels 2 and 3.

SWRCB Trash Amendments

On April 7, 2015, the SWRCB adopted an amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California to control trash and Part 1, Trash Provisions, of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California. They are collectively referred to as “the Trash Amendments.” The Trash Amendments apply to all surface waters of California and include a land-use-based compliance approach to focus trash controls on areas with high trash-generation rates. Areas such as high density residential, industrial, commercial, mixed urban, and public transportation stations are considered priority land uses. There are two compliance tracks:

- **Track 1:** Permittees install, operate, and maintain a network of certified full-capture systems in storm drains that capture runoff from priority land uses.
- **Track 2:** Permittees must implement a plan with a combination of full-capture systems, multibenefit projects, institutional controls, and/or other treatment methods that have the same effectiveness as Track 1 methods.

The Trash Amendments provide a framework for permittees to implement its provisions. Full compliance must occur within 10 years of the permit, and permittees must also meet interim milestones, such as average load reductions of 10 percent per year.

Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006

The Water Conservation in Landscaping Act includes the State of California’s Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo), which requires cities and counties to adopt landscape water conservation ordinances. The MWELo was revised in July 2015 via Executive Order B-29-15 to address the ongoing drought and build resiliency for future droughts. State law requires all land use agencies, which includes cities and counties, to adopt a Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance that is at least as efficient as the MWELo prepared by the California Department of Water Resources. The 2015 revisions to the MWELo improve water conservation in the landscaping sector by promoting efficient landscapes in new developments and retrofitted landscapes. The revisions increase water efficiency by requiring more efficient irrigation systems, incentives for grey water usage, improvements in on-site stormwater capture, and limiting the portion of landscapes that can be covered in high-water-use plants and turf. New development projects that include landscape areas of 500 square feet or more are subject to the MWELo. This applies to residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional projects that require a permit, plan check, or design review. The previous landscape-size threshold for new development projects ranged from 2,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet. The size threshold for rehabilitated landscapes has not changed and remains at 2,500 square feet.

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The City of Norwalk has enacted these provisions in the Norwalk Municipal Code (NMC), Chapter 17.03.020, Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014 passed in September 2014 and is a comprehensive three-bill package that provides a framework for the sustainable management of groundwater supplies by local authorities. The SGMA requires the formation of local groundwater sustainability agencies to assess local water basin conditions and adopt locally based management plans. The SGMA provides 20 years for groundwater sustainability agencies to implement plans, achieve long-term groundwater sustainability, and protect existing surface water and groundwater rights. The SGMA also provides local groundwater sustainability agencies with the authority to require registration of groundwater wells, measure and manage extractions, require reports and assess fees, and request revisions of basin boundaries, including establishing new subbasins. Furthermore, under the SGMA, groundwater sustainability agencies responsible for high- and medium-priority basins must adopt groundwater sustainability plans within five to seven years, depending on whether the basin is in critical overdraft.

Regional Regulations

Los Angeles Region Basin Plan for the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties

The Los Angeles RWQCB's Basin Plan is designed to preserve and enhance water quality and protect the beneficial uses of all regional waters. Specifically, the Basin Plan:

- Designates beneficial uses for surface and ground waters.
- Sets narrative and numerical objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the state's antidegradation policy.
- Describes implementation programs to protect all waters in the region.

In addition, the Basin Plan incorporates (by reference) all applicable SWRCB and RWQCB plans and policies and other pertinent water quality policies and regulations.

The Basin Plan is a resource for the RWQCB and others who use water and/or discharge wastewater in Region 4. Other agencies and organizations involved in environmental permitting and resource management activities also use the Basin Plan. Finally, the Basin Plan provides valuable information to the public about local water quality issues.

Water Replenishment District of Southern California: Groundwater Basins Master Plan

The Water Replenishment District (WRD) of Southern California, in coordination with other basin stakeholders, developed the Groundwater Basins Master Plan. The intent of the plan is to provide a single reference document for parties operating within and maintaining the Coastal Plain of Los Angeles' West Coast and Central Basins. The plan is intended to help guide the stakeholders to develop and assess initial concepts

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for additional recharge and pumping from these basins to utilize the basins fully and reduce dependence on imported water. Furthermore, the plan identifies projects and programs to enhance basin replenishment, increase the reliability of groundwater resources, improve and protect groundwater quality, and ensure that the groundwater supplies are suitable for beneficial uses (WRD 2016).

Los Angeles RWQCB (MS4) Permit for the Coastal Watershed of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties

On July 23, 2021, the Los Angeles RWQCB adopted a Regional Phase I Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System (MS4) Permit for discharges within the coastal watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura counties (Order No. R4-2021-0105, NPDES No. CAS004004). The municipal discharges of stormwater and non-storm water by the City of Norwalk are subject to waste discharge requirements in this MS4 permit.

Lower San Gabriel River Watershed Management Program

The Lower San Gabriel River Watershed Management Program was developed to implement the Los Angeles RWQCB's NPDES requirements on a watershed scale. The program is a long-term planning document that takes a comprehensive look at the Lower San Gabriel River Watershed, including its land uses, MS4 system, existing and planned control measures (both structural and nonstructural), existing stormwater treatment systems, historical monitoring data, and the various segments of the San Gabriel River and its tributaries that have been identified as impaired by pollutants. Using that data, the Watershed Management Modeling System was used to generate a "reasonable assurance" analysis that predicts an optimal combination of structural treatment systems and construction timelines to achieve the goals of the MS4 Permit (John L. Hunter and Associates 2017).

Los Angeles County Low Impact Development Standards Manual

The County of Los Angeles prepared the 2013 Low Impact Development (LID) Standards Manual to comply with the requirements of the NPDES MS4 Permit. The LID Standards Manual provides guidance for the implementation of stormwater quality control measures in new development and redevelopment projects with the intention of improving water quality and mitigating potential water quality impacts from stormwater and non-stormwater discharges.

Local Regulations

City of Norwalk General Plan

The City of Norwalk's General Plan (1996) is primarily a policy document that sets goals, objectives, and policies concerning the community and directs growth and development. In addition, it outlines the programs that were developed to accomplish the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan. Goals, objectives, and procedures related to hydrology and water quality are outlined below.

Utility Infrastructure Element

Storm Drainage

- Citywide Objective: To reduce storm water pollution.

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- Citywide Policy: Work with the appropriate state and county agencies to reduce water pollution from storm water.

Conservation Element

- Citywide Objective: To encourage efforts to reduce pollution.
- Citywide Policy: Cooperate with federal, state and regional agencies in efforts to reduce pollution.

City of Norwalk Municipal Code

Chapter 18.04, Stormwater Management and Discharge Control: The purpose of this chapter is to ensure the future health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of the City of Norwalk and the water quality of the receiving waters of the County of Los Angeles and surrounding coastal areas by:

- Reducing pollutants in stormwater discharges to the maximum extent practicable.
- Regulating illicit connections and illicit discharges and reducing the level of contamination of stormwater and urban runoff in the municipal stormwater system.
- Regulating non-stormwater discharges to the municipal stormwater system.

This chapter also sets requirements for the construction and operation of certain commercial development, new development, redevelopment, and other projects that are intended to ensure compliance with the stormwater mitigation measures prescribed in the MS4 permit.

5.9.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Regional Drainage

The Los Angeles RWQCB encompasses all coastal watersheds and drainages flowing to the Pacific Ocean between Rincon Point (on the coast of western Ventura County) and the eastern Los Angeles County line. In addition, the Los Angeles RWQCB includes all coastal waters within three miles of the continental and island coastlines.

Local Drainage

The project site is in the Lower San Gabriel River Watershed, which encompasses approximately 78.5 square miles (50,240 acres) in Los Angeles County and has approximately 150 stream miles. The main reach through the watershed is the San Gabriel River; Coyote Creek and San Jose Creek are major tributaries. Within the watershed, the San Gabriel River consists of a concrete-lined channel spanning a width of 140 to 200 feet. Coyote Creek and San Jose Creek also have concrete channels at their confluence with the San Gabriel River. The Coyote Creek sub-watershed drains approximately 185 square miles to its confluence with the San Gabriel River. The San Jose Creek sub-watershed drains approximately 7.29 square miles to its confluence with the San Gabriel River.

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The Lower San Gabriel River watershed is predominantly served by storm drain systems that extend across 15 agency jurisdictions and connect drainage in urbanized areas with the main tributaries. Although most agencies are not directly adjacent to the San Gabriel River, their runoff ultimately reaches the river through its tributaries and connected storm sewer systems (John L. Hunter and Associates 2017).

Site Hydrology

Runoff from the project site drains into a storm drain inlet on the south side of Imperial Highway connected to the Los Angeles County Flood Control District's (LACFCD) reinforced concrete drainpipe, which runs beneath the City Hall Lawn. The LACFCD drainpipe runs east to west along the northern boundary of the project site. The drainpipe connects to a concrete box culvert that runs beneath Avenida Manuel Salinas. The northern portion of the project site, which includes the City Hall lawn, is highly pervious, while the southern side, which encompasses City Hall, the surface parking lot and the parking structure, includes disperse landscaping and is highly impervious.

Surface Water Quality

Section 303(d) of the 1972 CWA requires states to identify water bodies that do not meet water quality objectives and do not support their beneficial uses. Every two years each state must submit to the EPA an updated list, called the 303(d) list. In addition to identifying the water bodies that are not supporting beneficial uses, the list identifies the pollutant or stressor causing impairment and establishes a priority for developing a control plan to address the impairment. The list identifies water bodies where 1) a total maximum daily load has been approved by the EPA and implementation is available, but water quality standards are not yet met, and 2) water bodies where the water quality problem is being addressed by an action other than a total maximum daily load and water quality standards are not yet met.

Beginning upstream in Whittier (in Reach 3 of the San Gabriel River) to its downstream confluence with the San Gabriel River Estuary, the Lower San Gabriel River stretches approximately 17.1 miles. Constituents of concern listed for the Lower San Gabriel River include coliform bacteria, pH, cyanide, and lead. Constituents of concern for the San Gabriel estuary include copper, dioxin, nickel, and dissolved oxygen (SWRCB 2022a).

Groundwater

The City of Norwalk is in the Coastal Plain of the Los Angeles Central Basin (Central Basin), and 31 percent of its potable water is groundwater obtained from the adjudicated Central Basin Aquifer. The Central Basin covers approximately 270 square miles and is bounded on the north by the Hollywood Basin and the Elysian, Repetto, Merced, and Puente Hills Basins; to the east by the Los Angeles County/Orange County line; and to the south and west by the Newport Inglewood Uplift, a series of discontinuous faults and folds that form a prominent line of northwest-trending hills, including the Baldwin Hills, Dominguez Hills, and Signal Hill. The City of Norwalk has three operating wells in the Central Basin with a total design capacity of 7.5 cubic feet per second (Norwalk 2021).

The Central Basin needs to be protected from seawater intrusion where the San Gabriel River meets the Pacific Ocean. The Alamitos Seawater Barrier was implemented to prevent ocean water from migrating underground

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into the Central Basin aquifers. The barrier is formed by injecting fresh water into the ground near where seawater is likely to enter the aquifers, creating a pressure ridge that blocks the seawater's migration. The water injected into the Alamitos Seawater Barrier is either potable water from the Metropolitan Water District, highly purified recycled water from the Water Replenishment District of Southern California's Leo J. Vander Lans Advanced Water Treatment Facility, or a combination of the two (LBWD 2016).

Groundwater in the Central Basin is recharged via surface spreading at the Whittier Narrows Dam, Montebello Forebay Spreading Grounds, which consists of the Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds, the San Gabriel Coastal Spreading Grounds, infiltration in the unlined portions of the Lower San Gabriel River, and via direct injection at the Alamitos Barrier Project (Norwalk 2021). The project site is not located within these active recharge sites.

Flood Hazards

Designated Flood Zones

According to the most recent FIRM that covers the project site (FIRM No. 06037C1837F, September 26, 2008), the project site is not located within a 100-year or 500-year floodplain (FEMA 2022).

Seismically Induced Dam Inundation

The project site is not located within the inundation zone of any dams (DWR 2022).

Seiches

A seiche is a surface wave created when an inland water body is shaken, usually by an earthquake. No surface water bodies pose a flood hazard to the project site due to a seiche. The closest water body to the project site is Coyote Creek located approximately 2 miles to the east.

Tsunamis

A tsunami is an ocean wave caused by a sudden displacement of the ocean floor, most often due to earthquakes. The project site is not at risk of flooding from tsunami because it is about 11.8 miles to the southwest from the ocean.

5.9.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to hydrology and water quality if the project would:

- HYD-1 Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality.
- HYD-2 Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.

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- HYD-3 Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
- i) Result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.
 - ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite.
 - iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.
 - iv) Impede or redirect flood flows.
- HYD-4 In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation.
- HYD-5 Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

5.9.3 Environmental Impacts

The following impact analysis addresses the threshold of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.9-1: Construction and operation of the proposed project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality [Threshold HYD-1]

Construction

Clearing, grading, excavation, and construction activities associated with the proposed project have the potential to temporarily impact water quality through soil erosion, increasing the amount of silt and debris carried in water runoff. Additionally, the use of construction materials, such as fuels, solvents, and paints, may present a risk to surface water quality. Finally, the refueling and parking of construction vehicles and other equipment on-site during construction may result in oil, grease, or related pollutant leaks and spills that may discharge into the storm drain system.

To minimize these potential impacts, development accommodated by the proposed project would require compliance with the CGP Water Quality Order 2009-0009-DWQ (as amended by Order No. 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-006-DWQ), which requires the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP. A SWPPP requires the incorporation of BMPs to control sediment, erosion, and hazardous materials contamination of runoff during construction and prevent contaminants from reaching receiving water bodies. The SWRCB mandates that projects that disturb one or more acres of land must obtain coverage under the statewide CGP. The CGP also requires that prior to the start of construction activities, the project developer must file PRDs with the SWRCB, which include a Notice of Intent risk assessment, site map, annual fee, signed certification statement, SWPPP,

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and post-construction water balance calculations. The construction contractor is always required to maintain a copy of the SWPPP at the construction site and implement all construction BMPs identified in the SWPPP during construction activities. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, the project developer is required to provide proof of filing the PRDs with the SWRCB. Categories of potential BMPs that would be implemented for the proposed project are described in Table 5.9-1. The final BMPs to be implemented for the proposed project would be determined through the City's review of the SWPPP, which would occur during the City's development review and building plan check process.

Table 5.9-1 Construction Best Management Practices

Category	Purpose	Examples
Erosion Controls	Protects the soil surface and prevents soil particles from being detached by rainfall, flowing water, or wind.	Scheduling, preserving existing conditions, mulch, soil binders, geotextiles, mats, hydroseeding, earth dikes, swales, velocity dissipating devices, slope drains, streambank stabilization, compost blankets, soil preparation/roughening, and non-vegetative stabilization.
Sediment Controls	Traps soil particles after they have been detached and moved by rain, flowing water, or wind.	Barriers such as silt fences, straw bales, sandbags, fiber rolls, and gravel bag berms; sediment basins; sediment traps; check dams; storm drain inlet protection; compost socks and berms; biofilter bags; manufactured linear sediment controls; and cleaning measures such as street sweeping and vacuuming
Wind Erosion Controls	Minimizes dust nuisances.	Applying water or other dust palliatives to prevent or minimize dust nuisance, reducing soil-moving activities during high winds, and installing erosion control BMPs for temporary wind control.
Tracking Controls	Prevents or reduces the tracking of soil offsite by vehicles	Stabilized construction roadways and construction entrances/exits and entrance/outlet tire wash.
Non-Storm Water Management Controls	Prevents pollution by limiting or reducing potential pollutants at their source or eliminating off-site discharge. Prohibits illicit connections or discharges.	Water conservation practices, BMPs specifying methods for: dewatering operations; temporary stream crossings; clear water diversions; pile driving operations; temporary batch plants; demolition adjacent to water; materials over water; potable water and irrigation; paving and grinding operations; cleaning, fueling, and maintenance of vehicles and equipment; concrete curing; concrete finishing.
Waste Management and Controls (i.e., good housekeeping practices)	Management of materials and wastes to avoid contamination of stormwater.	Proper material delivery and storage and material use, spill prevention and control, stockpile management, contaminated soil management, and management of solid, concrete, sanitary/septic, liquid, and hazardous wastes.

Source: CASQA 2019.

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In addition, erosion control plans would be prepared as a condition of approval and implemented during construction, and the project developer would be required to comply with City of Norwalk's grading permit regulations and inspections to reduce sedimentation and erosion.

Submittal of the PRDs and implementation of the SWPPP, the erosion control plan, and grading requirements throughout the construction phase of the proposed project at the actual work areas as well as contractor staging areas would address anticipated pollutants of concern from construction activities. With implementation of the SWPPP and BMPs, construction of the proposed project would not be anticipated to violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality. As a result, water quality impacts associated with construction activities would be **less than significant**.

Operations

Once the proposed project has been constructed, urban runoff could include a variety of contaminants, typical of a mixed-use development, that could impact water quality. Runoff from buildings and parking areas typically contain oils, grease, and fuel; antifreeze; by-products of combustion (such as lead, cadmium, nickel, and other metals); fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides; and other pollutants. Precipitation at the beginning of the rainy season may result in an initial stormwater runoff (first flush) with high pollutant concentrations.

The existing project site varies in imperviousness, with driveways, parking lots, buildings, landscaping, etc. Future development would increase the impervious areas when compared to existing conditions due primarily to the removal of the City Hall Lawn. Approximately 4.1 acres would be removed from the City Hall Lawn, with the fountain and a portion surrounding landscaping in the southwest corner of the site anticipated to be maintained. The City Hall Lawn would be removed developed with the proposed mixed-use buildings and new open space areas, with total open space or landscaped areas on the project site comprising up to 128,700 square feet. While pervious landscaped areas would be developed, it is assumed there would be an overall decrease in the amount of pervious area on the site. Future development would apply LID BMPs in accordance with the requirements of the MS4 permit and Chapter 18.04, Stormwater Management and Discharge Control, of the NMC. LID is a stormwater management and land development strategy that combines a hydrologically functional site design with pollution prevention measures to compensate for land development impacts on hydrology and water quality. Los Angeles County's LID Standards Manual further provides guidance on how new development and redevelopment projects can meet on-site retention requirements through the use of stormwater quality control measures. LID techniques mimic the site's predevelopment hydrology by using treatment control BMPs that store, infiltrate, evapotranspire, biofilter, or detain runoff close to its source. Source control BMPs reduce the potential for pollutants to enter runoff and are classified in two categories—structural and nonstructural. Structural source control BMPs have a physical or structural component, such as inlet trash racks, trash bin covers, and an efficient irrigation system, to prevent pollutants from contacting stormwater runoff. Nonstructural source control BMPs are procedures or practices used in project operation, such as stormwater training or trash management and litter control practices.

The project developer would prepare and submit a standard urban stormwater mitigation plan (SUSMP), which would include applicable LID requirements in the MS4 permit and Low Impact Development Standards Manual. The proposed project would be designed to control pollutants, pollutant loads, and runoff volume to

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the maximum extent feasible by minimizing impervious surface area and controlling runoff from impervious surfaces through infiltration, evapotranspiration, bioretention, and/or rainfall harvest and use. The final BMPs to be implemented for the proposed project would be determined through the City's review of the SUSMP, which would occur during the City's development review and building plan check process.

The BMPs incorporated into future project development would mitigate at a minimum the first flush or the equivalent of the greater between the 85th percentile storm and first 0.75-inch of rainfall for any storm event.¹ The installed BMP systems would be designed with an internal bypass or overflow system to prevent upstream flooding due to large storm events. The stormwater which bypasses the BMP systems would eventually discharge to an approved discharge point in the public right-of-way. Furthermore, the SUSMP would include the following information:

- Feasibility of infiltrating captured stormwater at the project site
- Source control measure(s) proposed to be implemented
- Calculation of the volume of stormwater that needs to be treated on the project site
- Discussion on whether stormwater runoff harvest and use is feasible
- Stormwater quality control measure(s) proposed to be implemented and sizing calculations
- Proposed hydromodification controls and calculations (if necessary)²; and
- Proposed maintenance plan (if necessary).

Additionally, the proposed project would incorporate into the project plans a stormwater mitigation plan, including the BMPs necessary to control stormwater pollution from facility operations as set forth in the SUSMP. Structural or treatment control BMPs in project plans would meet the design standards in the SUSMP and MS4 permit. The project developer would also provide verification of maintenance provisions for treatment and structural control BMPs.

The proposed project would comply with all state, county, and local regulations regarding stormwater runoff during the operational phase, which would ensure that water quality standards and waste discharge requirements would not be exceeded, and surface water and groundwater quality would not be degraded. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would not be expected to violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

¹ Stormwater quality control measures are designed to handle the frequent, smaller storm events, or the initial volume of stormwater runoff from larger storm events (typically referred to as first flush events). The first flush of larger storm events is the initial period of the storm where stormwater runoff typically carries the highest concentration and loads of pollutants. Small, frequent storm events represent most of the total annual average precipitation in the County.

² All projects located within natural drainage systems that have not been improved (e.g., channelized or armored with concrete, shotcrete, or rip-rap) or drainage systems that are tributary to a natural drainage system, are required to implement hydromodification controls. The project must fully mitigate off-site drainage impacts caused by hydromodification and changes in water quality, flow velocity, flow volume, and depth/width of flow.

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Impact 5.9-2: Construction and operation of the proposed project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the proposed project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. [Threshold HYD-2]

Construction

The proposed project would allow for the development of up to 350 multifamily residential units, 110,000 square feet of commercial uses, and up to two additional parking levels on the existing parking structure at the project site and would include open space and landscaping. Although the proposed project site is currently fully developed with the City Hall, City Hall Lawn, surface parking lot, County accessory building, and parking garage, construction activities would involve grading and excavation in these areas. The groundwater level is reported to be about 60 feet below ground surface and groundwater was not encountered to the maximum explored depth of 75 feet below ground surface at the project site (SWRCB 2022b, Appendix H). The project site is within a Zone of Required Investigation (ZORI) for liquefaction due to the historical high groundwater elevation of 10 feet below ground surface (CGS 1998, 1999). Project-related site preparation would include removal of existing soil to a maximum depth of about five feet. Therefore, groundwater would not be encountered during excavation, and dewatering is not required. Construction of the proposed project would not be anticipated to substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Therefore, impacts to groundwater supplies during construction would be **less than significant**.

Operation

The project site is in the Golden State Water Company–Norwalk (GSWC Norwalk) water service area. The GSWC Norwalk receives its water from several sources—groundwater from the Central Basin, imported water from Central Basin Municipal Water District (CBMWD), City of Santa Fe Springs, and City of Cerritos. The GSWC Norwalk also receives recycled water from CBMWD. For year 2020, on average, 65 percent of the GSWC Norwalk's source water was imported water and 31 percent was local ground water supply. All of GSWC Norwalk's groundwater wells are located along the Central Basin. The Central Basin is an adjudicated basin.³ The remaining four percent of the GSWC Norwalk's source water is recycled water supplied by CBMWD's recycled water system.

The GSWC Norwalk estimates that water demands in its service area for normal years would increase from approximately 4,261 acre-feet per year (afy) in 2020 to approximately 4,374 afy in 2045. According to the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, it indicates that the GSWC Norwalk would have sufficient water supplies to meet demands in single-dry-years and multiple-dry-years (that is, five consecutive dry years) over the period of 2020 to 2045 (Norwalk 2021).

³ When water users within a groundwater basin are in dispute over legal rights to the water, a court can issue a ruling known as an adjudication. The court decree will define the area of adjudication. The court typically appoints a watermaster to administer the court's decree. In basins or areas where a lawsuit is brought to adjudicate, the groundwater rights of all the overlayers and appropriators are determined by the court.

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As substantiated in the Water Supply and Demand Analysis (see Appendix J) the proposed project would result in a net increase of 111 afy. GSWC has a total supply pool of 23,639 afy available for use by GSWC Norwalk and the neighboring GSWC service areas and GSWC Norwalk has the capability of obtaining additional water supplies from GSWC's pool if the need arises. Additionally, the proposed project's population and employment contributions are within SCAG projections for the City of Norwalk (see Section 5.12, *Population and Housing*). Since the projected demands in the 2020 UWMP are based on SCAG projections, then the proposed project's water demand is within these projections. Therefore, proposed project water demands would not be expected to substantially deplete groundwater supplies.

Furthermore, as discussed under Section 5.9.1.2, the project site is not on an active recharge site and therefore would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge. Operation of the proposed project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Therefore, impacts on groundwater recharge would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.9-3: Construction and/or operation of the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, flooding on- or offsite, or create or contribute runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff [Threshold HYD-3(i), (ii) and (iii)]

The project site is in a highly urbanized, built-out portion of the City of Norwalk where soils have already been disturbed by existing development. No streams or rivers traverse or are located in the vicinity of the project site, which is already developed and largely flat. The closest drainage channel to the project site is the La Canada Verde Creek, 1.8 miles east of the project site. Soils could experience erosion during construction pursuant to the proposed project. A SWPPP specifying BMPs for minimizing pollution of stormwater with soil and sediment during development would be prepared and implemented. Adherence to the BMPs in the SWPPP and preparation of erosion control plans would reduce, prevent, or minimize soil erosion from grading and construction activities. Therefore, impacts related to substantial soil erosion or siltation during construction would be **less than significant**.

Buildout of the proposed project would increase impervious areas on the project site. Per the requirements of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, as detailed in the Los Angeles County Hydrology Manual and the Los Angeles County Hydraulic Design Manual, development under the proposed project would be required to have site-specific hydrology and hydraulic studies to determine the capacity of the existing storm drain systems and project impacts on such systems prior to approval by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. The proposed project would be required to comply with site-specific "allowable discharge rates," as identified by the Department of Public Works, that limit post-project peak flow discharges compared

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to existing conditions, thus minimizing the potential for flooding on- or off-site and exceedance of the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. The project developer must submit the hydrology and hydraulic studies to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works for review and approval prior to the issuance of grading permits.

Additionally, development in accordance with the proposed project must be operated in accordance with the Los Angeles County MS4 Permit (Order No. R4-2021-0105, NPDES No. CAS004004) and NMC Chapter 18.04, Stormwater Management and Discharge Control. The MS4 Permit requires new development to retain and treat a specified volume of stormwater runoff on-site as described in Impact 5.9-1.

Therefore, development pursuant to the proposed project would not be anticipated to cause substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site or substantial flooding on- or off-site. Development would also not be anticipated to create or contribute runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage system. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.9-4: Construction and/or operation of the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would impede or redirect flood flows [Threshold HYD-3 (iv) and HYD-4]

As detailed in Impact 5.9-3, development pursuant to the proposed project would not cause flooding on- or off-site. Additionally, the project site is not within a 100-year or 500-year floodplain (FEMA 2022) nor a dam inundation zone (DWR 2022). Therefore, development pursuant to the proposed project would not impede or redirect flood flows, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.9-5: Construction and/or operation of the proposed project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones [Threshold HYD-4]

As detailed in Impact 5.9-3, the project site is not within a 100-year or 500-year floodplain or a dam inundation zone (DWR 2022). Additionally, the project site is not at risk of inundation from tsunamis, since it is about 11.8 miles from the Pacific Ocean, nor is it at risk of inundation from seiches (see Section 5.9.1.2). Therefore, development pursuant to the proposed project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

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Impact 5.9-6: Construction and/or operation of the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan [Threshold HYD-5]

The project will adhere to the state CGP, implement the SWPPP, and adhere to the City's grading requirements, as described in detail in Impact 5.9-1, and would thereby ensure that surface and groundwater quality are not adversely impacted during construction. In addition, the project would implement LID BMP measures and would thereby ensure that water quality is not impacted during the operational phase of the proposed project. As a result, site development would not be expected to obstruct or conflict with the implementation of the Los Angeles Region Basin Plan for the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.

The project site would be connected to GSWC's public water supply. Per the Water Replenishment District of Southern California Groundwater Basins Master Plan, GSWC manages supplies to ensure withdrawals from the Central Basin Aquifer do not exceed the safe yield for the Basin. Additionally, the Central Basin is recharged via surface spreading at the Whittier Narrows Dam, Montebello Forebay Spreading Grounds, infiltration in the unlined portions of the Lower San Gabriel River, and via direct injection at the Alamosos Barrier Project (Norwalk 2021). The project site is not located within these active recharge sites. Therefore, the proposed project would not obstruct or conflict with a water quality or groundwater management plan. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.9.4 Cumulative Impacts

Hydrology and Drainage

Cumulative projects in the Lower San Gabriel River watershed could increase impervious areas and thus increase local runoff rates at those project sites. However, other projects in the region would be required to manage runoff on-site as applicable in accordance with the NPDES MS4 permit. Projects in the region would also be required to limit post-development runoff discharges per the requirements of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, as detailed in the Los Angeles County Hydrology Manual and the Los Angeles County Hydraulic Design Manual. Projects within the City would also need to comply with the requirements of Chapter 18.04 of the NMC. Thus, no significant cumulative drainage impact would be anticipated to occur, and project drainage impacts would not be cumulatively considerable. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be **less than significant**.

Water Quality

Cumulative projects have the potential to generate pollutants during project construction and operation. All construction projects that disturb one acre or more of land would be required to prepare and implement SWPPPs to obtain coverage under the statewide CGP. All projects within the watershed would also be required to implement LID BMPs that would be applied during project design and project operation to minimize water

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pollution from project operation. Thus, no significant cumulative water quality impacts would be expected to occur, and project water quality impacts would not be cumulatively considerable. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.9.5 References

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5.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

This section of the DEIR evaluates the potential impacts on land use from implementing the Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan Project (proposed project).

Land use impacts can be direct or indirect. Direct impacts result in land-use incompatibilities, division of neighborhoods or communities, or interference with other land use plans adopted to avoid or mitigate an environmental effect, including habitat for wildlife conservation plans. This section focuses on direct land-use impacts. Indirect impacts are secondary effects resulting from land-use policy implementation, such as increased demand for public utilities or services or increased roadway traffic. Indirect impacts are addressed in other sections of this DEIR including Section 5.1, *Aesthetics*; 5.2, *Air Quality*; 5.3, *Biological Resources*; 5.4, *Cultural Resources*; 5.5, *Energy*; 5.6, *Geology and Soils*; 5.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*; 5.8, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*; 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*; 5.11, *Noise*; 5.12, *Population and Housing*; 5.13, *Public Services*; 5.14, *Recreation*; 5.15, *Transportation*; and 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*.

One comment letter pertaining to land use and planning was received in response to the Notice of Preparation. The comment letter addresses the proposed project's consistency with the adopted 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS or Connect SoCal). Responses to the comment letter and analysis regarding consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS are incorporated into this section. This comment letter is from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), dated March 8, 2022 (see Appendix B).

5.10.1 Environmental Setting

5.10.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to land use and planning and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

State

California Government Code

California Government Code provides authority for a city/county to adopt a specific plan by ordinance (as a regulatory plan) or resolution (as a policy plan). When a specific plan is adopted by ordinance, the specific plan effectively replaces portions or all the current zoning regulations for specified parcels. It becomes an independent set of zoning regulations that provide clear direction to the type and intensity of uses permitted or define other types of design and permitting criteria. There is currently no specific plan governing the project site. Still, the project proposes The Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan and proposes that it be adopted by ordinance and serve as the zoning for the project site.

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Regional

Southern California Association of Governments

SCAG is a council of governments representing Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. It is the region's federally recognized metropolitan planning organization, encompassing over 38,000 square miles. SCAG is a regional planning agency and a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SCAG is also the regional clearinghouse for projects requiring federal and state law environmental documentation. In this role, SCAG reviews proposed development and infrastructure projects to analyze their impacts on regional planning programs. As the Southern California region's metropolitan planning organization, SCAG cooperates with the Southern California Air Quality Management District (AQMD), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and other agencies in preparing regional planning documents. SCAG has developed regional plans to achieve specific regional objectives.

Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy

The SCAG Regional Council adopted Connect SoCal (its 2020-2045 RTP/SCS) in September 2020 to replace the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS. The RTP/SCS helps coordinate the development of the region's transportation improvements and provides a vision for transportation investments throughout the region. Using growth forecasts and economic trends that project out over 20 years, the RTP/SCS considers the role of transportation in the broader context of economic, environmental, and quality-of-life goals for the future, identifying regional transportation strategies to address regional mobility needs. Connect SoCal builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies of previous RTPs/SCSs, increases mobility options and achieves a more sustainable growth pattern in the region. The RTP/SCS is a long-range visioning plan that balances mobility and housing and goals for the environment, economy, equity, environmental justice, and public health that is developed and updated by SCAG every four years. Connect SoCal identifies ten goals to achieve its long-range vision (refer to Table 5.10-3, below).

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

The City of Norwalk adopted the current General Plan in 1996. It included five principal components: About the General Plan, Vision Norwalk, Area Plans, Opportunity, Special Site Studies, and Citywide Elements. The General Plan is a policy document that represents the official statement of the City regarding its social, physical, and economic goals and helps determine the potential growth of the City, including residential, commercial, and industrial development; then, it establishes goals to accommodate that growth. The adopted General Plan includes chapters on land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, community design, educational and cultural resources, and utility infrastructure (Norwalk 1996). Applicable goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan elements and City Center Area Plan are further discussed in Table 5.10-2, *Consistency with General Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies*.

- **City Center Area Plan.** The City Center Area Plan has been developed to provide specific recommendations for the future social, physical, and economic development of the City Center, including

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the Civic Center, the existing Norwalk Entertainment Center (Specific Plan Area 1), and several surrounding buildings. The City Center Area Plan provides a vision to show what the area could become and discusses economic development concepts; land uses, urban design concepts; historical, civic, and cultural resources; circulation concepts; and utility infrastructure.

- **Land Use Element.** The Land Use Element is included in the Citywide Elements Section of the General Plan. It designates the general distribution and intensity of land uses for housing, business, industry, open space, education, public buildings and grounds, and other public and private uses. The Land Use Element also establishes standards of population density and building intensity for the various land uses identified.
- **Circulation Element.** The Circulation Element is correlated with the Land Use Element and identifies the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other local public transit facilities.
- **Housing Element.** The Housing Element is a comprehensive assessment of current and projected housing needs for all community segments and economic groups. In addition, it embodies policy for providing adequate housing and includes action programs for this purpose. The City is currently updating the Housing Element for the year 2029. Under the new Housing Element, Norwalk has been assigned 5,034 units of housing at a variety of affordability levels. The Housing Element demonstrates that the City has the capacity for these units. The Housing Element is anticipated to be adopted by the end of 2022.
- **Conservation Element.** The Conservation Element addresses the conservation, development, and use of natural resources such as water, forests, soils, rivers, and mineral deposits.
- **Open Space Element.** The Open Space Element details plans and measures for preserving open space for natural resources, the managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and public health and safety.
- **Noise Element.** The Noise Element identifies and appraises noise levels in the community and helps to guide land-use decisions.
- **Safety Element.** The Safety Element establishes policies and programs to protect the community from risks associated with seismic, geologic, flood, fire, and other urban hazards.
- **Community Design Element.** The Community Design Element explores issues related to the visual environment. Whereas most General Plan elements focus on functional design issues, this element establishes that the City is also concerned with the aesthetic form of development.
- **Educational and Cultural Resources Element.** The Educational and Cultural Resources Element assesses Norwalk's educational and cultural resources. It provides policies for the preservation and enhancement of these resources.

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- **Utility Infrastructure Element.** The Utility Infrastructure Element addresses the issues related to the City's infrastructure capacity and establishes policies for the maintenance of existing facilities and the provision of new facilities.

City of Norwalk Municipal Code

- **Norwalk Municipal Code (NMC) Title 17, Zoning Ordinance,** provides zoning regulations and provisions to designate, regulate, and restrict the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for agriculture, residences, commerce, trade, industry, or other purposes; to regulate and limit the height and size of buildings and other structures erected or altered; to regulate and determine the size of yards and other open spaces; to regulate and limit the density of population; to adopt zones of such number, shape, and area as are established and adopted with the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance is designed to implement the goals of the General Plan through detailed regulations. Each property in the city is designated a certain zone.
- **NMC Chapter 17.08, Article II, Public Facilities Overlay Zone,** is intended to promote the orderly and harmonious development of areas in the vicinity of the Civic Center and major public buildings and to ensure that the appearance of the area surrounding such facilities shall not be detrimental to the dignity and beauty of such public facilities or of the surrounding area.
- **NMC Chapter 17.08, Article IV, Institutional Zone,** is intended to implement the General Plan Institutional land use designation and to permit public uses that support the functions and purposes of other land uses as well as the functions of the City government and other government entities. The Institutional Zone allows for government facilities and uses that provide economic development opportunities, as determined by the City.

Economic Development Opportunities Plan

The Economic Development Opportunities (EDO) Plan evaluates existing demographic information and retail market conditions to identify and prioritize strategic areas to promote economic development in the city successfully. The City Council adopted the EDO Plan on September 18, 2018 (Kosmont 2018). The EDO identifies ten strategic areas, including the Civic Center/Entertainment District strategic area, including the project site. The Civic Center/Entertainment District strategic area is described as “[u]rban infill, civic center bordered by major arterials Imperial Hwy and Norwalk Blvd with connectivity to the transit hub.” It is identified as a “[s]trong location for enhanced entertainment district with a blend of retail, restaurant, entertainment, hotel, and cultural uses” that can “[c]apitalize on traffic counts and daytime population.” The EDO Plan also identified the “[p]otential to create a Specific Plan or Special District to support the redevelopment of priority opportunity site.” The vision for this strategic area includes attracting entertainment, hotel, restaurant use, and other entertainment uses that can accommodate supporting retail, theater, service, hospitality, and other office uses (all quotes Kosmont 2018).

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5.10.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Land Uses

The existing project site consists of approximately 13.2 acres at Norwalk's southeast corner of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard. The Imperial Highway borders the project site to the north, Avenida Manuel Salinas to the east, the Los Angeles County Superior Court–Norwalk and a surface parking lot to the south, and Norwalk Boulevard to the west.

As shown in Table 5.10-1, *Existing Development On-Site*, the project site is currently developed with the approximately 39,000-square-foot Norwalk City Hall building, the approximately 4.3-acre City Hall Lawn, a portion of an accessory building associated with the County Superior Court property (County accessory building), a surface parking lot, and a three-level parking structure.

Table 5.10-1 Existing Development On-Site

Land Uses	Size
City Hall Lawn	4.3 acres
City Hall	39,000 square feet
Surface Parking Lot	121,968 square feet (269 parking spaces)
County Accessory Building	Approximately 4,232 square feet
Parking Structure (adjacent to County Accessory Building)	3 aboveground levels (approximately 1,050 parking spaces)

The project site includes a monument sign on the northeast corner of the project site, near the intersection of Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway, and two memorials—one is a tribute to Norwalk emergency professionals on the northeast side of the project site, and one, known as the Freedom Memorials, in the surface parking lot near the entrance to City Hall. In addition, the project site includes an underground time capsule just north of City Hall located on a concrete platform with steel handrails and a metal flagpole, and a plaque to Manuel Salinas on the west side of the project site. The project site includes landscaped medians with approximately 160 landscaped trees throughout the surface parking lot and landscaping around City Hall. The City Hall Lawn is mainly an undeveloped turf lawn with dispersed mature trees, memorials, and walking paths.

Surrounding Land Uses

The project site is primarily surrounded by commercial, multiple-family residential, and institutional uses. Surrounding uses include commercial uses and accompanying surface parking lots across Imperial Highway to the north; the Norwalk Library, Norwalk Sheriff's Station, and accompanying surface parking lots across Avenida Manuel Salinas to the east; and commercial, multiple-family residential uses, and the Los Angeles County Department of Social Services building across Norwalk Boulevard to the west. The Los Angeles County Superior Courthouse is southwest of the project site. Commercial uses (including the AMC Theatre), a hotel, and multifamily residential uses are south of the project site across Civic Center Drive. Single-family and multiple-family residential neighborhoods are to the northeast and southeast of the project site.

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Specific Plan Area 1 (SPA 1) (the Norwalk Entertainment District) is located south of the project site. SPA 1 is zoned Specific Plan Area 1 and has a General Plan land use designation of Specific Plan and is developed with the AMC Theater, DoubleTree hotel, commercial uses, and multiple-family residential uses. Some surrounding uses are also within the public facilities overlay. However, SPA 1 to the south, SPA 8 to the north, and the single-family residential neighborhood are not in the overlay of public facilities (Norwalk 2020a, 2020b). The commercial properties to the northwest of the project site are zoned Restricted Commercial (C1) and General Commercial (C3) with General Plan land use designations of Neighborhood Commercial and General Commercial, respectively. The commercial, civic, and multifamily residential properties that front Norwalk Boulevard west of the project site are zoned Commercial and Office (CO) and have a land use designation of Professional Office. Commercial properties to the north of the project site are zoned SPA 8 and have a General Plan land use designation of Specific Plan. Institutional uses to the east are zoned Institutional with a land use designation of Institutional (see Figure 3-6, *Surrounding Uses Photographs*, and Figure 3-7, *Existing and Surrounding Zoning and Land Use Designations*).

Existing General Plan and Zoning Designations

The project site has a General Plan land use designation of Institutional and is currently zoned Institutional. The Institutional zone allows for government facilities and offices (City Hall, corporate yard, courthouse, fire station, fueling station, hospital, police or sheriff station, public library, etc.) or uses that provide economic development opportunities promoting employment, education, and business training resources or services to the public, as determined by the City. (NMC Section 17.08.190). The project site is also within a Public Facilities Overlay Zone (Norwalk 2020a, 2020b). The purpose of the Public Facilities Overlay Zone is to promote the orderly and harmonious development of areas in the vicinity of the Civic Center and major public buildings to ensure that the appearance of the surrounding area is not detrimental to the dignity and beauty of public facilities or the surrounding area.

5.10.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to land use if the project would:

- LU-1 Physically divides an established community.
- LU-2 Causes a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

5.10.3 Environmental Impacts

5.10.3.1 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the threshold of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

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Impact 5.10-1: Project implementation would not divide an established community. [Threshold LU-1]

Implementation of the proposed project would include the construction of a mixed-use development with residential and commercial uses and landscaped spaces as authorized by the proposed specific plan on the site of the existing City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot, which are within a strategic area identified by the City for redevelopment (Kosmont 2018). It is contemplated that the development would be implemented primarily through a public-private partnership between the City and Primestor Development, Inc. (Primestor), which is anticipated to include proposed ground leases to Primestor of areas, including the City-owned lawn and surface parking area. In addition to the new mixed-use buildings and other development, the project would include open space, oriented in a north-south configuration that is publicly accessible, but privately operated and maintained. By re-orienting open space to the north-south configuration, the proposed project would facilitate overall connectivity within the site and to the existing surrounding civic, commercial, and residential uses. Vehicular access to the project site would remain along with Avenida Manuel Salinas and Civic Center Drive (see Figure 3-9, *Conceptual Ground Floor Plan*) with a new driveway on Norwalk Boulevard. The proposed project would include and enhance pedestrian connectivity within the project site and with the surrounding area. Implementation of the proposed project would not obstruct access to any existing areas or buildings surrounding the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not physically divide an established community, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.10-2: Project Implementation would not conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted to avoid or mitigate an environmental effect. [Threshold LU-2]

As described above, the existing project site is currently zoned Institutional and has a corresponding General Plan land use designation of Institutional. Implementation of the proposed project would be generally consistent with the uses permitted by the existing Institutional zoning and land use designation, which includes both government facilities and economic development as determined by the City. However, the project would change the project site's zoning from Institutional to Specific Plan through a zone map and zone text amendment and would change the project site's land use designation from Institutional to Mixed-Use through a General Plan map and text amendment. The zone change would also remove the public facilities overlay. The creation of customized zoning and land use designation for the project site would provide more detailed regulations to govern the development of uses that would provide economic development opportunities that support the existing Institutional zone onsite and is consistent with the EDO Plan adopted by the City in 2018, which identifies the potential for a specific plan to support the development of the project site. The proposed project would also require a master conditional use permit for alcohol by the proposed specific plan. The project also proposes ground leases, reciprocal easement agreements, parking leases and/or licenses, and easements with the City and other public agencies to implement the proposed specific plan.

Permitted uses, densities, setbacks, and other development standards are established in the proposed Norwalk Entertainment District–Civic Center Specific Plan. The proposed specific plan identifies a conceptual site plan

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that would implement the specific plan through the construction of two mixed-use buildings on the project site. The proposed specific plan would allow for the development of up to 350 multifamily residential units and up to 110,000 square feet of commercial uses, consisting of a mix of retail, food, and beverage, health and wellness facilities, and/or grocery/market uses. The proposed project would include publicly accessible, but privately operated and maintained open space areas, which would include lawn and hardscape areas and would provide gathering spaces that could accommodate a diverse range of events and programming. The ground level publicly accessible open space would allow fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, and booths, as well as outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements. The residential component would also include residential open space in the proposed specific plan. Once adopted, the proposed project would be consistent with the land use and zoning designations, and the specific plan.

General Plan Consistency

Although the proposed project includes changes to the existing zoning and land use designation of the project site, Table 5.10-2, *Consistency with General Plan Goals and Policies*, evaluates the proposed project’s consistency with the City’s existing General Plan and demonstrates that the proposed project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with the City’s plans and policies. Although some of the General Plan goals, objectives, and policies discussed below are not at a project-level and do not have direct application to an individual site or development project, the analysis identifies how the proposed project may further the intent behind such goals, objectives, and policies, even if such goals, objectives or policies do not directly apply.

Table 5.10-2 Consistency with General Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis
CITY CENTER AREA PLAN	
<p>Objective. To establish City Center as a strong subregional center and concentrate efforts towards its economic and physical development.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would provide for the economic and physical development of the site with retail and commercial uses in a central location that creates a sense of place, supports the existing commercial and institutional uses surrounding the project site, including the existing Norwalk Entertainment District SPA 1 to the south of the project site, and would serve as an attractive destination for Norwalk residents and visitors. The proposed project would realize redevelopment of the project site as identified in the City’s Economic Development Opportunities Plan, which outlines a vision for this strategic area to include entertainment, hotel, and restaurant uses that can accommodate supporting retail, theater, service, hospitality, and other office uses.</p>
<p>Objective. To provide for infrastructure improvements needed to support the physical development of City Center.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would include utility and infrastructure improvements onsite that would connect to existing public utility and infrastructure in the public right-of-way, such as water, wastewater, stormwater, natural gas, electricity and telecommunications. As discussed in Section 5-17, <i>Utilities and Service Systems</i>, existing utilities would adequately serve the proposed project, and the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact related utility demand.</p>
<p>Objective. To provide for efficient and diverse modes of transportation to support City Center.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would allow for a mixed-use development that would contain residential and commercial uses</p>

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Table 5.10-2 Consistency with General Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis
Land Use Policy. Encourage complementary and appropriate land uses adjacent to public transportation stations and routes.	adjacent to bus routes along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard and within proximity of two regional transit stations (Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center, approximately 0.61 miles to the east and Los Angeles County Metro station about 1.7 miles to the west). The proposed project would encourage and support current and future transit use and other alternative forms of transportation while providing sufficient parking to meet the evolving needs of the City's existing and future entertainment/civic uses. Additionally, the proposed project would support pedestrian circulation throughout the development to promote interactive use of the commercial and publicly accessible open space facilities.
Objective. To provide for a balance of commercial, retail, and related supportive uses within City Center.	Consistent. The proposed project would provide retail and commercial uses and gathering spaces that are publicly accessible and privately maintained and operated. The proposed project would create a sense of place, support, and enhance the existing commercial and institutional uses in the City's Civic Center and Norwalk Entertainment District and serve as an attractive destination for residents and visitors. The proposed project would realize redevelopment of the project site as identified in the City's Economic Development Opportunities Plan, which outlines a vision for this strategic area to include entertainment, hotel, and restaurant uses that can accommodate supporting retail, theater, service, hospitality, and other office uses.
Land Use Policy: Encourage and support, where appropriate, retail and entertainment development in City Center.	
Land Use Policy: Consider the establishment of urban design guidelines which will provide for an aesthetically pleasing, pedestrian-friendly, and economically viable business core and which will encourage uses which are mutually supportive.	Consistent: The City has not adopted urban design guidelines for the City Center Area Plan area. The proposed specific plan includes architectural, landscape, and design guidelines that would guide development on the project site to provide an aesthetically pleasing, pedestrian-friendly mix of residential and commercial uses.
Land Use Policy: Consider the use of City-owned property for uses which are revenue producing.	Consistent. The project site is located in Strategic Area #1 of the City's adopted Economic Development Opportunities Plan (Kosmont 2018). Through a public-private partnership, the proposed project would allow for the development of portions of the city-owned project site with a mixed-use development that would include residential and a mix of commercial opportunities, which would support the generation of revenue on City-owned property.
Land Use Policy: Support or facilitate the construction of child care facilities in accordance with new development and based on need.	Consistent: The proposed project would allow up to 110,000 square feet of a variety of commercial uses, which would allow for childcare facilities as a permitted use.
Historic, Civic, and Cultural Resources Policy. Support the preservation of historic structures and places.	Consistent: The proposed project would not impact City Hall, which meets eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register and California (see also Section 5.4, <i>Cultural Resources</i>). The proposed project would support the preservation of historic structures and places. The proposed project would retain the two existing memorials (one, a tribute to Norwalk emergency professional, on the northeast side of the project site and one, known as the Freedom Memorial, in the surface parking lot near the entrance to City Hall). It would also retain the existing underground time capsule just north of City Hall and a plaque to Manuel Salinas on the east side of the project site.
Historic, Civic, and Cultural Resources Policy. Encourage the use of City Hall and other public facilities for community purposes.	Consistent: The proposed project would include areas open space areas that would be reoriented to a north-south configuration that would be publicly accessible and privately operated and maintained. The landscaped areas would be activated with kiosks, vendor carts, pavilions, outdoor furniture, and other elements, and portions of the publicly accessible open space would accommodate community events

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Table 5.10-2 Consistency with General Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis
	and programming, such as farmers markets and, community bingo, yoga, back to school, and job fairs, among others. The proposed project would allow for new mixed-use buildings on the City Hall Lawn and existing surface parking lot while preserving and respecting the existing City Hall building.
Circulation Policy. Promote regulations and standards which encourage developments to be functionally integrated with adjacent transportation facilities and networks.	Consistent: The proposed project would encourage and support current and future transit use and other alternative forms of transportation, thereby integrating the proposed project with nearby transportation facilities and networks. The proposed project would have publicly accessible open space and would provide access from existing sidewalks along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard (which could be widened) that would encourage pedestrians and transit use in the area. The proposed project would also have bicycle parking onsite.
Circulation Policy. Identify and evaluate the major rights-of-way requiring increased capacity and methods of mitigating traffic impacts resulting from specific City Center projects.	Consistent: Pursuant to SB 743, roadway capacity and level of service are no longer a CEQA impact. Transportation-related impacts, including CEQA-related vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impacts as well as non-CEQA-related capacity issues for identified major rights-of-way serving the project site, are addressed in Section 5.15, <i>Transportation</i> , and in Appendix M.1, <i>Transportation Study</i> . The proposed project would result in a less than significant to VMT with the incorporation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1.
Circulation Policy. Require projects to include adequate on-site parking and encourage joint use of existing private parking facilities for public use during off-hours together with joint development of public/private parking facilities.	Consistent: Parking for the proposed project would include a mix of new on-site parking and use of the parking structure on site. The parking structure would function as a joint-use for the project's commercial uses and City Hall and other nearby civic uses and the theater and other commercial uses to the south. The new on-site parking combined with available parking in the parking structure would provide adequate parking to accommodate the project uses. The proposed specific plan also allows the expansion of the existing parking structure if needed to serve the project site and/or other uses in the civic/entertainment district area. Therefore, the proposed project would include adequate on-site parking and encourage joint use of existing parking facilities for public use.
Circulation Policy. Minimize adverse circulation impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.	Consistent: Pursuant to SB 743, roadway capacity and level of service are no longer a CEQA impact. However, the proposed project would be designed to minimize adverse circulation impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. Transportation-related impacts, including CEQA-related VMT impacts and non-CEQA-related circulation issues, are addressed in Appendix M.1, <i>Transportation Study</i> . As discussed in Section 5.15, <i>Transportation</i> , the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact related hazards due to geometric design and incompatible uses. The proposed project would result in a less than significant impact to emergency access with incorporation of Mitigation Measure TRA-2.
Utilities Policy. Require new developments to install all on-site utilities and connections to distribution systems underground.	Consistent: As discussed in Section 5.17, <i>Utilities and Service Systems</i> , all utility connections within the Project Site would be appropriately sized and relocated appropriately, and underground where feasible. Therefore, the proposed project would comply with this policy.
Utilities Policy. Design and maintain public facilities so that associated noise, light, glare, or odors will not adversely affect nearby land uses.	Consistent: As discussed in Sections 5.2, <i>Air Quality</i> and 5.8, <i>Noise</i> , the proposed project would implement project-specific mitigation measures as noted in the respective discussions and comply with all regulatory requirements to reduce potential impacts regarding noise and odors during construction and/or operation of the proposed project.

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Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis
	<p>Additionally, as discussed in Section 5.1, <i>Aesthetics</i>, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact to light and glare. Proposed project lighting would be designed to be directed downward onto the project site and adjacent properties are protected from spillover illumination. There would be no exterior night lighting that produces a light intensity exceeding 2.0 footcandles as measured at the property line of the nearest residentially zoned property. As such, the proposed project is consistent with the policy.</p>
<p>Utilities Policy. Promote water and wastewater conservation practices to reduce the water and sewage flows from existing and future developments.</p>	<p>Consistent. Building and site design of the proposed project would comply with Title 24 requirements and integrate sustainable practices that conserve energy and water resources, reduce waste, and reduce the effects of urban heat gain.</p>
LAND USE ELEMENT	
<p>Goal. To create a well-balanced community by careful land use and urban design policies which provide for the housing, employment, social, economic, recreational, cultural health, safety, educational, and service needs of its residents and which maintains and enhance a high quality of life.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would allow for the development of a mixed-use project that would include residential and a mix of commercial opportunities. Additionally, the building placement and form of the proposed project will promote high-quality and site-appropriate development guided by the proposed Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan.</p>
<p>Goal. To achieve a physical environment which respects and nurtures the unique characteristics which distinguish Norwalk as a special place to live, work, and grow, as well as to invest resources, and conduct business.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project includes up to 110,000 square feet of new commercial space (including a mix of food and beverage establishments, retail, health and wellness, and grocery/supermarket) and up to 350 residential units above ground-floor commercial space to meet the needs of the City. The project would create a sense of place and active publicly accessible open space that invite residents, guests, and visitors to gather and create community and would continue to distinguish Norwalk as a special place to live, work, and grow while serving the needs of all residents and visitors.</p>
<p>Goal. To develop a range of well-integrated housing types which will serve the various needs of all the residents of the City.</p>	
City Wide Land Uses	
<p>Objective. To provide for a development pattern which can maximize Norwalk's changing role as a subregional center and which includes employment opportunities, provision of goods and services, housing alternatives, and open space.</p>	<p>Consistent. Implementation of the proposed project would encourage economic development and would establish new commercial and residential uses, and landscaped areas. The proposed project would be consistent with the Economic Development Opportunities Plan to attract retail, restaurant, and entertainment use and support another commercial, office and entertainment use. Therefore, the proposed project would promote employment opportunities, provision of goods and services, housing alternatives, and open space within the project site, while supporting the City's physical and economic growth.</p>
<p>Objective. To provide for upgraded infrastructure and services to support the City's physical and economic growth and development.</p>	
<p>Objective. To provide for larger comprehensive developments along the City's major arterials, which will enhance the overall character of the streetscape and will include adequate parking, buffering, and landscaping.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project is strategically located and would enhance the major arterials of Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Avenue. The proposed project would include landscaping, well-designed and selected streetscape elements, such as furniture and public art, to contribute to the public realm by delineating travel paths, providing places to rest and shade, and defining the character of an area by providing visual and structural continuity.</p>
<p>Objective. To provide for adequate child care facilities to meet the needs of today's working community.</p>	<p>Consistent: The proposed project would allow up to 110,000 square feet of a variety of commercial uses, which would allow for childcare facilities as a permitted use.</p>
<p>Objective. To concentrate commercial density in the City Center area and establish it as an urban and sub-regional core.</p>	<p>Consistent. Consistent with the City's adopted Economic Development Opportunities Plan (Kosmont 2018), the proposed project would establish new commercial density in the City Center Area. Through a public-private partnership, the proposed project would allow for the</p>

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Table 5.10-2 Consistency with General Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis
	development of the city-owned project site with a mixed-use development that would include a residential and a mix of commercial opportunities to establish this area as an urban core within the City.
Objective. To establish a positive image for Norwalk as a growing city and take steps towards maintaining this positive image.	Consistent. Customized development standards and other requirements in the proposed specific plan would encourage a high-quality development that includes activated and publicly accessible open space and complements City Hall and surrounding land uses, promotes a positive image of the City, and maintains visual order. Development consistent with the proposed project would provide a harmonious architectural design with high-quality materials. The proposed project would also include pedestrian walkways throughout the project site that would connect with public rights-of-way and connects public transit facilities and other forms of transportation. The proposed project includes a set of development and design standards that would guide outdoor space standards, landscape design, site design, architectural design character, and streetscape/street furniture that would ensure that the proposed project's buildout is inviting and aesthetically pleasing.
Policy. Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of areas important to the creation of a positive image for Norwalk.	
Policy. Encourage developments to be well located and functionally integrated with adjacent transit facilities.	Consistent. The development of the proposed project would be located approximately 0.61 miles west of the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center and approximately 1.7 miles east of the Norwalk Los Angeles County Metro Station. Local bus service is provided along Imperial Highway via the Norwalk Transit System (NTS) Route 4 and along Norwalk Boulevard via NTS Routes 1, 2, and 3 and Los Angeles County Metro Route 62. The nearest bus stop along Imperial Highway is located along the northern boundary of the project site, and the nearest bus stop along Norwalk Boulevard is at the southwest corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard.
Policy. Encourage the development of child care facilities within the City.	Consistent: The proposed project would allow up to 110,000 square feet of a variety of commercial uses, which would allow for childcare facilities as a permitted use.
Residential Land Uses	
Objective. To continue to provide for a diversity in housing types for all economic segments of the community.	Consistent. Implementation of the proposed project would include the development of up to 350 multi-family residential units within the project site. The proposed project would reserve a minimum of 15 percent of its dwelling units as affordable units. Therefore, the proposed project would diversify and expand the City's housing stock with multiple-family residential units, including affordable units.
Objective. To provide for a balanced distribution of multi-family housing throughout the City.	
Objective. Encourage development of a wide range of housing types to serve all economic segments of the community by incentives.	
Policy. Encourage balanced distribution of multi-family developments.	
Commercial Land Uses	
Objective. To provide for sub-regional serving commercial uses.	Consistent. The proposed project would provide sub-regional and local serving commercial uses. The proposed project includes up to 110,000 square feet of commercial uses, consisting of a mix of retail, food and beverage, health and wellness facilities, and/or grocery/market uses. The commercial space is anticipated to be provided at the ground level of the mixed-use buildings and would front Imperial Highway, Norwalk Boulevard, the project's internal publicly accessible open space, and City Hall. Fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, and booths would also be in the open-air publicly accessible open
Objective. To provide for adequate local-serving commercial uses.	

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Table 5.10-2 Consistency with General Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis
	space through the center of the project site and would support commercial uses onsite.
Policy. Encourage development of offices, hotels, restaurants, and entertainment in areas designated as sub-regional centers by establishing a positive environment for these uses.	Consistent. The proposed project would contain 110,000 square feet of commercial uses, consisting of a mix of food and beverage establishments, retail, health and wellness facilities, and grocery/supermarket uses. The proposed project's location on major arterials and with proximity to public transit facilities, its mix of uses, and landscaped areas with both active and passive features will establish a positive environment for these uses.
Policy. Encourage development of department stores and related retail uses in areas designated as sub-regional centers by promoting standards that are conducive to these uses.	
Policy. Encourage site and building designs which are compatible with the scale and character of adjoining land uses by establishing particular development standards for various districts in the City.	Consistent. The proposed project would provide a mixed-use development that would balance residential, commercial, and supportive uses on the project site and include development standards to address scale and compatibility with adjoining land uses.
Public Land Uses	
Objective. To maximize and enhance the recreational potential of existing parks, schools, and public facilities.	Consistent. The proposed project would provide publicly accessible open space that would feature both active and passive uses to promote daily use for gathering, recreation, socializing, and community building. The project would include publicly accessible and privately operated, and maintained open space and residential open space, governed by standards in the proposed specific plan. The publicly accessible open space could accommodate a variety of community events and programming.
Policy. Encourage the provision of private open space in future commercial/office and residential developments by the development of appropriate standards of development and incentives to provide the intended amenities.	
CIRCULATION ELEMENT	
Local Thoroughfares and Transportation Routes	
Policy 1.13: Provide for the safe and expeditious transport of hazardous materials.	Consistent. Operation of the proposed project would not involve the routine use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials; however, should such activities occur within the project area, existing regulations would govern them, including without limitation those set forth by RCRA, which provides the "cradle to the grave" regulation of hazardous wastes. See also Section 5.8, <i>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</i> .
Policy 1.14: Limit driveway access to arterials streets to maintain a desired quality of arterial traffic flow.	Consistent. The proposed project includes a total of five driveways; three on Avenida Manuel Salinas, one off of Civic Center Drive, and one off of Norwalk Boulevard. All driveways would generally be in the same location as existing driveways. The only new driveway introduced by the proposed project would be the driveway on Norwalk Boulevard, which is needed to provide vehicular site access to parking within the mixed-use building on the northwest corner of the project site.
Transportation System/Demand Management	
Goal 3. A circulation system that maximizes efficiency through the use of transportation system management and demand management strategies.	Consistent. The proposed project maximizes efficiency by promoting a multimodal transportation network through Mitigation Measure TRA-1, which requires a transportation demand management measures that enhance multimodal access. With the incorporation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1, impacts related to transportation would be less than significant. The project site has existing sidewalks along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard (which could be widened) and the project would provide, publicly accessible open space through the project site, and bicycle parking facilities. These features support and encourage active transportation, such as walking and bicycling, and would further this goal, Transportation-related impacts, including

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Table 5.10-2 Consistency with General Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis
	identified mitigation measures, are addressed in Section 5.15, <i>Transportation</i> .
Policy 3.1. Encourage new development which facilitates transit services, provides for non-automotive circulation, and minimizes vehicle miles traveled.	Consistent. The proposed project would develop residential and commercial land uses in the project site, which would bring employment opportunities closer to the local workforce. The proximity of existing and future housing units within the project site would reduce vehicle miles traveled by offering alternate modes of traveling (e.g., walking, bicycling, public transit) throughout the area.
Policy 3.4. Encourage the implementation of employer Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements included in the City's adopted TDM ordinance and in the Southern California Air Quality Management District's Regulation 15 Program.	Consistent. The proposed project includes Mitigation Measure TRA-1, which would require the preparation of a TDM program consistent with the City's ordinance. With the incorporation of TRA-1, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact to vehicle miles traveled. Refer to Section 5.15, <i>Transportation</i> .
Public Transportation	
Goal 4. An efficient public transportation system that provides mobility to all City residents, employees, and visitors.	Consistent. Implementation of the proposed project would include up to 350 multi-family residential units, 110,000 square feet of commercial uses, and open space within the project site, which is located approximately 0.61 miles west of the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center, and approximately 1.7 miles east of the Norwalk Los Angeles County Metro Station. Local bus service is provided along Imperial Highway via the NTS Route 4 and along Norwalk Boulevard via NTS Routes 1, 2, and 3 and Los Angeles County Metro Route 62. The nearest bus stop along Imperial Highway is located along the northern boundary of the project site, and the nearest bus stop along Norwalk Boulevard is at the southwest corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard. Additionally, the proposed project's mixed-use nature would reduce the need for vehicle use and promote walkability and transit use.
Policy 4.3. Promote new development that is designed in a manner which (1) facilitates provision or expansion of transit service, (2) provides on-site commercial and recreational facilities to discourage mid-day travel and (3) provides non-automobile circulation within the development.	
Policy 4.4. Encourage developers to work with agencies providing transit service with the objective of maximizing the potential for transit use by residents and/or visitors.	
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	
Goal 5. An efficient bicycle and pedestrian circulation system that encourages these alternative forms of transportation.	Consistent: Pedestrian circulation would be incorporated throughout the development to promote interactive use among the project uses and provide connectivity to nearby civic, commercial and entertainment uses and transit facilities. Additionally, the proposed project would give adequate bicycle parking encouraging the use of alternative forms of transportation.
Policy 5.5. Encourage the provision of showers, changing rooms and an accessible and secure area for bicycle storage at all new and existing developments and public places.	
Policy 5.6. Require developers, whenever feasible, to provide facilities for pedestrian travel such as sidewalks and to design developments to provide pedestrian access to the development on sidewalks and not require that pedestrians use driveways to access the development.	
Parking	
Goal 7. Well-designed and convenient parking facilities.	Consistent. Parking for the proposed project would include a mix of new on-site parking and the use of the parking structure on site. The parking structure would function as a joint-use for the project's commercial uses, City and other nearby civic uses, and for the other commercial uses to the south. The new on-site parking combined with available parking in the parking structure would provide adequate
Policy 7.1. Provide sufficient on- and off-street parking.	
Policy 7.3. Consolidate parking, where appropriate, to eliminate the number of ingress and egress points onto arterials. Encourage the use of right-turn-in, right-turn-out type of driveways to reduce crossing conflicts on the arterials.	

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<p>Policy 7.4. Encourage the use of shared parking facilities among different land uses, by means of parking districts or other mechanisms. Shared parking is defined as parking spaces that can be used to serve two or more individual developments without conflict or encroachment (based on the time-differing nature of individual peaks). Experience indicates that the prudent and careful combining of uses result in a parking demand that is less than the demand generated by separate freestanding developments of similar size and character.</p>	<p>parking to accommodate the project uses. The proposed specific plan also allows for the expansion of the existing parking structure if needed to serve the project site and/or other uses in the civic/entertainment district area. Therefore, the proposed project would include adequate on-site parking and encourage the joint use of existing private parking facilities for public use. Off-Street parking would be consolidated in the new mixed-use buildings and the parking structure. It is conveniently located for all uses on the project site and the larger entertainment center/civic center area.</p>
HOUSING ELEMENT	
<p>Goal. Provide a variety of rental and homeownership housing opportunities for all income groups of the City.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would allow for the development of up to 350 multi-family residential rental units within the project site. The proposed project would reserve a minimum of 15 percent of its dwelling units as affordable units. Therefore, the proposed project contributes to various housing options in the City.</p>
<p>Policy. Encourage through specific plans, planned unit developments, density bonuses and other incentives the construction of new housing on vacant and underutilized sites.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would include the implementation of a specific plan for the project site and would realize redevelopment of the project site as identified in the City's Economic Development Opportunities Plan, which outlines a vision for this strategic area to include entertainment, hotel, and restaurant uses that can accommodate supporting retail, theater, service, hospitality, and other office uses. The project would provide up to 350 new rental housing units, including affordable units, without displacing any existing housing. It would activate the site to create unique, quality opportunities for gathering, recreation, and community building.</p>
<p>Goal. Attain a housing market where all families can find adequate housing within their financial means.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would add up to 350 new residential rental units, including a minimum of 15 percent of those units reserved as affordable housing, thereby helping families attain housing within their financial means and offering a mix of new housing options without displacing existing housing. The proposed project would support local, state, and federal goals to provide residents with a decent home and suitable living environment and conserve and improve the existing stock of affordable housing in the City of Norwalk.</p>
<p>Goal. Achieve an assisted housing supply that provides a full range of affordable ownership and rental housing opportunities.</p>	
<p>Policy. Support the Federal and State goal of a decent home and suitable living environment for all of Norwalk's residents.</p>	
<p>Policy. Assist in the provision of housing affordable to extremely low, very low, low and moderate-income households through actions of the City and Norwalk Housing Authority.</p>	
<p>Goal. Conserve and improve the existing stock of affordable housing</p>	
<p>Goal. Preserve the existing supply of affordable housing that is financially assisted by the City, County, State and/or Federal governments.</p>	<p>Consistent. The Proposed Project would provide a variety of housing types available to a diverse range of residents, including a minimum of 15 percent affordable. It would comply with all applicable fair housing laws.</p>
<p>Goal. Attain a housing market with "fair housing choice" meaning that individuals and families have the information, options, and protection to live where they choose without unlawful discrimination and other barriers related to race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, or handicap.</p>	
<p>Policy. Ensure that persons living in Norwalk are not discriminated on the basis of race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, or other bases protected by State and Federal fair housing laws.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project's design would meet the requirements outlined in the California Green Building Standards Code</p>
<p>Goal. Achieve energy conservation during the 2013-2021 planning period.</p>	

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Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis	
Policy. Educate residents, businesses, visitors and governments to reduce energy use and conserve energy.	(CalGreen), as codified in Part 11 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), encouraging energy conservation. The proposed project would install solar panels.	
CONSERVATION ELEMENT		
Goal. To protect natural resources from contamination.	Consistent. Building and site design would integrate sustainable practices that conserve energy and water resources, reduce waste, and reduce the effects of urban heat gain. As described in Sections 5.2, <i>Air Quality</i> , 5.3, <i>Biological Resources</i> , 5.6, <i>Geology and Soils</i> , 5.7, <i>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</i> , 5.8, <i>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</i> , and 5.9, <i>Hydrology and Water Quality</i> , of this DEIR, implementation of the proposed project would implement regulatory requirements, including compliance with the California Green Building Standards Code, and if necessary, project-specific mitigation measures to reduce any potential impacts. Dependent on the ultimate design and layout of buildings constructed under the specific plan, the proposed project could result in the removal of up to 160 trees within the project site. As discussed in Section 5.3, <i>Biological Resources</i> , the proposed project would comply with the Norwalk Tree Ordinance as it applies to any street trees and street shrubs, as defined in the ordinance, that may be located on or adjacent to the project site, including by obtaining any required approval from the City Director prior to removal, and by providing guards and protectors sufficient to prevent injury from project construction to any street trees and street shrubs that are not authorized for removal. Therefore, the proposed project would protect natural resources, reduce pollution, and apply mitigation measures and regulatory requirements to mitigate any impacts, as applicable and feasible.	
Goal. To provide adequate mitigation to ensure that development or any land use activity will not be harmful to the environment.		
Objective. To encourage efforts to reduce pollution.		
Policy. Cooperate with Federal, State and regional agencies in efforts to reduce pollution.		
Policy. Implement provisions of the State of California Environmental Quality Act.	Consistent. The project applicant shall prepare and submit a standard urban stormwater mitigation plan (SUSMP), including the applicable LID requirements outlined in the MS4 permit and Low Impact Development Standards Manual. The site shall be designed to control pollutants, pollutant loads, and runoff volume as feasible, including runoff from impervious surfaces. See also Section 5.9, <i>Hydrology and Water Quality</i> .	
Policy. Promote public awareness of water pollution and means of prevention.		
Policy. Encourage the use of alternative energy sources, such as solar power.		Consistent. The proposed project would include the installation of solar panels.
Policy. Encourage the use of drought-tolerant plant materials in compliance with the State of California Water Conservation in Landscaping Act.		Consistent. The proposed development would include all State mandated water-saving features. Additionally, landscape designs within the proposed project would emphasize water-efficient or drought-tolerant plants.
Policy. Minimize the amount of paved surfaces in new development to reduce the "urban heat island" effect, where temperatures in urban areas are increased due to reflection of heat.	Consistent. The proposed project's building and site design would strive to integrate sustainable practices that conserve energy and water resources and reduce waste. The proposed project would also incorporate landscaped areas throughout the project site, which helps reduce the effects of urban heat gain.	
OPEN SPACE ELEMENT		
Goal. To ensure that open space land for recreation purposes is provided in adequate quantities and within reasonable proximity to meet the needs of the citizens of Norwalk.	Consistent. The proposed project would include both private residential open space and publicly accessible open space that would provide opportunities for recreation.	
Goal. To ensure the planned development of the City's recreational facilities.		

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Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis
Recreational Programs	
Objective. To provide programs and facilities to meet the varied needs of residents of the City of Norwalk, including the elderly and handicapped.	Consistent. In addition to private residential open space, the proposed project would include publicly accessible open space that would be privately operated and maintained. These landscaped areas would be open-air, including both lawn and hardscape gathering spaces, and may include fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, booths, outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements. Portions of the landscaped areas would accommodate events and programming such as farmer’s markets, community bingo, yoga, back school, and job fairs, among others.
Policy. Encourage development of facilities and programs for indoor and outdoor activities to meet unique neighborhood needs.	
Park Design, Landscaping, and Maintenance	
Objective. To provide parks and recreational facilities which are designed, landscaped, and maintained to provide a high-quality recreational experience.	Consistent. In addition to the residential open space discussed above, the proposed project would include publicly accessible open space that would be privately operated and maintained, including a central landscaped corridor in a north-south configuration through the middle of the project site. These publicly accessible open space areas would be open-air, with lawn and hardscape gathering spaces, and may include fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, booths, outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements. Portions of the landscaped areas would accommodate events and programming such as farmer’s markets, community bingo, yoga, back to school, and job fairs, among others.
Policy. Ensure that new park and recreation facilities are designed to meet City standards.	
Policy. Develop or upgrade park facilities to meet the American Disability Act (ADA) requirements.	Consistent. The proposed project would not provide public park uses but would provide publicly accessible open space that would comply with all applicable ADA regulations and requirements.
Park Safety, Accessibility, and Compatibility	
Objective. To provide parks that are accessible and safe for users and compatible with neighboring uses.	Consistent. The proposed project would not provide public park uses but would include passive and active publicly accessible open space and landscaping that would be privately operated and maintained, which could be used as gathering spaces and accommodate events and programs for the surrounding community, including future residents and visitors of the proposed project. Pedestrian circulation shall be incorporated throughout the development to promote interactive use of project elements and connect to the surrounding civic, commercial and entertainment uses. The proposed project would provide outdoor lighting typical of mixed-use development and similar to existing lighting onsite and in the project site area.
Policy. Encourage the design of parks including activity buildings, outdoor facilities, people-gathering areas, lighting, parking areas, and other elements so that they do not adversely affect adjacent uses.	
Policy. Develop park facilities within convenient walking distance of residents.	
Policy. Encourage integration of parks and open space into new residential neighborhoods.	
Policy. Encourage parks which are located, oriented, and designed in such a way as to facilitate security, policing, and maintenance.	
Policy. Expand the permanent supply of usable recreational open space by obtaining new land area, or requiring new developments, such as residential subdivisions, to provide adequate on-site recreational facilities.	Additionally, the buildout of the proposed project would be required to comply with the development standards and design guidelines outlined in its specific plan. In compliance with existing state regulations and the proposed project’s design requirements for outdoor lighting and building materials, the operation of the proposed project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare.
Policy. Develop or upgrade park facilities to meet the American Disability Act (ADA) requirements.	Consistent. The proposed project would not provide public park facilities but would comply with all applicable ADA regulations and requirements.

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Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis
Financing	
<p>Objective. To provide means by which the costs of park and recreation facilities and programs are borne by those who benefit and contribute to additional demands.</p>	<p>Consistent. In addition to the residential open space discussed above, the proposed project would include publicly accessible open space that would be open-air, with lawn and hardscape gathering spaces, and may include fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, booths, outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements. Portions of the landscaped areas would accommodate events and programming such as farmer’s markets, community bingo, yoga, back to school, and job fairs, among others. The proposed project’s demands for park space would be partially offset by providing open space and recreational uses on-site. In addition to the onsite recreational facilities for residents and publicly accessible landscaped areas, the proposed project would contribute property and sales taxes to the City to fund recreational and park facilities in the City. Since the proposed project is not a subdivision, the park and recreational dedication fees in NMC Section 16.03.090 do not apply.</p>
<p>Policy. Require that developers contribute to provide parks and recreational facilities to off-set additional demands brought about by new development, including use of Quimby Act, Parkland, Park, and Recreation Dedication and Fees.</p>	
<p>Policy. Promote the provision of private open space and recreation facilities in largescale residential developments in order to meet the open space and recreation needs that will be generated by the development.</p>	
<p>Policy. Encourage the inclusion of private outdoor and indoor recreation facilities in large commercial/industrial projects as a benefit for employees and as a means of reducing demand on public facilities.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would include publicly accessible open space and residential open space throughout the project site. Implementing the residential open space and publicly accessible open space would provide recreational opportunities to the residents of the proposed project and reduce demand for public facilities in the surrounding areas.</p>
Private and Group Open Space	
<p>Objective. To establish quality residential neighborhoods and commercial environments through the provision of adequate private and group open space.</p>	<p>Consistent. the proposed project would include residential and publicly open space throughout the project site. The proposed landscaped areas would provide adequate open space for residents and visitors of the proposed project and meet the needs of all on-site users.</p>
<p>Policy. Usable private and group open space should be provided in adequate amounts and locations to meet the needs of all on-site users.</p>	
<p>Policy. Suitable amenities should be provided within private and group open space areas to encourage their use.</p>	
NOISE ELEMENT	
<p>Goal. To ensure that all areas of the City are free from excessive noise.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would be designed to minimize adverse noise impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and sensitive uses. With the incorporation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1 and NOI-2, noise impacts would be less than significant. Noise-related impacts are addressed in Section 5.11, <i>Noise</i>.</p>
<p>Goal. To reduce the number of people exposed to excessive noise and minimize the future effect of noise in the City.</p>	
<p>Goal. To ensure that land uses are compatible with existing and future noise levels.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would comply with applicable federal, state, and local noise regulations to control noise pollution. With the incorporation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1 and NOI-2, noise impacts would be less than significant. Noise-related impacts are addressed in Section 5.11, <i>Noise</i>.</p>
<p>Objective. To have noise levels in all areas of the City meet the minimum standards of land use compatibility established in the Noise Element, especially adjacent to noise sensitive uses.</p>	
<p>Policy. Encourage compliance with state and federal legislation designed to abate and control noise pollution.</p>	
<p>Policy. Encourage the use of acoustical materials in a new residential and community development where noise levels exceed the compatibility standards of the Noise Element.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would be developed with quality materials to minimize acoustical impacts and comply with applicable regulations. The noise-related analysis is provided in Section 5.11, <i>Noise</i>.</p>

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<p>Policy. Ensure that proposed noise sources are reduced below a level of significance and properly muffled to prevent noise impacts on neighboring properties.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would be designed to minimize adverse noise impacts to surrounding neighborhoods and sensitive uses. Noise-related impacts are addressed in Section 5.11, <i>Noise</i>.</p>
SAFETY ELEMENT	
<p>Goal. To reduce the City's loss of life, injury, and economic, social and environmental losses.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would increase the population at the project site and could increase emergency calls and calls for service, which may increase the average response time from LACFD and LASD without reciprocal additions to staff and facilities. However, the proposed project would construct residential units, and commercial uses will contribute to the City's property and sales taxes, which are used to fund the fire and police protection services. The proposed project would provide for the organization of City Hall and the new residential and commercial uses around a central landscaped area, providing for visibility and accessibility that serve to minimize opportunities for crime. Additionally, the inclusion of residential uses would also offer increased "eyes on the street" to help deter crime. Therefore, the proposed project would ensure emergency services' availability and effective response. See also Section 5.13, <i>Public Services</i>.</p>
<p>Goal. To ensure the availability and effective response of emergency services.</p>	
Safety from Natural and Man-Made Hazards	
<p>Policy. Adopt and maintain high standards for seismic performance of buildings through prompt adoption and careful enforcement of appropriate building codes for seismic design.</p>	<p>Consistent. All future development within the project site will comply with applicable seismic requirements of the CBC and Title 24 CCR criteria for seismic safety. Additionally, the proposed project will comply with applicable NMC and CBC standards regulating grading and building construction for seismic safety. As further discussed in Section 5.16, <i>Geology and Soils</i>, a preliminary geotechnical analysis was prepared for the proposed project. The proposed project would be required to comply with regulatory requirements, such as CBC, which would include the recommendations outlined in the geotechnical evaluation. Therefore, buildout of the proposed project would meet the standards for seismic performance and requirements. See also Section 5.16, <i>Geology and Soils</i>.</p>
<p>Policy. Consider seismic requirements when determining the location and design of critical, sensitive and high-occupancy facilities.</p>	
<p>Policy. New development and other land use entitlements should be reviewed by emergency response agencies to ensure that public safety can be adequately provided.</p>	<p>Consistent. The LACFD and LASD are responsible for fire and public safety responses. Both service providers would review all building permit applications to ensure adequate access in an emergency.</p>
COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT	
<p>Goal. The City of Norwalk will be recognized as a place of visual order and exceptional quality in design.</p>	<p>Consistent. Development standards and design standards in the proposed specific plan would ensure a high-quality design that complements City Hall and surrounding land uses, which would promote a positive image of the City and maintain visual order. Development consistent with the proposed project would provide for a harmonious architectural design with high-quality materials that are visually consistent across the project site and with surrounding uses. The proposed project would also include pedestrian walkways and publicly accessible open space throughout the site that would connect with public rights-of-way, providing visual cohesion with the surrounding urban environment. The proposed project consists of a set of development and design standards that would guide outdoor space standards, landscape design, site design, architectural design character, and streetscape/street furniture that would ensure that the build-out of the proposed project is aesthetically pleasing.</p>
<p>Policy. New residential, commercial, industrial, and public facility and right-of-way developments should be reviewed to determine consistency and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood, district, and the overall community.</p>	

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EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT	
<p>Goal. To provide a comprehensive approach to historic preservation and adaptive reuse of buildings.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would allow for the construction of new mixed-use buildings on the City Hall lawn and existing surface parking lot while retaining and respecting the current City Hall building, which appears to be an eligible historical resource.</p>
<p>Goal. To maintain and enhance cultural facilities, programs, and services.</p> <p>Objective. To encourage cultural and social diversity and the preservation of the cultural heritage of the City of Norwalk.</p>	<p>Consistent. City Hall is an eligible historic resource. The project site includes a monument sign on the northeast corner of the project site, near the intersection of Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway, and two memorials (one, a tribute to a Norwalk emergency professional, on the northeast side of the project site and one, known as the Freedom Memorials, in the surface parking lot near the entrance to City Hall). In addition, the project site includes an underground time capsule just north of City Hall and a plaque to Manuel Salinas on the west side of the project site. The City Hall building will be maintained and integrated into the design of the proposed project. The historic/cultural memorials, time capsule, and plaque would also be retained within the project site.</p>
<p>Policy. Coordinate with the La Mirada-Norwalk Unified School District, Little Lake Unified School District, Whittier Union High School, and ABC Unified School District to ensure that quality educational services and facilities are provided for the children of Norwalk residents.</p>	<p>Consistent. As discussed in Section 5.13, <i>Public Services</i>, based on information provided by the Norwalk-La Mirada Norwalk School District, the proposed project would result in the addition of 288 new kindergarten to 12th grade students, including 132 new elementary school students, 67 new middle school students, and 89 new high school students. However, existing schools within the Norwalk-La Mirada School District and near the project site have sufficient capacity to serve the proposed project; thus the proposed project would not result in the need for additional schools or modifications to existing schools. The proposed project would pay all applicable school fees.</p>
<p>Policy. Develop and maintain the appropriate environment to preserve historically or culturally important buildings, structures, sites, or neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Consistent. The existing City Hall building would be retained and not modified by the proposed project. Additionally, as described above, the proposed project would retain the existing monuments/memorials located on the project site. The proposed project would be designed to be visually consistent with its surroundings and City Hall onsite. Refer to Section 5.4, <i>Cultural Resources</i>.</p>
<p>Policy. Foster public appreciation for the beauty and culture of the City and the accomplishments of its past reflected through its buildings, structures, sites, areas, neighborhoods and ethnic diversity.</p>	
UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT	
<p>Goal. To maintain an adequate level of service in utility systems to support present and future community needs.</p>	<p>Consistent. As discussed in Section 5.17, <i>Utilities and Service Systems</i>, water, natural gas, and electricity facilities would adequately serve the proposed project.</p>
Placement, Maintenance, and Phasing of Infrastructure	
<p>Objective. To provide street and pedestrian lighting in the City of Norwalk to contribute to the safety of its citizens.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would provide outdoor lighting typical of mixed-use development and landscaped areas. The proposed project's lighting would be similar to existing urban lighting in the project area. The proposed project would include the creative use of lighting equipment to enhance the appearance of nighttime views, as described in the specific plan. Future development will require security lighting along walkways, parking areas, and internal roadways. Therefore, the proposed project would include streets and pedestrian lighting to contribute to the safety of all residents and visitors.</p>
<p>Policy. Promote adequate illumination of all streets, alleys, public areas, and areas which are deficient, and maintain lighting fixtures in good working condition.</p>	
<p>Policy. Encourage infrastructure improvements to be designed to complement the area in which they are located and sited so that they do not adversely impact existing structures.</p>	

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<p>Policy. Continue to plan for and coordinate the implementation of infrastructure requirements to meet development demands.</p>	<p>Consistent. Water, natural gas, and electricity facilities, thereby implementing infrastructure requirements to meet development demands.</p>
Sewer	
<p>Objective. To provide adequate sewer systems to efficiently serve existing and future needs in Norwalk.</p>	<p>Consistent. As discussed in Section 5.17, <i>Utilities and Service Systems</i>, all utility connections, including sewer connections, within the project site would be appropriately sized and relocated underground.</p>
<p>Policy. Expand sewer collection systems to accommodate the needs of existing and planned development.</p>	
<p>Policy. Provide maintenance of the sewer systems in a manner that will ensure proper service to existing and new developments.</p>	
<p>Policy. Promote water conservation practices to reduce the sewage flows from existing and future developments.</p>	<p>Consistent. Compliance with regulatory requirements that promote water conservation, including the provisions of CalGreen and Section 17.03.020 (Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance) of the NMC, which closely follows the standards set by the State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, as well as the implementation of water-saving strategies, will assist in assuring that adequate water supply is available.</p>
Water Supply	
<p>Objective. To provide adequate water supply and delivery systems to meet the demands of new and existing development.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project's development would increase the long-term water demand associated with consumption, operational uses, maintenance, and other on-site activities. As detailed in Section 5.17, <i>Utilities and Service Systems</i>, there is sufficient water to serve the project. All utility connections within the project site, including water, would be appropriately sized.</p>
<p>Policy. Maintain water distribution systems to ensure proper service to existing and new developments.</p>	
<p>Policy. Promote water conservation in both City operations and in private development to minimize the need for the development of new water sources and facilities.</p>	<p>Consistent. Compliance with regulatory requirements that promote water conservation, such as Golden State Water Company's (GSWC) Water Shortage Contingency Plan, the requirements of CalGreen, and Section 17.03.020 (Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance) of the NMC which closely follows the standards set by the State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, as well as the implementation of other water-saving strategies, will assist in assuring that adequate water supply is available.</p>
<p>Policy. Ensure the provision of adequate fire flow rates in all new development.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project would comply with City requirements regarding infrastructure improvements needed to meet respective water demands, fire flow, and pressure requirements. LACFD would review final development plans and, along with the City, would conduct ongoing evaluations to ensure facilities are adequate.</p>
Reclaimed Water	
<p>Objective. To provide adequate reclaimed water supply and delivery systems to meet new and existing needs.</p>	<p>Consistent. The proposed project's development will increase the long-term water demand associated with consumption, operational uses, maintenance, and other on-site activities. The Los Coyotes Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) would provide recycled water to the projects site to be used for landscape irrigation. As detailed in Section 5.17, <i>Utilities and Service Systems</i>, there is sufficient water to serve the project.</p>
<p>Policy. Encourage the use of reclaimed water for commercial uses such as nurseries, industrial operations and landscaping.</p>	
Storm Drainage	
<p>Objective. To provide adequate storm drainage and flood control infrastructure to efficiently serve existing and future Norwalk residents.</p>	<p>Consistent. As discussed in Section 5.17, <i>Utilities and Service Systems</i>, and Section 5.9, <i>Hydrology and Water Quality</i>, the proposed project would integrate LID requirements that would control runoff leaving the site. Onsite stormwater features would ensure adequate</p>

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	stormwater control and drainage onsite. Therefore, the proposed project would comply with this policy.
<p>Objective. To reduce storm water pollution.</p> <p>Policy. Work with the appropriate State and County agencies to reduce water pollution from storm water.</p>	<p>Consistent. The project applicant shall prepare and submit a standard urban stormwater mitigation plan (SUSMP), which shall include the applicable LID requirements set forth in MS4 permit and Low Impact Development Standards Manual. The site shall be designed to control pollutants, pollutant loads, and runoff volume to the extent feasible by including pervious surface areas and controlling runoff from impervious surfaces through best management practices. Additionally, the proposed project would comply with all state, county, and local regulations regarding stormwater runoff during the operational phase.</p>
Natural Gas	
<p>Objective. To ensure adequate natural gas service to meet present and future needs of the City.</p>	<p>Consistent. The forecast net increase in natural gas demands due to buildout under the proposed project is well within SoCalGas' forecasts of natural gas supplies, and therefore, would not require the City to obtain new or expanded natural gas supplies. See also Section 5.5, <i>Energy</i>.</p>
<p>Policy. Coordinate with The Gas Company in upgrading or adding gas service lines to serve present and future needs of Norwalk.</p>	<p>Consistent. As discussed in Section 5.17, <i>Utilities and Service Systems</i>, all utility connections, including gas connections, within the project site would be appropriately sized to meet the needs of the project.</p>
<p>Policy. Encourage energy conservation in both public and private buildings.</p>	<p>Consistent. The design of the proposed project would meet requirements set forth in the California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen), as codified in Part 11 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). Therefore, the proposed project would encourage energy conservation.</p>
Electricity	
<p>Objective. To ensure adequate electricity service to meet present and future needs of Norwalk.</p>	<p>Consistent. As discussed in Section 5.17, <i>Utilities and Service Systems</i>, all utility connections, including electrical services, within the project site would be appropriately sized to meet the needs of the project.</p>
<p>Policy. Coordinate with Southern California Edison in upgrading and adding electrical service to serve present and future needs of Norwalk.</p>	
<p>Policy. Encourage energy conservation in both public and private buildings.</p>	<p>Consistent. The design of the proposed project would meet requirements set forth in the California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen), as codified in Part 11 of Title 24 of the CCR. Therefore, the proposed project would encourage energy conservation within all public and private buildings.</p>
Solid Waste Management	
<p>Objective. To provide for the safe and efficient disposal of solid waste.</p>	<p>Consistent. The City is served by four landfills, with a residual daily capacity of 12,130 tons per day (or 24.3 million pounds per day). The estimated 6,035 ppd, generated by uses permitted and developed pursuant to the specific plan would be adequately served by these landfills. Additionally, the proposed project would abide by the requirements of AB 939, which required every California city and county to divert 50 percent of its waste from landfills by the year 2000; and SB 1383 which establishes targets to achieve a 50 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. Therefore, sufficient landfill capacity is available in the region for the estimated solid waste generated by the proposed project See also Section 5.17, <i>Utilities and Service Systems</i>.</p>

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Table 5.10-2 Consistency with General Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Relevant Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Compliance Analysis
Objective. To protect the citizens and environment of Norwalk by controlling and limiting toxic waste generation in the City.	Consistent. Construction wastes associated with the proposed project would result in solid wastes associated primarily with grading and grubbing activities and the removal of organic and other materials potentially deleterious to soil compaction. Additionally, the construction of the proposed project would result in the generation of construction wastes. The proposed project would be constructed in accordance with the City's Green Building Standards Code which requires a minimum of 65 percent of the non-hazardous construction and demolition debris (by weight or volume) to be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse. Furthermore, the requirements of NMC Chapter 8.48, Solid Waste Handling and Recycling Services, would be implemented including the preparation of waste management plans for construction activities.
Policy. Comply with the provisions of AB 939 to reduce solid waste.	Consistent. AB 939 requires cities and counties to divert 50 percent of its waste from landfills by such means as recycling, source reduction, and composting. Solid waste diversion in Norwalk is consistent with AB 939. Target disposal rates for Norwalk are 4.0 pounds per day (ppd) per resident and 22.1 ppd per employee. Actual disposal rates in 2020 were 2.8 ppd per resident and 12.6 ppd per employee. The proposed project would comply with the provisions of AB 939, and would also comply with SB 1383, to reduce solid waste by implementing recycling programs, and reducing the statewide disposal of organic waste by 75 percent of the 2014 level by 2025.
Policy. Encourage public and private recycling programs.	Consistent. The development of the proposed project would comply with the requirements of AB 341, which mandates recycling for commercial and multifamily residential land uses.
Policy. Actively promote safe disposal of hazardous wastes.	Consistent. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials would ensure that all potentially hazardous materials associated with future development proposed by the project are used and handled in an appropriate manner and would minimize the potential for safety impacts.

Source: Norwalk General Plan, 1996.

NMC Consistency

The proposed project is generally consistent with the uses permitted by the project site's existing zoning designation of Institutional, because it would include uses that provide economic development opportunities as determined by the City and would generally be consistent with the development standards applicable to the Institutional zone. However, the proposed project proposes to amend the zoning for the project site to provide customized zoning that more specifically regulates development on the project site through the establishment of a new specific plan. All permitted uses, densities, setbacks, and other development standards would be established in the proposed specific plan, and all proposed development would be consistent with the proposed specific plan. Development of the proposed project would comply with the adopted specific plan and would be compatible with the existing land uses of the surrounding areas. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the NMC, with approval of the proposed specific plan.

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SCAG 2020–2045 RTP/SCS Consistency

The proposed project is considered a project of regional significance pursuant to the criteria outlined in Section 15206(b)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines, which states “[a] proposed local general plan, element, or amendment thereof for which an EIR was prepared,” because the proposed project includes a general plan amendment.

The proposed project does not meet the criteria of a project of regional significance pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15206(b)(2). Based on CEQA Guidelines Section 15206(b)(2), a project has the potential for causing significant effects on the environment extending beyond the city or county in which the project would be located. Examples of the effects include generating significant amounts of traffic or interfering with the attainment or maintenance of state or national air quality standards. Projects subject to this subdivision include:

- (A) A proposed residential development of more than 500 dwelling units.
- (B) A proposed shopping center or business establishment employing more than 1,000 persons or encompassing more than 500,000 square feet of floor space.
- (C) A proposed commercial office building employing more than 1,000 persons or encompassing more than 250,000 square feet of floor space.
- (D) A proposed hotel/motel development of more than 500 rooms.
- (E) A proposed industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or industrial park planned to house more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or encompassing more than 650,000 square feet of floor area.

The proposed project does not meet any of these criteria. As shown in Table 5.10-3, *SCAG Connect SoCal Goals*, the proposed project is consistent with SCAG’s 2020–2045 RTP/SCS, which focuses on transit, transportation, and mobility, and the protection of the environment and health of residents.

SCAG forecasts are demographic projections based on a time horizon. As discussed in the DEIR Section 5.12, *Population and Housing*, SCAG forecasts that the City’s population would increase from 102,773 in 2020 to 107,000 by 2045, an increase of 4,227 residents, or 4.1 percent. The proposed project would develop up to 350 dwelling units. Assuming an average of 3.61 residents per dwelling unit, the proposed project would generate approximately 1,264 new residents, which would result in a total population of 104,037, an increase of 1.2 percent from the existing (2020) conditions (also see Section 5.12, *Population and Housing*). Therefore, the projected population increase would be within the projected 4.1 percent increase by 2045, and the proposed project is within the SCAG’s population growth forecast. Additionally, as discussed in Section 5.12, *Population and Housing*, the proposed project’s employment generation (441 employees) is within SCAG’s anticipated employment projections by 2045. The proposed project would not exceed the population and housing projections of the City and would not conflict with SCAG’s population growth projections. No further consistency analysis is necessary.

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Table 5.10-3 SCAG Connect SoCal Goals (2020-2045)

Relevant Goals	Compliance Analysis
Goal #1: Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness	Consistent. The proposed project would implement the City's Economic Development Opportunities Plan by revitalizing the project site with a vibrant community-focused mixed-use development that contributes to the City's economic base.
Goal #2: Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods	Consistent. The proposed project would encourage and support current and future transit use and other alternative forms of transportation while providing sufficient parking to meet the evolving needs of the proposed project and existing and future entertainment/civic uses in the area. The proposed project would locate new residential and commercial uses in the vicinity of multiple public transit facilities along a bus route and major arterials and would include pedestrian connections. The proposed project site includes sidewalks along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard (which could be widened) and the project would provide publicly accessible open space and bicycle racks onsite, which would encourage and support active forms of transportation such as bicycling and walking. As discussed in Section 5.15, <i>Transportation</i> , the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact to hazards due to geometric design and incompatible uses. For emergency access, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact with mitigation. Therefore, the proposed project would support the mobility and travel on the project site and adjacent roadways.
Goal #3: Enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not directly impact the regional transportation system. However, implementation of the proposed project would encourage transit use, by locating new residential and commercial uses in the vicinity of multiple public transit facilities and along a bus route and major arterials.
Goal #4: Increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system	Consistent. The proposed project would encourage and support current and future transit use and other alternative forms of transportation.
Goal #5: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality	Consistent. As discussed in Section 5.2, <i>Air Quality</i> , the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact to air quality with incorporation of mitigation measures. While the proposed project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact related to GHG emissions, based on a bright-line threshold of 3,000 MTCO ₂ e/yr, the proposed project would nonetheless be consistent with regulatory schemes and policies adopted to reduce GHG emissions and includes project features that would encourage alternative transportation (such as transit, bicycle and walking) that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The proposed project would develop residential and commercial land uses on the project site, which would bring employment opportunities closer to the local workforce, and provide commercial uses in an infill, urbanized environment that could facilitate the reduction of VMT. The close proximity of future housing units to commercial uses within the project site and surrounding area would reduce vehicle miles traveled by supporting and encouraging alternate modes of traveling (e.g., walking, bicycling, public transit) throughout the area, thereby reducing air quality and traffic impacts and greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the project location proximate to multiple public transit facilities and along existing bus routes would encourage public transit use. The proposed project would encourage walking and bicycling by creating a pedestrian-scale environment onsite with ground-floor commercial uses and publicly accessible open space, and by providing bicycle parking and multiple points of access for

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Table 5.10-3 SCAG Connect SoCal Goals (2020-2045)

Relevant Goals	Compliance Analysis
	pedestrians and bicyclists. The proposed project would introduce new residential and commercial uses adjacent to planned bicycle routes, would support the City's Bicycle Master Plan and would not hinder the implementation of the planned bicycle routes along Norwalk Boulevard and Civic Center Drive (see Section 5.15, <i>Transportation</i>). Further, as discussed in Section 5.15, <i>Transportation</i> , the proposed project would implement Mitigation Measure TRA-1, which would implement TDM measures to reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions associated with vehicle trips. Since the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact to air quality (with the incorporation of mitigation measures), is consistent with plans and policies designed to reduce GHG emissions, is located within an urbanized area near transit, and incorporates project features and mitigation measures that reduce vehicle trips, the proposed project would be consistent with this goal.
Goal #6: Support healthy and equitable communities	Consistent. In addition to the residential and commercial components, the proposed project would include publicly accessible open space with lawn and hardscape gathering spaces, that may include fixed or non-fixed commercial kiosks and pavilions, vendor carts, booths, outdoor furniture, ornamental plantings, hardscapes, playgrounds, splash pads, water features, event spaces, and picnic and lawn areas, or similar elements. The publicly accessible open space would offer community gathering spaces, and portions would accommodate events and programming such as farmers markets, community bingo, yoga, back to school, and job fairs, among others.
Goal #7: Adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network	Consistent. Implementation of the proposed project would develop residential and commercial land uses on the project site, which would bring employment opportunities closer to the local workforce and transit, provide bicycle racks onsite and activated publicly accessible open space, and encourage and improve the use of the region's public transportation system for residents and workers that would be generated by the proposed project.
Goal #8: Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel	Not Applicable. The proposed project would not introduce new transportation technologies that would result in more efficient travel.
Goal #9: Encourage the development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options	Consistent. Development of the proposed project would include up to 350 multi-family residential units with a mix of unit sizes and an affordable housing component within the project site, which is located approximately 0.61 miles west of the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center, and approximately 1.7 miles east of the Norwalk Los Angeles County Metro Station. Local bus service is provided along Imperial Highway via NTS Route 4 and along Norwalk Boulevard via NTS Routes 1, 2, and 3 and Los Angeles County Metro Route 62. The nearest bus stop along Imperial Highway is located along the northern boundary of the project site, and the nearest bus stop along Norwalk Boulevard is at the southwest corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard.
Goal #10: Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats	Not Applicable. The proposed project would be located within an urban area and would not affect natural and agricultural lands or habitats. Also see Section 5.3, <i>Biological Resources</i> .
Source: SCAG 2020	

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Based on the analysis above, the proposed project would be consistent with the applicable General Plan goals, objectives, and plans; the NMC; and SCAG's 2020–2045 RTP/SCS. Therefore, impacts from the proposed project would be **less than significant** with respect to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.10.4 Cumulative Impacts

A cumulative impact would be considered significant if the project, taken together with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects in the identified area, would conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations. As discussed above, the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations. In addition, the proposed project would not physically divide an existing community, nor would the proposed project conflict with any adopted land use plan, policies, or regulations. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulative land use and planning impact and the impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.10.5 References

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5.11 NOISE

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential for implementation of the proposed project to result in noise and vibration impacts at nearby noise and vibration sensitive receptors. This section discusses the fundamentals of sound; examines state and local noise guidelines, policies, and standards; characterizes existing noise levels in the project area; and evaluates potential noise and vibration impacts associated with the proposed project. Noise modeling worksheets are in Appendix K of this DEIR.

5.11.1 Environmental Setting

5.11.1.1 NOISE AND VIBRATION FUNDAMENTALS

Noise is defined as unwanted sound and is known to have several adverse effects on people, including hearing loss, speech and sleep interference, physiological responses, and annoyance. Although sound can be easily measured, the perception of noise and the physical response to sound complicate the analysis of its impact on people. People judge the relative magnitude of sound sensation in subjective terms such as “noisiness” or “loudness.” The following are brief definitions of terminology used in this section:

Technical Terminology

- **Sound.** A disturbance created by a vibrating object, which, when transmitted by pressure waves through a medium such as air, is capable of being detected by a receiving mechanism, such as the human ear or a microphone.
- **Noise.** Sound that is loud, unpleasant, unexpected, or otherwise undesirable.
- **Decibel (dB).** A unitless measure of sound on a logarithmic scale.
- **A-Weighted Decibel (dBA).** An overall frequency-weighted sound level in decibels that approximates the frequency response of the human ear.
- **Equivalent Continuous Noise Level (Leq); also called the Energy-Equivalent Noise Level.** The value of an equivalent, steady sound level which, in a stated time period (often over an hour) and at a stated location, has the same A-weighted sound energy as the time-varying sound. Thus, the Leq metric is a single numerical value that represents the equivalent amount of variable sound energy received by a receptor over the specified duration.
- **Statistical Sound Level (Ln).** The sound level that is exceeded “n” percent of time during a given sample period. For example, the L50 level is the statistical indicator of the time-varying noise signal that is exceeded 50 percent of the time (during each sampling period); that is, half of the sampling time, the changing noise levels are above this value and half of the time they are below it. This is called the “median sound level.” The L10 level, likewise, is the value that is exceeded 10 percent of the time (i.e., near the maximum) and this is often known as the “intrusive sound level.” The L90 is the sound level exceeded 90 percent of the time and is often considered the “effective background level” or “residual noise level.”

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- **Lmin and Lmax.** The lowest and highest measured noise levels, in terms of root-mean-square noise levels.
- **Day-Night Sound Level (Ldn or DNL).** The energy-average of the A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 24-hour period, with 10 dB added to the sound levels occurring during the period from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am.
- **Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL).** The energy average of the A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 24-hour period, with 5 dB added from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm and 10 dB from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am. For general community/environmental noise, CNEL and Ldn values rarely differ by more than 1 dB (with the CNEL being only slightly more restrictive, that is, higher than the Ldn value). As a matter of practice, Ldn and CNEL values are interchangeable and are treated as equivalent in this assessment.
- **Sensitive Receptor.** Noise- and vibration-sensitive receptors include land uses where quiet environments are necessary for enjoyment and public health and safety. Residences, schools, motels and hotels, libraries, religious institutions, hospitals, and nursing homes are examples.
- **Peak Particle Velocity (PPV).** The peak rate of speed at which soil particles move (e.g., inches per second) due to ground vibration.

Sound Fundamentals

Sound is a pressure wave transmitted through the air. It is described in terms of loudness or amplitude (measured in decibels), frequency or pitch (measured in Hertz [Hz] or cycles per second), and duration (measured in seconds or minutes). The standard unit of measurement of the loudness of sound is the decibel (dB). Changes of 1 to 3 dBA are detectable under quiet, controlled conditions, and changes of less than 1 dBA are usually indiscernible. A 3 dBA change in noise levels is considered the minimum change that is detectable with human hearing in outside environments. A change of 5 dBA is readily discernible to most people in outside environments, and a 10 dBA change is perceived as a doubling (or halving) of the sound.

The human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies. Sound waves below 16 Hz are not heard at all and are “felt” more as a vibration. Similarly, while people with extremely sensitive hearing can hear sounds as high as 20,000 Hz, most people cannot hear above 15,000 Hz. In all cases, hearing acuity falls off rapidly above about 10,000 Hz and below about 200 Hz. Since the human ear is not equally sensitive to sound at all frequencies, a special frequency dependent rating scale is usually used to relate noise to human sensitivity. The A-weighted decibel scale (dBA) performs this compensation by discriminating against frequencies in a manner approximating the sensitivity of the human ear.

Sound Measurement

Sound pressure is measured through the A-weighted measure to correct for the relative frequency response of the human ear. That is, an A-weighted noise level de-emphasizes low and very high frequencies similar to the human ear’s response to those frequencies.

Unlike linear units such as inches or pounds, decibels are measured on a logarithmic scale, as points on a sharply rising curve. On a logarithmic scale, an increase of 10 dBA is 10 times more intense than 1 dBA, 20 dBA is 100

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times more intense than 1 dBA, and 30 dBA is 1,000 times more intense than 1 dBA. A sound as soft as human breathing is about 10 times greater than 0 dBA. The decibel system of measuring sound gives a rough connection between the physical intensity of sound and its perceived loudness to the human ear. Ambient sounds generally range from 30 dBA (very quiet) to 100 dBA (very loud).

A sound's decibel level decreases as the distance increases from the source of the sound. Sound dissipates exponentially with distance from its source, and this phenomenon is known as "spreading loss." For a single point source, sound levels decrease by approximately 6 dBA for each doubling of distance from the source. This drop-off rate is appropriate for noise generated by on-site operations from stationary equipment or activity at a project site. If noise is produced by a line source, such as highway traffic, the sound decreases by 3 dBA for each doubling of distance in a hardscape environment, such as buildings, pavement, and other hard surfaces. Line source noise in a relatively flat environment with absorptive soft surfaces, such as vegetation, decreases by 4.5 dBA for each doubling of distance.

Time variation in noise exposure is typically expressed in terms of a steady-state energy level equal to the energy content of the time period (called L_{eq}), or alternately, as a statistical description of the sound level that is exceeded over some fraction of a given observation period. For example, L50 represents the noise level that is exceeded 50 percent of the time; that is, the noise level exceeds the L50 half the time, and is less than the L50 half the time, or, L50 is exceeded 30 minutes in an hour. Similarly, the L2, L8, and L25 values represent the noise levels that are exceeded two, eight, and 25 percent of the time or one, five, and 15 minutes per hour. These "L" values are typically used to demonstrate compliance with a city's noise ordinance, as discussed below. Other noise descriptors typically noted during a noise survey are the L_{min} and L_{max} , the lowest and highest sound levels during the measurement period (in terms of root-mean-square noise levels).

Because community receptors are more sensitive to unwanted noise intrusion during the evening and at night, an artificial dB increment is added to these "quiet time" noise levels in a 24-hour noise descriptor called the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) or Day-Night Noise Level (Ldn). The CNEL descriptor adds an artificial increment of 5 dBA to the actual noise level for the hours from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm and 10 dBA for the hours from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am. The Ldn descriptor uses the same methodology except that it only adds 10 dBA from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am. Both descriptors give roughly the same 24-hour level, with the CNEL being only slightly more restrictive (i.e., higher).

Psychological and Physiological Effects of Noise

Physical damage to human hearing begins at prolonged exposure to noise levels higher than 85 dBA. Exposure to high noise levels affects our entire system, with prolonged noise exposure in excess of 75 dBA increasing body tensions, affecting blood pressure, functions of the heart, and the nervous system. Extended periods of noise exposure above 90 dBA can result in permanent hearing damage. When the noise level reaches 120 dBA, it causes a tickling sensation the human ear called the "threshold of feeling." As the sound reaches 140 dBA, the tickling sensation is replaced by pain, called the "threshold of pain." Table 5.11-1 shows typical noise levels from familiar noise sources.

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Table 5.11-1 Typical Noise Levels

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dBA)	Common Indoor Activities
Onset of physical discomfort	120+	
	110	Rock Band (near amplification system)
Jet Flyover at 1,000 feet	100	
Gas Lawn Mower at three feet	90	
Diesel Truck at 50 feet, at 50 mph	80	Food Blender at 3 feet Garbage Disposal at 3 feet
Noisy Urban Area, Daytime	70	Vacuum Cleaner at 10 feet Normal speech at 3 feet
Commercial Area Heavy Traffic at 300 feet	60	Large Business Office Dishwasher Next Room
Quiet Urban Daytime	50	Theater, Large Conference Room (background)
Quiet Urban Nighttime	40	Library
Quiet Suburban Nighttime	30	Bedroom at Night, Concert Hall (background)
Quiet Rural Nighttime	20	Broadcast/Recording Studio
	10	
Lowest Threshold of Human Hearing	0	Lowest Threshold of Human Hearing

Source: Caltrans 2013.

Vibration Fundamentals

Vibration is an oscillating motion in the earth. Like noise, vibration is transmitted in waves, but in this case through the earth or solid objects. Unlike noise, vibration is typically of a frequency that is felt rather than heard. Vibration amplitudes can be described in terms of peak particle velocity (PPV), which is the maximum instantaneous peak of the vibration signal. PPV is appropriate for evaluating potential building damage. The units for PPV are normally inches per second (in/sec). Typically, groundborne vibration generated by human activities attenuates rapidly with distance from the source of the vibration.

5.11.1.2 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to protecting and preserving aesthetic resources and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

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Federal

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has set the goal of 65 dBA Ldn as a desirable maximum exterior standard for residential units developed under HUD funding (this level is also generally accepted within the State of California.) Although HUD does not specify acceptable interior noise levels, standard construction of residential dwellings typically provides 20 dBA or more of attenuation with the windows closed. Based on this premise, the interior Ldn should not exceed 45 dBA.

Under the authority of the Noise Control Act of 1972, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established noise emission criteria and testing methods published in Parts 201 through 205 of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations that apply to some transportation equipment (e.g., interstate rail carriers, medium trucks, and heavy trucks) and construction equipment. In 1974, the EPA issued guidance levels for the protection of public health and welfare in residential land use areas of an outdoor Ldn of 55 dBA and an indoor Ldn of 45 dBA (USEPA 1974). These guidance levels are not considered standards or regulations and were developed without consideration of technical or economic feasibility. There are no federal noise standards that directly regulate environmental noise related to the construction or operation of the proposed project.

The US Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) published its latest version of the Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual in 2018. Topics presented in the manual include procedures for predicting and assessing noise and vibration impacts of proposed transit projects for different stages of project development and different levels of analysis. Additional topics in the manual include descriptions of noise and vibration mitigation measures, construction noise and vibration, and how to present these analyses in the Federal Transit Administration's environmental documents. The guidance manual is for technical specialists who conduct the analyses, as well as project sponsor staff, Federal agency reviewers, and members of the general public who may be affected by the projects. It should be noted that this document is a guidance manual and not a regulatory requirement.

State

The State of California regulates freeway noise, sets standards for sound transmission, provides occupational noise control criteria, identifies noise standards, and provides guidance for local land use compatibility. State law requires that each county and city adopt a general plan that includes a noise element which is to be prepared according to guidelines adopted by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

General Plan Guidelines

The State of California's *General Plan Guidelines* discusses how ambient noise should influence land use and development decisions and includes a table of normally acceptable, conditionally acceptable, normally unacceptable, and clearly unacceptable uses at different noise levels, expressed in CNEL. A conditionally acceptable designation implies new construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements for each land use is made and needed noise insulation features are incorporated in the design. A normally acceptable designation indicates standard construction with no special noise reduction requirements. Local municipalities adopt these compatibility standards as part of their general plans and modify them as appropriate for their local environmental setting. The City of Norwalk has adopted

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its own land use compatibility standards in its general plan. The City's noise and land use compatibility table is shown in Table 5.11-2.

California Building Code

The California Building Code requires that interior noise levels attributable to exterior sources do not exceed 45 dBA in any habitable room (Cal. Code of Reg. Title 24, Part 2, Volume 1, Chapter 12, Section 1207.11.2). The noise metric is evaluated as either the Ldn or CNEL, consistent with the noise element of the local general plan.

The State of California's noise insulation standards for nonresidential uses are codified in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Building Standards Administrative Code, and Part 11, California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). CALGreen noise standards are applied to new or renovation construction projects in California to control interior noise levels resulting from exterior noise sources. Projects may use either the prescriptive method (Section 5.507.4.1) or the performance method (Section 5.507.4.2) to show compliance. Under the prescriptive method, a project in a noise environment of 65 dBA CNEL or higher must demonstrate transmission loss ratings for the wall and roof-ceiling assemblies and exterior windows. Under the performance method, a project must demonstrate that interior noise levels do not exceed 50 dBA Leq-one hour average [Leq(1hr)].

City of Norwalk

City of Norwalk General Plan

The Noise Element of the Norwalk General Plan provides goals, policies, and objectives to promote the health and well-being of persons living in Norwalk. The following goals, policies, and objectives are applicable to the proposed project.

Goals

- To ensure all areas of the City are free from excessive noise.
- To reduce the number of people exposed to excessive noise and minimize the future effect of noise in the City.
- To ensure that land uses are compatible with existing and future noise levels.

Objectives

- To have noise levels in all areas of the City meet the minimum standards of land use established in the Noise Element, especially adjacent to noise sensitive uses.
- To promote the reduction of noise impacts from existing transportation to a level of compatibility with adjoining land uses.

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Policies

- Encourage compliance with state and federal legislation designed to abate and control noise pollution.
- Existing noise sources that exceed the appropriate maximum standard shall be encouraged to reduce their noise level to at least the land use compatibility standards of the Noise Element.
- Discourage truck traffic from using local residential streets.
- Encourage the use of acoustical materials in a new residential and community development where noise levels exceed the compatibility standards in the Noise Element.
- Ensure that proposed noise sources are reduced below a level of significance properly muffled to prevent noise impacts on neighboring properties.

Implementation Programs

The Noise Element also provides implementation programs for the goals, objectives, and policies. Relevant implementation programs to the project include:

- Require noise study reports for new project that are not clearly compatible with the future noise level at the project site and identify necessary noise reduction measures to meet City noise standards.
- Implement the mitigation measures identified by the noise study report through imposing appropriate conditions of approval on development proposals and Building Permits.
- Condition discretionary actions for projects adjacent to any property that is designated, developed, or occupied by noise sensitive uses. The developer may be required to submit to the City a construction noise mitigation plan to the City Engineer for review and approval prior to issuance of a grading or building permit. The plan must show how the noise from construction would be mitigated through the use of such methods as: time of operation, temporary noise attenuation fences, location of construction equipment, and use of current technology and noise suppression equipment.
- Continue to enforce the City's (noise) codes, restrictions on hours of operation of construction, site maintenance equipment, trash collection and truck deliveries.
- Disseminate to the public and developers information regarding City noise regulations and programs, the adverse effects of high noise levels, and means of mitigating such levels.
- The City will act to reduce noise levels by making noise levels of equipment a consideration when making purchases.

In addition to those goals and polices, the Noise Element also includes noise and land use compatibility guidelines to be considered when siting new land uses/developments, which are shown in Table 5.11-2, *Norwalk Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines*. These noise compatibility standards establish an acceptable limit for noise exposure for various land uses in the City. New buildings and developments (not including modifications or additions to existing structures) should be reviewed to determine if the project lies in one of the following noise classifications.

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Table 5.11-2 Norwalk Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines

Land Uses	CNEL or Ldn (dBA)					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential-Low Density Single Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)
Residential- Multiple Family	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)
Transient Lodging: Hotels and Motels	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)
Playground, Neighborhood Parks	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)
Office Buildings, Businesses, Commercial and Professional	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agricultural	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)	Diagonal lines (TL-BR)

Explanatory Notes

	<p>Clearly Acceptable: Specified land use is satisfactory, based on the assumption that any buildings are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements</p>		<p>Normally Unacceptable: New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in design.</p>
	<p>Normally Acceptable: New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning, will normally suffice.</p>		<p>Clearly Unacceptable: New construction or development should generally not be undertaken. If the proposed development is intended for storage or other uses where persons will not be exposed to excessive noise levels, and a detailed analysis provides for adequate noise insulation features, the new development or construction may occur.</p>

Source: City of Norwalk General Plan Noise Element.

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City of Norwalk Municipal Code

Chapter 9, Article III, of the NMC establishes the City’s noise standards. Article III generally prohibits noise that is loud, unnecessary, or unusual, or that annoys, disturbs, injures, or endangers the comfort, repose, health, peace, or safety of others within the limits of the city.

Exterior Noise Standards

Section 9.04.120 states that unless sound-level meter readings determine the ambient noise level in a given environment to be higher, the ambient noise levels in Norwalk are presumed to be those summarized in Table 5.11-3, *Norwalk Presumed Exterior Ambient Noise Levels*. As mentioned below, ambient noise monitoring was conducted at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors during daytime hours, and levels ranged between 58.6 dBA and 79.5 dBA. No measurements were taken during the nighttime hours from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am, and therefore, this analysis defaults to the presumed nighttime ambient noise levels shown in in Table 5.11-3.

Table 5.11-3 Norwalk Presumed Exterior Ambient Noise Levels

Noise Level, dBA	Time of day	Zone
45	10:00 pm to 7:00 AM	Residential
55	7:00 am to 10:00 PM	Residential
60	Anytime	Commercial
65	Anytime	All other zones

Source: NMC Section 9.04.120.

Under section 9.04.140, Prima Facie Violation, it states that an average noise level reading that exceeds the ambient noise level at the property line of any residential land (or if a condominium or apartment house, within any adjoining apartment) by more than 5 dB is in violation of NMC noise standard.

Construction Noise

Section 9.04.150.E, Construction or Repairing of Buildings, prohibits the erection (including excavation), demolition, pile driving, hammering, alteration, construction, or repair of any building other than between the hours of 7:00 am and 6:00 pm or sunset, whichever is later. The exception to this would be for emergencies in the interest of public health and safety where a permit would be required from the Building Official or Director of Community Development.

5.11.1.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Ambient Noise Measurements

PlaceWorks conducted ambient noise monitoring at neighborhoods near the project site on March 30, 2022, through April 1, 2022 to determine a baseline noise level at different environments within the project area. Noise measurements consisted of six short-term measurements (15-minute) during peak hours of 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm; two short-term measurements (15-minute) during evening hours of 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm; and three long-term measurements (48-hours). While evening noise measurements were conducted at the nearest

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residential receptors, evening events at the project site were not observed during noise measurements. As described in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the City Hall Lawn is utilized for certain City events, organization-led events, and regularly scheduled activities that can vary in size, duration, and content but do include noise-generating activities such as amplified music, crowd noise, and generator and other equipment noise. These noise-generating events are temporary in nature and infrequent but do occur as part of the baseline condition.

The primary observed noise source at all monitoring locations is roadway traffic on adjacent major thoroughfares (Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway). Urban and residential activity (such as landscaping, dogs barking, garage doors opening and closing, car doors shutting, faint music, and conversations) and aircraft overflights also contributed to the overall noise environment. Meteorological conditions during the measurement period were favorable for outdoor sound measurements and were noted to be representative of typical conditions for the season. Generally, conditions included clear skies with temperatures varying between 68 to 72 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) and winds averaging 3 miles per hour (mph) or less. All sound level meters were equipped with a windscreen during measurements.

The long-term sound level meters (Larson Davis LxT and Larson Davis 820) used for noise monitoring satisfy the American National Standards Institute standard for Type 1 instrumentation. The long-term sound level meters were set to “slow” response and “A” weighting (dBA). The meters were calibrated before and after the monitoring period. All measurements were taken at least five feet above the ground and away from reflective surfaces. Long-term noise measurement locations are described below and shown in Figure 5.11-1, *Approximate Noise Monitoring Locations*, and results are summarized in Table 5.11-4, *Long-Term Noise Measurement Summary*.

- **Long-Term Location 1 (LT-1)** was along Imperial Highway next to Norwalk Library at 12350 Imperial Highway and approximately 20 feet south of the nearest eastbound travel lane centerline. A 48-hour noise measurement began at 2:00 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. The noise environment is characterized primarily by vehicular traffic along Imperial Highway.
- **Long-Term Location 2 (LT-2)** was along Norwalk Boulevard south of Imperial Highway and approximately 45 feet east of the nearest northbound travel lane centerline. A 48-hour noise measurement began at 3:00 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. The noise environment is characterized primarily by vehicular traffic along Norwalk Boulevard.
- **Long-Term Location 3 (LT-3)** was along Civic Center Drive in front of 12904 Goller Avenue (a residence) and approximately 35 feet south of the nearest eastbound travel lane centerline. The noise measurement meter was initially mounted at 4:00 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022, for a 48-hour noise measurement, but due to public tampering, the hours between 4:00 pm and 7:59 pm on March 30th are omitted. The logged hours are from 8:00 pm Wednesday, March 30, 2022, to 4:00 pm Friday, April 1, 2022. The noise environment is characterized primarily by vehicular traffic along Civic Center Drive.

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Table 5.11-4 Long-Term Noise Measurement Summary

Monitoring Location	Description	48-hour Noise Level, dBA		
		CNEL	Lowest Leq(1hr)	Highest Leq(1hr)
LT-1	Imperial Highway, next to 12350 Imperial Highway (Norwalk Library) 03/30/2022, 2:00 PM	79	62.7	78.6
LT-2	Norwalk Boulevard, south of Imperial Highway. 03/30/2022, 3:00 PM	73	60.4	72.9
LT-3	Civic Center Drive, in front of 12904 Goller (residence) 3/30/2021, 4:00 PM	68	51.1	71.8

Notes: For LT-3, due to public tampering, the hours between 4:00 pm and 7:59 pm on March 30th are omitted. The logged hours are from 8:00 pm Wednesday, March 30, 2022, to 4:00 pm Friday, April 1, 2022.

The short-term sound level meter (Larson Davis LxT) used for noise monitoring satisfies the American National Standards Institute standard for Type 1 instrumentation. The short-term sound level meter was set to “slow” response and “A” weighting (dBA). The meter was calibrated before and after the monitoring period. All measurements were taken at least five feet above the ground and away from reflective surfaces. Short-term measurement locations are described below and shown in Figure 5.11-1, *Approximate Noise Monitoring Locations*, and results are summarized in Table 5.11-5, *Short-Term Noise Measurements Summary*.

- **Short-Term Location 1 (ST-1)** was in front of 12249 Gettysburg Drive (a residence) and approximately 25 feet north of the nearest westbound travel lane centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement began at 5:43 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. The noise environment is characterized primarily by traffic noise from Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard. Traffic generally ranged from 69 dBA to 71 dBA from Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard.
- **Short-Term Location 2a (ST-2a)** was along Imperial Highway, next to 12535 Volunteer Avenue (a residence). The measurement location was approximately 25 feet north of the nearest westbound travel lane centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted during the peak traffic hours beginning at 5:03 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. The noise environment is characterized primarily by traffic noise from Imperial Highway. Traffic noise levels generally ranged from 65 dBA to 80 dBA except for a nearby bus stop. Bus noise levels measured up to 85 dBA.
- **Short-Term Location 2b (ST-2b)** was along Imperial Highway, next to 12535 Volunteer Avenue (a residence) and approximately 25 feet north of the nearest westbound travel lane centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted during evening hours and began at 7:54 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. The noise environment is characterized primarily by traffic noise from Imperial Highway. Traffic noise levels generally ranged from 65 dBA to 75 dBA. Bus noise levels measured up to 85 dBA.
- **Short-Term Location 3 (ST-3)** was next to 12646 Kalnor Avenue (a residence) and approximately 25 feet east of the nearest northbound travel lane centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement during the peak traffic hours began at 6:13 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. ST-3 is a low-traffic residential area, and the noise environment is characterized primarily by traffic noise from Imperial Highway. Secondary noise

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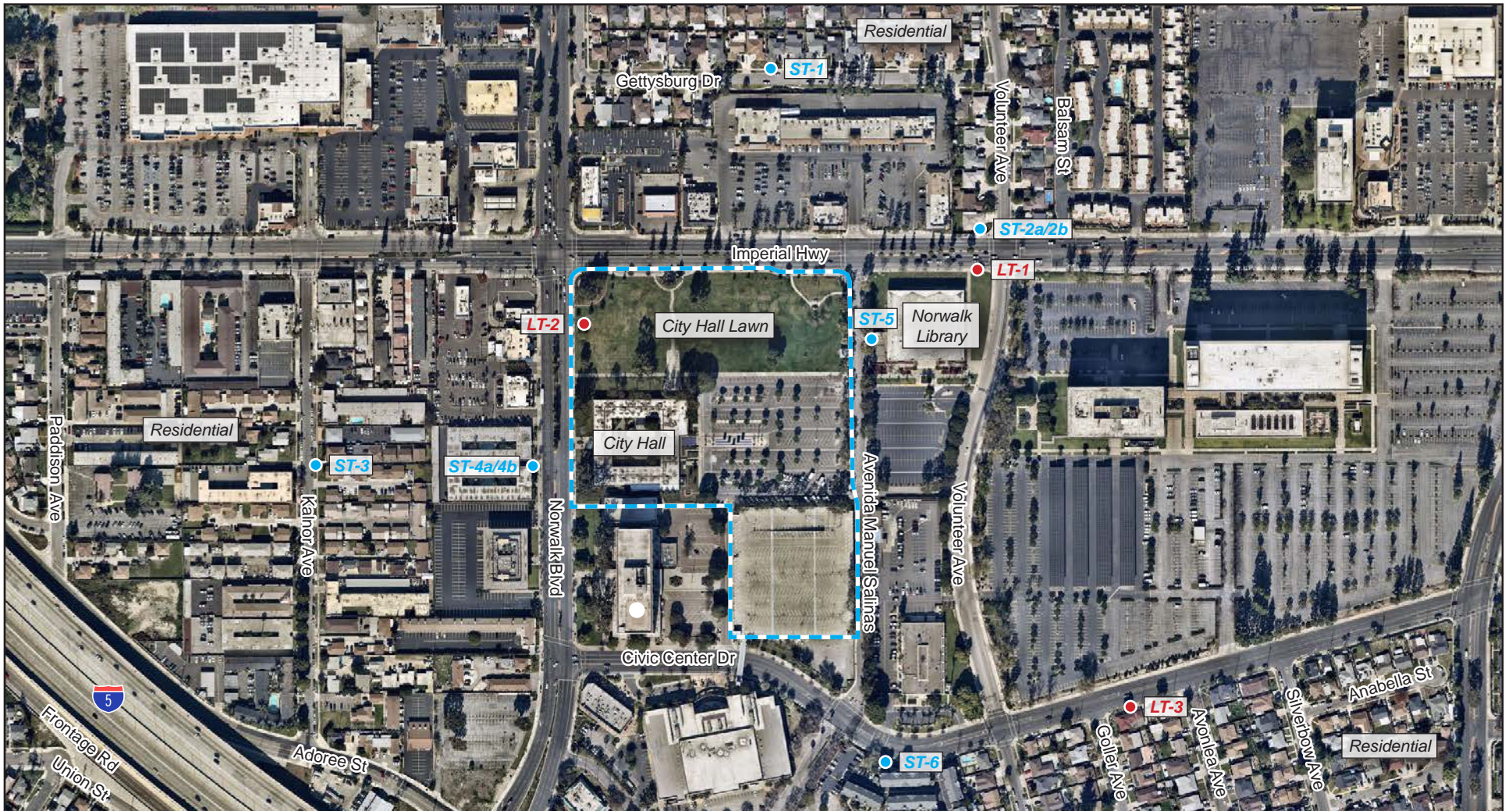
sources included residents talking, birds chirping, and garage doors opening and closing. Noise levels generally ranged from 52 dBA to 56 dBA.

- **Short-Term Location 4a (ST-4a)** was next to 12645 Norwalk Boulevard (a residence) and approximately 25 feet west of the nearest southwest bound travel lane centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement during peak traffic hours began at 4:44 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. The noise environment is characterized primarily by traffic noise from Norwalk Boulevard. Noise levels generally ranged from 55 dBA to 75 dBA.
- **Short-Term Location 4b (ST-4b)** was next to 12645 Norwalk Boulevard (a residence) and approximately 25 feet west of the nearest southwest bound travel lane centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement during evening hours began at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. The noise environment is characterized primarily by traffic noise from Norwalk Boulevard. Noise levels generally ranged between 63 dBA to 74 dBA.
- **Short-Term Location 5 (ST-5)** was along Avenida Manuel Salinas next to the Norwalk Library. A 15-minute noise measurement during the peak traffic hours began at 4:25 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. This is a low-traffic area, and the noise environment is characterized primarily by traffic from Imperial Highway. Noise levels generally ranged between 60 dBA to 70 dBA.
- **Short-Term Location 6 (ST-6)** was along Civic Center Drive, in front of 12812 Sycamore Village Drive (a residence) and approximately 25 feet south of the nearest eastbound travel lane centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted during the peak traffic hours and began at 3:40 pm on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. This noise environment is characterized primarily by traffic from Civic Center Drive. Noise levels generally ranged between 55 dBA to 70 dBA.

Table 5.11-5 Short-Term Noise Measurements Summary

Monitoring Location	Description	15-minute Noise Level, dBA						
		L _{eq}	L _{max}	L _{min}	L50	L25	L8	L2
ST-1	In front of 12249 Gettysburg Drive 03/30/2022, 5:43 pm	58.6	79.4	49.8	52.8	55.0	61.8	69.0
ST-2a	Next to 12535 Volunteer Avenue (residence) 03/30/2022, 5:03 pm	72.6	88.0	58.3	67.6	72.2	77.2	80.4
ST-2b	Next to 12535 Volunteer Avenue (residence) 03/30/2022, 7:43 pm	79.5	104	52.6	68.6	74.9	78.8	82.8
ST-3	Next to 12646 Kalnor Avenue (residence) 03/30/2022, 6:13 pm	58.6	66.7	53.5	58.1	59.0	60.7	62.6
ST-4a	Next to 12645 Norwalk Boulevard (residence) 03/30/2022, 4:44 pm	69.2	81.7	55.5	64.7	70.1	73.9	76.7
ST-4b	Next to 12645 Norwalk Boulevard (residence) 03/30/2022, 7:00 pm	68.2	80.0	55.6	64.4	69.1	73.2	75.7
ST-5	Avenida Manuel Salinas next to the Norwalk Library 03/30/2022, 4:25 pm	64.1	73.6	55.6	62.5	65.1	67.2	69.8
ST-6	Civic Center Drive, in front of 12812 Sycamore Village Drive (residence) 03/30/2022, 3:40 pm	65.6	80.4	53.6	63.0	66.3	69.7	72.4

Figure 5.11-1 - Approximate Noise Monitoring Locations



--- Project Boundary

● **ST-X** Short-Term Noise Measurement Locations (6)

ST-Xa: Conducted during peak traffic hours of 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm

● **LT-X** Long-Term Noise Measurement Locations (3)

ST-Xb: Conducted during evening hours of 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm



Source: Nearmap, 2022

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Sensitive Receptors

Certain land uses, such as residences, schools, and hospitals, are particularly sensitive to noise and vibration. Sensitive receptors include residences, senior housing, schools, places of worship, libraries, and recreational areas. These uses are regarded as sensitive because they are where citizens most frequently engage in activities which are likely to be disturbed by noise, such as reading, studying, sleeping, resting, working from home, or otherwise engaging in quiet or passive recreation. Regarding vibration specifically, historical buildings can also be considered sensitive receptors. Commercial and industrial uses are not particularly sensitive to noise but are evaluated for potential vibration impacts.

The nearest noise sensitive receptors to the project site boundary are residences approximately 330 feet to the northeast (across Imperial Highway), 350 feet south (along Civic Center Drive), and 116 feet west (along Norwalk Boulevard) and the Norwalk Library 100 feet to the east. Other sensitive uses in the vicinity of the project site include Bethesda Romanian Church 675 feet to the southwest (Figure 5.11-1).

5.11.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to noise if the project would:

- N-1 Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.
- N-2 Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.
- N-3 For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or 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, if the project would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

5.11.2.1 TRANSPORTATION NOISE THRESHOLDS

A project would have a significant effect on the environment related to noise if it substantially increases the ambient noise levels at noise sensitive receptors. As indicated previously in this Chapter, most people can detect changes in sound levels of approximately 3 dBA under normal, quiet conditions, and changes of 1 to 3 dBA under quiet, controlled conditions. Changes of less than 1 dBA are usually indiscernible. A change of 5 dBA is readily discernible to most people in an outdoor environment. Based on this, the following thresholds of significance similar to those recommended by the Federal Aviation Administration, are used to assess traffic noise impacts at sensitive receptor locations. A significant impact would occur if traffic noise increase would exceed:

- 1.5 dBA in ambient noise environments of 65 dBA CNEL and higher.
- 3 dBA in ambient noise environments of 60 to 64 dBA CNEL.
- 5 dBA in ambient noise environments of less than 60 dBA CNEL.

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5.11.2.2 CONSTRUCTION NOISE THRESHOLDS

The City of Norwalk does not have a quantified construction noise threshold. Therefore, the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) temporary construction noise criteria of 80 dBA Leq is used to determine impact significance at noise sensitive receptors.

5.11.2.3 STATIONARY NOISE THRESHOLDS

As discussed in Section 5.11.1.2, *Regulatory Background*, the NMC establishes exterior residential noise standards under Section 9.04.120. Ambient noise measurements conducted by PlaceWorks, in addition to the City's presumed ambient noise levels (Table 5.11-3, *Norwalk Presumed Exterior Ambient Noise Levels*), are used to determine impact significance for stationary noise sources (noise sources that are considered point sources which can include speech from conversations, use of patios, decks, balconies, loading docks, and permanent mechanical equipment like air conditioning units, cooling towers, generators, etc.). Section 9.04.140 of the NMC states that if the noise level exceeds the measured ambient or presumed ambient (see Table 5.11-3, whichever is higher) at the property line of any residential land by 5 dB or more, it is considered a noise violation. Therefore, a significant stationary noise impact would occur if project-related stationary noise would increase the ambient or presumed ambient by 5 dBA or more.

5.11.2.4 VIBRATION THRESHOLDS

The City of Norwalk does not have quantified vibration damage standards. The FTA criteria for vibration damage for various types of buildings are summarized in Table 5.11-6, *Groundborne Vibration Damage Criteria*, and used to determine impact significance.

Table 5.11-6 Groundborne Vibration Damage Criteria

	Building Category	PPV (in/sec)
I.	Reinforced concrete, steel, or timber (no plaster)	0.5
II.	Engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster)	0.3
III.	Non-engineered timber and masonry buildings	0.2
IV.	Buildings extremely susceptible to vibration damage	0.12

Source: FTA 2018.
PPV = peak particle velocity

5.11.3 Environmental Impacts

5.11.3.1 METHODOLOGY

This section analyzes impacts related to short-term construction noise and vibration, as well as operational noise and vibration associated with operational buildout of the proposed project. Construction is anticipated to start in June of 2023 and be completed by May of 2025. Methodologies to assess noise are described below.

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Construction Noise and Vibration

Construction noise includes two main sources: construction-related traffic (worker, vendor, and haul truck trips) and construction equipment (associated with actual construction activities on-site). Construction noise modeling is conducted using the FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model with construction equipment mix based on CalEEMod defaults and assumed pile driving and rock crushing equipment. Project vibration impacts are addressed using reference vibration levels for construction equipment published by FTA (FTA 2018).

Operational Noise and Vibration

Assessment of operational noise resulting from full buildout of the project site considers three main noise components: noise associated with increased traffic generated by the project, noise associated with stationary equipment that would be developed on the project site, and noise associated with an overall increase in activity on-site because of the new development.

Traffic noise increases are calculated using a version of the FHWA RD-77-108 Traffic Noise Prediction Model. The traffic noise prediction model takes in the following inputs: average daily traffic (ADT) volumes; vehicle mix; speeds; number of lanes; and day, evening, and night traffic splits. Model inputs associated with transportation noise were provided by Gibson Transportation Consulting, Inc. (see Appendix M). Model inputs for noise associated with stationary equipment was based on a conservative assumption of where stationary equipment could be located, and on review of the conceptual site plan stationary equipment and loading docks were assumed to be located at the edge of the proposed mixed-use buildings along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard. Noise associated with an overall increase in project activity on the site is discussed qualitatively and considered in conjunction with the modeled noise components.

5.11.3.2 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.11-1: Construction activities would result in temporary noise increases in the vicinity of the proposed project in excess of established standards. [Threshold N-1 (part)]

Construction Vehicles

The transport of workers and materials to and from the construction site would incrementally increase noise levels along main access roadways, including but not limited to I-5, Imperial Highway, and Norwalk Boulevard. Individual construction vehicle pass-bys and haul trucks may create momentary noise levels of up to 85 dBA (L_{max}) at 50 feet from the vehicle, but these occurrences would be temporary and generally short lived as trucks pass by.

Existing average daily trips along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard are between 26,461 and 47,728.¹ Based on CalEEMod outputs, the proposed project would generate up to 711 daily worker and vendor trips

¹ Existing average daily traffic provided by Gibson Transportation Consulting (see Table 5.11-8).

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during building and parking garage construction phases and up to 101 daily haul truck trips during rough grading soil haul (see Appendix B, *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data*). The addition of temporary worker and vendor trips and haul truck trips would result in a noise increase of less than 0.5 dBA CNEL along access roadways with adjacent noise sensitive receptors. Therefore, temporary construction vehicles would not generate an increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of established standards. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Construction Equipment

Noise generated during construction within the project site is based on the type of equipment used, the location of the equipment relative to sensitive receptors, and the timing and duration of the noise-generating activities. Each activity phase of construction involves the use of different construction equipment and therefore each activity phase has its own distinct noise characteristics. Noise levels from construction activities are dominated by the loudest piece of construction equipment. The dominant noise source is typically the engine, although work piece noise (such as dropping of materials) can also be noticeable.

Construction activities associated with the proposed project could require rock crushing and pile driving, which generate the highest noise levels compared to other construction activities. Grading also generates high noise levels—second to pile driving and rock crushing—because it requires large equipment. Construction noise levels can often vary at any given sensitive receptor based on factors such as noise attenuation due to distance between the noise source and receptor, the number and types of equipment in use at a given time, and the load and power requirements to accomplish tasks for each construction activity. Heavy equipment, such as a dozer or a loader, can have maximum, short-duration noise levels of 85 dBA at 50 feet. Since noise from construction equipment is intermittent and diminishes at a rate of 6 dBA per doubling distance,² the average noise levels at noise-sensitive receptors (the closest of which is the Norwalk Library approximately 100 feet to the east) would be lower, because mobile construction equipment would move around the site with different loads and power requirements.

Noise levels from project-related construction activities were calculated by combining the simultaneous use of the three loudest pieces of construction equipment during overlapping and non-overlapping construction components at spatially averaged distances (i.e., from the acoustical center of each disturbance area per phase such as grading, paving, and demolition) to the nearest receptors, with the exception of pile driving, rock crushing, and architectural coating. Although construction may occur across the entire construction area, the area around the center of most phase (e.g., grading, paving, demolition) best represents the potential average construction-related noise levels at the various sensitive receptors. Noise levels generated from pile driving, rock crushing, and architectural coating at sensitive receptors is determined by measuring the distance from the edge of the nearest proposed mixed-use building as shown in the conceptual site plan (see Figure 3-8) and the existing parking garage to off-site sensitive receptors. As seen in Table 5.11-7, *Project-Related Construction Noise*, construction noise would exceed 80 dBA Leq at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors to the east (Norwalk Library) and residences to the west during pile driving only. Therefore, impacts related to temporary noise

² The sound attenuation rate of 6 dBA is generally conservative and does not consider additional attenuation provided by existing buildings, structures, and natural landscapes around the project site.

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increases in the vicinity of the proposed project in excess of established standards would be **potentially significant**.

Table 5.11-7 Project-Related Construction Noise

Activity Phase	dBA Leq					
	RCNM Reference Noise Level	Norwalk Library to east	Residences to north/northeast	Residences to west	Residences to south	Bethesda Church to southwest
<i>Distance in feet</i>	50	370	735	630	945	1,170
Asphalt Demo ¹	87	69	63	65	61	59
Asphalt Demo and Rough Grading ¹	87	70	64	65	62	60
<i>Distance in feet</i>	50	450	695	550	1230	1,290
Site Preparation and Rough Grading	85	66	62	64	57	56
Rough and Fine Grading	85	66	62	64	57	56
<i>Distance in feet</i>	50	245	515	360	950	1,200
Building & Garage Construction overlapping Pile Driving ¹	95	81	75	78	69	67
Building & Garage Construction Post Pile Driving ¹	86	72	65	69	60	58
<i>Distance in feet</i>	50	290	545	335	920	1,245
Paving	84	68	63	67	58	56
<i>Distance in feet</i>	50	110	350	200	770	1,000
Architectural Coating	74	67	57	62	50	48
<i>Distance in feet</i>	50	110	350	200	350	815
Pile Driving Only	94	87	77	82	77	70
<i>Distance in feet</i>	50	110	350	200	350	815
Rock Crushing Only ¹	83	76	66	71	66	59
Maximum dBA Leq		87	77	82	77	70
Exceeds 80 dBA Leq Threshold?		Yes	No	Yes	No	No

Source: RCNM and CalEEMod defaults in addition to assumed pile driving and rock crushing equipment
Bold = Threshold exceedance

In addition to Mitigation Measure NOI-1 for pile driving listed below, the proposed project would incorporate the Noise Element's implementation program for construction noise because the proposed project is adjacent to noise sensitive uses (Norwalk Library). As stated in the Noise Element, for projects adjacent to any property that is designated, developed, or occupied by noise-sensitive uses, the developer may be required to submit a construction noise mitigation plan to the City Engineer for review and approval prior to issuance of a grading or building permit. The plan must show how noise from construction would be mitigated through the use of such methods as time of operation, temporary noise attenuation fences, location of construction equipment, and use of current technology and noise suppression equipment.

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Mitigation Measures:

- NOI-1 The Applicant will implement the following measures during pile driving:
- With approval of the project structural engineer, pile holes shall be predrilled to minimize the number of pile hammer blows necessary to seat the pile, where feasible.
 - Alternatives to impact hammers, such as oscillating or rotating pile installation systems, shall be used where feasible.
 - Pile drivers with the best available noise control technology, such as shrouding, shall be used. Pile driving noise control may be achieved by shrouding the pile hammer point of impact, placing resilient padding directly on top of the pile cap, and/or by reducing exhaust noise with a sound-absorbing muffler. The shrouding of pile-driving equipment would attenuate pile-driving noise levels by 10 dBA (FHWA 2016), resulting in mitigated construction noise levels of 77 dBA Leq or less.

Significance After Mitigation: With implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1, temporary construction noise levels associated with pile driving would be reduced to less than 80 dBA Leq at noise-sensitive receptors. Thus, impacts related to temporary construction noise would be reduced to **less than significant with mitigation**.

Impact 5.11-2 Project implementation would not result in long-term operation-related noise that would exceed local standards. [Threshold N-1 (part)]

The proposed project would result in the generation of operational noise related to the increase in traffic; stationary noise such as mechanical equipment, loading activity, and residential operations; and overall increase in activity on-site because of the new development.

Operational Traffic Noise

ADT provided by Gibson Transportation Consulting is used to determine project and cumulative traffic noise increase. Traffic noise increases were calculated by comparing the existing ADT segment volumes to future ADT segment volumes logarithmically for roadway segments in the project site area (Appendix K of this DEIR).³ As mentioned in Section 5.11.2, *Thresholds of Significance*, a significant traffic noise impact would occur if traffic noise increased the existing noise environment by:

- 1.5 dBA or more for ambient noise environments of 65 dBA CNEL and higher.
- 3 dBA or more for ambient noise environments of 60 to 64 dBA CNEL.
- 5 dBA or more for ambient noise environments of less than 60 dBA CNEL.

As shown in Table 5.11-8, *Project and Cumulative Traffic Noise Increases*, project-related noise increase would be up to 0.1 dBA CNEL and would not exceed the most stringent threshold of 1.5 dBA CNEL. Therefore, impacts

³ Project noise increase = $10 \cdot \log(\text{existing plus project volume} / \text{existing volume})$; Cumulative increase = $10 \cdot \log(\text{future plus project volume} / \text{existing volume})$.

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would be less than significant. Cumulative traffic noise impacts are discussed in the Section 5.11.4, *Cumulative Impacts*. The proposed project’s traffic noise would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of established standards, and a **less-than-significant** impact would occur.

Table 5.11-8 Project and Cumulative Traffic Noise Increases

Roadway Segment	Traffic Volumes (ADT)				Traffic Noise Increase (dBA CNEL)	
	Existing No Project	Existing Plus Project	Future No Project	Future Plus Project	Project Noise Increase	Cumulative Plus Project Noise Increase
Imperial Highway - Norwalk Blvd to Bloomfield Ave	45,942	45,977	47,505	47,540	0.0	0.1
Imperial Highway - Norwalk Blvd to I-5 Freeway	47,728	47,813	49,340	49,425	0.0	0.2
Norwalk Blvd - Imperial Highway to Crewe Street	24,311	24,342	25,099	25,130	0.0	0.1
Norwalk Blvd - Imperial Highway to I-5 Freeway	26,461	26,527	27,371	27,437	0.0	0.2
Avenida Manuel Salinas - Imperial Highway to Civic Center Drive	2,411	2,495	2,497	2,581	0.1	0.3
Civic Center Drive - Avenida Manuel Salinas to Norwalk Blvd	16,219	16,316	16,849	16,946	0.0	0.2
Maximum CNEL Increase					0.1	0.3
Potentially Significant?					No	No

Source: Gibson Transportation Consulting, Inc. 2022.

Mechanical Equipment and Loading Activities

The project proposes to construct mixed-use buildings which are anticipated to have heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units. For a conservative analysis, it is assumed that HVAC equipment could be installed at the edge of the two proposed buildings facing Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard. Typical HVAC noise levels are 72 dBA at a distance of 3 feet. The nearest sensitive receptors to the nearest proposed buildings are the Norwalk Library at approximately 115 feet east (across Manuel Salinas Avenue) of the project site, based on the conceptual site plan, and single-family homes approximately 365 feet northeast (across Imperial Highway) from the project site based on the conceptual site plan. At a distance of 115 feet and 365 feet, noise levels would attenuate to 40 dBA or less. This would not exceed the presumed nighttime and daytime ambient noise levels (Table 5.11-3) of 45 and 55 dBA, respectively, by 5 dBA. This level would also be below the daytime measured ambient of 64 and 73 dBA (see Table 5.11-2). Therefore, the proposed project’s noise from stationary mechanical equipment would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of established standards, and noise impacts from the proposed project’s stationary mechanical equipment would be **less than significant**.

The ground floor of the proposed mixed-use buildings would include retail and commercial uses that could include loading and unloading activities from delivery trucks. It is also assumed that delivery trucks could be equipped with transport refrigeration units (TRUs), which are noise generators. For a conservative analysis, it is assumed loading activities could occur at the nearest edge of a proposed mixed-use building along Norwalk

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Boulevard and Avenida Manuel Salinas to the nearest sensitive receptors across Norwalk Boulevard (residential) and the Norwalk Library across Avenida Manuel Salinas. It is also assumed that no loading activities would occur during the nighttime hours between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am and that loading activities would be interior to the buildings.

PlaceWorks’ empirical noise measurements for loading and unloading activities from delivery trucks with attached TRUs indicate noise levels are typically 66 dBA Leq at a distance of 20 feet for one truck. To be conservative, it is assumed that two adjacent delivery trucks could be unloading at the same time. Table 5.11-9, *Delivery Truck Loading Activity Noise*, shows the attenuated noise levels at the nearest off-site residences approximately 175 feet to the west (across Norwalk Boulevard) and library receptors 115 feet to the east (across Manuel Salinas Avenue). The loading docks adjacent to Manuel Salinas Avenue would be within the eastern building, which would provide at least a 5 dBA reduction for noise impacts to the Norwalk Library. At these distances, noise levels would attenuate to 53 dBA Leq or less, which would not exceed the City’s presumed daytime ambient noise levels of 55 dBA (see Table 5.11-3) nor the measured ambient noise levels of 68 dBA and 64 dBA. Therefore, the proposed project’s loading activities would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project that would exceed established standards, and impacts from the proposed project’s loading activities would be **less than significant**.

Table 5.11-9 Delivery Truck Loading Activity Noise

Noise Source	dBA Leq		
	Reference Measured Noise Levels	Noise Level at Off-Site Residences to West - 175 feet	Noise Level at Off-Site Norwalk Library to East - 115 feet ¹
Adjusted Reference Level for 2 Trucks at 20 feet	72	53	52
Exceeds Daytime NMC Standard of 55 dBA?		No	No
Exceeds Existing Daytime Ambient Noise Level of 68 dBA ²		No	NA
Exceeds Existing Daytime Ambient Noise Level of 64 dBA ²		NA	No

¹ Includes noise reduction of 5 dBA based on enclosure of the loading dock in the proposed mixed-use building adjacent to Manuel Salinas Avenue (see Appendix K for calculations).

² Based on the measured ambient from residences to southwest at ST-4 and ST-5 locations. ST-4b level is used for a conservative analysis as it was 1 dBA lower in the evening hours compared to peak traffic measurement period. See Table 5.11-5.

Outdoor Spaces

For purposes of analyzing noise impacts, it is assumed that the proposed project would have two main mixed-use buildings with a central, ground-floor publicly accessible open space, as shown in Figure 3-8, *Conceptual Site Plan*. The ground floor of the mixed-use buildings would have commercial and retail uses and parking. Above the ground floor would be multistory residential units with residential outdoor space (potentially including a pool or outdoor amenities for residences and guests only). The ground level would also have publicly accessible open space that would be privately operated and maintained. Outdoor community events, such as the types that already occur on the project site (see Chapter 3, *Project Description*) could continue, and smaller-scale outdoor events and programming could also occur following project buildout. The operational noise associated with these uses is discussed below.

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Private Residential Common Areas and Private Balconies/Patios

Based on the conceptual site plan, both mixed-use buildings would have residential units above ground-floor commercial uses. Residential outdoor common areas and private patios could be located on the floors above the ground-floor commercial uses and could have amenities such as barbeques and seating for residents. The residential common areas would be semi-enclosed by the additional stories of residential units that form a U-shape around the common areas, which open toward the center of the project site (see Figure 3-10a, *Conceptual Volumetrics*).

The primary noise source associated with the residential common open spaces would be conversational noise from people talking. A typical conversation between two people at a distance of three feet is 60 dBA. People would be spaced throughout the common spaces, and the conceptual building configuration would provide substantial acoustical shielding to the nearest off-site receptors. Therefore, the noise impacts from the residential use of outdoor common areas would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project that exceeds established standards, and residential noise from the use of common areas would be **less than significant**.

Residential units may also have balconies and patios; some residential balconies may face Avenida Manuel Salinas, Imperial Highway, and Norwalk Boulevard. These balconies would not be shielded by the building itself like the residential common areas. The primary noise source associated with balconies is typically conversation from residents. As mentioned above, a typical conversation between two people at a distance of three feet is 60 dBA. Based on the conceptual site plan, the nearest noise-sensitive receptors to the balconies are assumed to be approximately 110 feet to the east (Norwalk Library) and 200 feet to west (residences). At those distances noise levels would attenuate to approximately 28 dBA or less, which would be well below the existing ambient noise levels. Therefore, the use of balconies would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the proposed project that would exceed established standards, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Publicly Accessible Ground Level Spaces

The City Hall Lawn and/or the surface parking lot on the project site have also been utilized periodically for special events and activities sponsored by organizations and/or the City, and various regularly scheduled activities. The proposed project's publicly accessible open space could continue to accommodate events and programming such as those that already occur on the project site. These events are assumed to continue on the project site in the future and are considered part of the operational noise baseline. Therefore, this analysis will evaluate operational noise impacts associated with new and additional events and gatherings as a result of implementation of the proposed project. The frequency of events may increase in the future with the proposed project; however, the types and size of future events would remain consistent with events that currently occur onsite.

Table 3-2, *Potential Events on the Project Site*, outlines examples of events and activities that currently occur on-site and may continue in the future. As shown in Table 3-2, these events are similar to the events that currently exist on-site. In addition, as stated in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the proposed project would provide activated and engaging open-air publicly accessible open space suitable for community gatherings, socializing, and

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outdoor dining. The primary resulting noise source from such events is conversational noise, which, as described above, would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of established standards. While some amplified noise could occur, it is expected to be similar to what is associated with other events that already occur on the project site. Additionally, as shown in Figures 3-8 and 3-9, the proposed project's conceptual building siting along Norwalk Boulevard, Imperial Highway and Avenida Manuel Salinas with publicly accessible open space through the center of the project site would provide substantial acoustical shielding that does not currently exist, so that noise generated from within the project site does not reach off-site sensitive receptors (the closest being Norwalk Library approximately 100 feet to the east and the nearest residential receptor approximately 116 feet to the west). This conceptual layout of multi-story development near the edges of the public right of ways would shield noise from future new events associated with the proposed project and ongoing existing events. Additional shielding would be provided by the Norwalk City Hall (to remain) and existing commercial/retail buildings to the north across Imperial Highway. Therefore, the operational noise from activated outdoor uses would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the proposed project in excess of established standards, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.11-3: The project would generate excessive short-term groundborne vibration or groundborne noise. [Threshold N-2]

Temporary Construction Vibration

Construction can generate varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the construction procedures and equipment. Operation of construction equipment generates vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish with distance from the source. The effect on buildings in the vicinity of the construction site varies depending on soil type, ground strata, and receptor-building construction. The effects from vibration can range from no perceptible effects at the lowest vibration levels, to low rumbling sounds and perceptible vibrations at moderate levels, to slight structural damage at the highest levels. Vibration from construction activities rarely reaches the levels that can damage structures.

Vibration Damage

For a conservative analysis, it is assumed that pile driving would be used for building column foundations for the mixed-use building as shown in the conceptual site plan and at the existing parking garage, should expansion of the parking garage occur. Different building types, or categories as identified by the FTA (see Table 5.11-6), have different vibration damage thresholds. This analysis evaluates project-related vibration impacts to Norwalk City Hall (an eligible historical building), surrounding commercial/civic buildings, and the nearest residential buildings. Table 5.11-10, *Vibration Levels for Typical Construction Equipment and Screening Distances*, summarizes vibration levels for typical construction equipment at a reference distance of 25 feet, including an impact pile driver, and the vibration impact screening distances for different building categories.

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Table 5.11-10 Vibration Levels for Typical Construction Equipment and Screening Distances

Equipment	FTA Reference Vibration Levels in PPV (in/sec) at 25 feet	Commercial Structures Screening Distance to 0.3 PPV in/sec ¹	Residential Structures Screening Distance to 0.2 PPV in/sec ¹	Historical Structures Screening Distance to 0.12 PPV in/sec ¹
Impact Pile Driver	1.52	75	97	136
Vibratory Roller	0.21	20	26	37
Hoe Ram	0.089	12	15	21
Large Bulldozer	0.089	12	15	21
Caisson Drilling	0.089	12	15	21
Loaded Trucks	0.076	11	9	19
Jackhammer	0.035	6	8	11
Small Bulldozer	0.003	2	<2	<3

Source: FTA 2018.
¹ Distances in feet.

Commercial and Civic Structures

Commercial/civic buildings would typically fall under building FTA's Building Category II, engineered concrete and masonry (see Table 5.11-6), with a corresponding threshold of 0.3 in/sec PPV. Different equipment would be used throughout the project site, therefore Table 5.11-11, *Vibration Levels at the Nearest Commercial Buildings*, shows the distance from anticipated equipment location to the nearest commercial/civic buildings, based on the conceptual site plan. For example, a vibratory roller would not be used throughout the site, but only where paving would occur (new parking areas). For pile driving, it is assumed it could occur at the edge of proposed new buildings along the property line. All other equipment is assumed could be used at the edge of the project site boundary.

The nearest commercial/civic structures (aside from City Hall, discussed below) to construction vibration sources would be the commercial/civic buildings to the north and west (across Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard, respectively), the Norwalk Library to the east, and the Los Angeles County Superior Court–Norwalk to the south. As shown in Table 5.11-11, vibration levels would not exceed the 0.3 in/sec PPV threshold for commercial structures. Therefore, impacts for this building category would be **less than significant**.

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Table 5.11-11 Vibration Levels at Nearest Commercial/Civic Buildings

Equipment	PPV (in/sec)			
	Commercial to north	Norwalk Library and Sheriff's Station to east	Courthouse to south	Commercial to west
<i>Distance in feet</i>	150	110	200	115
Impact Pile Driver	0.10	0.16	0.07	0.15
<i>Distance in feet</i>	220	110	260	115
Vibratory Roller	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02
<i>Distance in feet</i>	120	110	100	115
Hoe Ram	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Large Bulldozer	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Caisson Drilling	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Loaded Trucks	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Jackhammer	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Small Bulldozer	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Maximum Vibration Level	0.10	0.16	0.07	0.08
Exceeds 0.3 in/sec PPV Threshold?	No	No	No	No

Source: FTA 2018.

Residential Structures

Residential buildings would typically fall under the FTA's Building Category III, nonengineered timber and masonry (see Table 5.11-6), with a corresponding threshold of 0.2 in/sec PPV. Table 5.11-12, *Vibration Levels at the Nearest Residential Structures*, shows the distance from anticipated equipment location based on the conceptual site plan to the nearest residential structures. Vibration distances from on-site construction equipment to residential structures are determined the same way as discussed above for commercial buildings.

The nearest residential structures to construction vibration sources would be the residences to the north, northeast, and west (across Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard). As shown in Table 5.11-12, vibration levels would not exceed the 0.2 in/sec PPV threshold for residential buildings. Therefore, impacts for this building category would be **less than significant**.

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Table 5.11-12 Vibration Levels at Nearest Residential Structures

Equipment	PPV (in/sec)			
	Residences to north	Residences to northeast	Residences to southwest	Residences to south
<i>Distance in feet</i>	420	330	175	360
Impact Pile Driver	0.02	0.03	0.08	0.03
<i>Distance in feet</i>	450	470	200	360
Vibratory Roller	<0.01	<0.01	0.01	<0.01
<i>Distance in feet</i>	410	340	185	360
Hoe Ram	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Large Bulldozer	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Caisson Drilling	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Loaded Trucks	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Jackhammer	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Small Bulldozer	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Maximum Vibration Level	0.02	0.03	0.08	0.03
Exceeds 0.2 in/sec PPV Threshold?	No	No	No	No

Source: FTA 2018.

Historical Norwalk City Hall

Historical buildings would fall under the FTA's Building Category IV, extremely susceptible to vibration damage, with a corresponding threshold of 0.12 in/sec PPV (see Table 5.11-6). Table 5.11-13, *Vibration Levels at Norwalk City Hall*, shows the distance from anticipated equipment location to the nearest façade of the Norwalk City Hall. As mentioned in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, pile driving would occur no closer than 50 feet from City Hall. However, ground general construction and disturbance could occur in immediate proximity to City Hall which would include activities such as such as landscaping, paving, and kiosk construction. Table 5.11-13, *Vibration Levels at Norwalk City Hall*, shows that pile driving and construction activities would exceed the FTA's historical structure vibration threshold of 0.12 in/sec PPV. It is possible that pile driving and other construction activities could result in damage to the mosaic tiles that clad the exterior walls of the historical resource, which appear to be a character-defining features of the historical resource. Therefore, should pile driving be necessary, vibration impacts to City Hall would be **potentially significant**.

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Table 5.11-13 Vibration Levels at Norwalk City Hall

Equipment	PPV (in/sec) within 50 feet of Norwalk City Hall	PPV (in/sec) within 5 feet of Norwalk City Hall
Impact Pile Driver	0.54	NA
Vibratory Roller	0.07	2.35
Hoe Ram	0.03	1.00
Large Bulldozer	0.03	1.00
Caisson Drilling	0.03	1.00
Loaded Trucks	0.03	0.85
Jackhammer	0.01	0.39
Small Bulldozer	0.00	0.03
Maximum Vibration Level	0.54	2.35
Exceeds 0.12 in/sec PPV Threshold?	Yes	Yes

Source: FTA 2018.

NA: Activity not proposed at this distance to City Hall.

Operational Vibration

Sources of operational vibration typically include above-ground or underground rail systems such as a subway or railroad tracks. Since the proposed project includes the operation of commercial and residential uses, and does not include a rail system, subway, or rail tracks, it would not have any significant source of vibration. Therefore, **no impact** would occur.

Mitigation Measures:

NOI-2

In the event that demolition, grading, building construction, and pile driving is necessary within the screening distances for historical structures shown in Table 5.11-11, construction vibration monitoring shall be conducted to document conditions at the Norwalk City Hall prior to, during, and after vibration-generating demolition, grading, building construction, and pile driving. The construction vibration monitoring shall be implemented by a historic architect meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards to include the following tasks:

- Performance of a photo survey, elevation survey, and tile/crack monitoring survey for the City Hall. Surveys shall be performed prior to and in regular intervals during of all vibration-generating activities within the screening distances shown in Table 5.11-11 of the City Hall building (the FTA Historical Structures Screening Distance to 0.12 in/sec PPV).
- Conduct a post-construction survey on the structure following the completion of vibration-generating activities and applicant to make appropriate repairs in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards where damage has occurred as a result of construction activities.

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Significance After Mitigation: Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would ensure that any inadvertent damage to the character-defining feature (mosaic tiles) at City Hall associated with vibration would be replaced and/or repaired to the satisfaction of a qualified professional such that the historical integrity of the building remains.

Impact 5.11-4: The proposed project is not within an airport land use plan nor within two miles of public airport or public use airport. The proximity of the project site to an airport would not result in exposure of future resident and workers to excessive airport-related noise levels. [Threshold N-3]

The project site is not within an airport land use plan nor within two miles of public airport or public use airport. The nearest airport is Fullerton Municipal Airport in Fullerton, California, approximately 5.75 miles southeast of the project site. The project site is not within two miles of an airport. Therefore, airport noise would not expose people working or residing in the project area to excessive aircraft noise levels. **No impact** would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation. No impact.

5.11.4 Cumulative Impacts

5.11.4.1 CUMULATIVE TRAFFIC

A significant cumulative traffic noise increase would occur if (1) the cumulative increase exceeded 1.5 dBA or more for ambient noise environments of 65 dBA CNEL and higher; 3 dBA or more for ambient noise environments of 60 to 64 CNEL; or 5 dBA or more for ambient noise environments of less than 60 dBA CNEL, and if (2) the project's contribution to the cumulative increase were calculated to be 1 dBA or greater. As shown in Table 5.11-8, the Cumulative Plus Project noise increase is up to 0.3 dBA CNEL along Avenida Manuel Salinas, between Imperial Highway and Civic Center Drive. Therefore, cumulative traffic noise impacts are **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.11.4.2 CUMULATIVE CONSTRUCTION

Because construction noise attenuates at a high rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance of the noise source, only projects within 1,000 feet of the project site are considered to contribute to cumulative construction noise. Projects farther than 1,000 feet from the project site would typically not significantly contribute to overlapping construction noise. There are two planned and approved projects within 1,000 feet of the project site: 1) a 2,480-square-foot fast food restaurant with a drive-through at 12843 Norwalk Boulevard southwest of the project site, and 2) a 121-room hotel at 13111 Sycamore Street south of the project site. It is assumed project construction activities could overlap with nearby planned and approved projects.

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The nearest sensitive receptors to the proposed project and the two planned and approved projects mentioned above are the residences to the south and southwest of the project site. Noncumulative noise levels at these receptors would be up to 72 dBA with mitigation during impact pile-driving activities. Specific construction equipment and phasing is unknown at the two nearest planned and approved projects. However, based on the size of these projects, it is assumed that construction equipment is generally 85 dBA at a distance of 50 feet (with no pile driving). The distances from the planned and approved projects to the receptors to the southwest and south, as measured from the nearest boundaries, are approximately 90 feet (121-hotel room) and 700 feet (2,480-square-foot restaurant with drive-through). At these distances, the composite noise level for cumulative construction noise at the sensitive receptors would be approximately 80 dBA Leq or less. This would not exceed the FTA criterion of 80 dBA Leq. Additionally, the proposed project's contribution would be less than 1 dBA. Therefore, cumulative construction noise levels would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation. Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.11.5 References

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5.12 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) examines the potential for the proposed project to result in substantial unplanned population growth or the displacement of people or housing. It results in physical environmental effects.

One comment letter about population and housing was received from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) (see Appendix B). The comment letter addresses the proposed project's consistency with the adopted 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS or Connect SoCal) and is considered in this section and in Section 5-10, *Land Use and Planning*.

5.12.1 Environmental Setting

5.12.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to population and housing and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

State

California Housing Element Law

California planning and zoning law require each city and county to adopt a general plan for future growth (California Government Code Section 65300). This plan must include a housing element that identifies housing needs for all economic segments and provides opportunities for housing development to meet that need. At the state level, the Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) estimates the relative share of California's projected population growth in each county based on California Department of Finance population projections and historical growth trends. These figures are compiled by HCD in a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) for each region of California. Where there is a regional council of governments, the HCD provides the RHNA to the board. The council then assigns a share of the regional housing needs to each city and county. Assigning shares allows cities and counties to comment on the proposed allocations. The HCD oversees the process to ensure that the council of governments distributes its share of the state's projected housing needs.

California housing element law (Government Code Sections 65580 to 65589) requires that each city and county identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs in its jurisdiction and prepare goals, policies, and programs to further the development, improvement, and preservation of housing for all economic segments of the community, commensurate with local housing needs.

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POPULATION AND HOUSING

Regional

Southern California Association of Governments

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) represents Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. SCAG is a regional planning agency and serves as a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment.

Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy

SCAG has developed regional plans to achieve specific regional objectives. On September 3, 2020, SCAG adopted the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS and is also referred to as “Connect SoCal”) and its associated Program EIR. Connect SoCal is a long-range visioning plan that builds on and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern (SCAG 2020a). A component of Connect SoCal is a set of growth forecasts that estimates employment, population, and housing growth (SCAG 2020b). SCAG, transportation agencies use these estimates, and local agencies to anticipate and plan for growth.

This long-range plan, which is a requirement of the state of California and the federal government, is updated by SCAG every four years as demographic, economic, and policy circumstances change. Project consistency analysis for goals in Connect SoCal is provided below.

Local

The development of housing in the City is guided by the goals, objectives, and policies of the Norwalk General Plan Land Use and Housing Elements. Currently, Norwalk is preparing the 2021-2029 update to the City’s General Plan Housing Element. The public review period for the draft housing element ran for 30 days from September 24, 2021, to October 24, 2021, and it is undergoing review by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The 2021-2029 Draft Housing Element includes the following applicable goals related to housing applied to the proposed project (Norwalk 2021):

- **Goal 1:** Increase Affordable Housing Opportunities
- **Goal 2:** Increase Homeownership
- **Goal 3:** Create Safe and Integrated Neighborhoods
- **Goal 4:** Create Public Awareness of Fair Housing Laws and Affordable Housing Advocacy
- **Goal 5:** Increase Training and Employment Opportunities

5.12.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Population

The population of Norwalk and Los Angeles County (for comparison purposes) from the 2010 and 2020 US Census estimates are shown in Table 5.12-1. Note that the population decreased by 2.6 percent in Norwalk between 2010 and 2020 when the population grew in Los Angeles County by 2.0 percent.

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Table 5.12-1 City of Norwalk and Los Angeles County Population, 2010–2020

	2010	2020	Change, 2010–2020	Percent Change, 2010–2020
City of Norwalk	105,549	102,773	(2,776)	-2.6%
Los Angeles County	9,818,605	10,014,009	195,404	+2.0%

Source: Census 2010, 2020a.

Population Forecast

SCAG generates regional growth forecasts for counties and their cities. SCAG’s Demographics and Growth Forecast report shows Norwalk and Los Angeles County population forecasts. The forecast for 2045 is shown in Table 5.12-2. SCAG’s projections show the city growing slower than Los Angeles County.

Table 5.12-2 Population Forecast, City of Norwalk and Los Angeles County

	2020	2045	Change, 2020–2045	Percent Change, 2020–2045
City of Norwalk	102,773	107,000	4,227	4.1%
Los Angeles County	10,014,009	11,673,600	1,659,501	16.6%

Sources: Census 2020a; SCAG 2020.

Housing

Based on information gathered from the California Department of Finance, estimated available housing, including unit type characteristics, in Norwalk and Los Angeles County for 2021 is detailed in Table 5.12-3.

Table 5.12-3 Housing Units, City of Norwalk and Los Angeles County

Housing Unit Type	City of Norwalk	Los Angeles County
Single-Family Detached	20,584	1,736,319
Single-Family Attached	1,256	234,701
Multifamily	5,827	1,585,448
Mobile Homes	498	58,341
Total	28,165	3,614,809
Vacancy Rate	3.6%	6.4%

Source: DOF 2021.

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Regional Housing Needs Assessment

The RHNA is mandated by state housing law as part of the systematic process of updating housing elements of local general plans. State law requires that housing elements identify RHNA targets set by HCD to encourage each jurisdiction in the state to provide its fair share of very-low-, low-, moderate-, and above-moderate-income housing. The RHNA does not promote growth but provides a long-term outline for housing in the context of local and regional trends and housing production goals.

SCAG determines the total housing need for each community in Southern California based on three main factors: 1) the number of housing units needed to accommodate future population and employment growth; 2) the number of additional units needed to allow for housing vacancies; and 3) the number of very-low-, low-, moderate-, and above-moderate-income housing units needed in the community. Additional factors used to determine the RHNA include tenure, the average rate of units needed to replace housing units demolished, and other factors.

The City must ensure that sufficient sites planned and zoned for housing are available to accommodate its need and implement proactive programs that facilitate and encourage the production of housing commensurate with its housing needs. The City of Norwalk’s RHNA allocation for the 2021–2029 period is shown in Table 5.12-4. The City must ensure that sufficient sites planned and zoned for housing are available to accommodate its need and implement proactive programs that facilitate and encourage the production of housing commensurate with its housing needs.

Table 5.12-4 City of Norwalk Regional Housing Needs Assessment Allocation (2021-2029)

Income Category	Number of Units	Percent
Extremely Low Income (0 to 50% of AMI)	1,546	31%
Low Income (51% to 80% of AMI)	759	15%
Moderate Income (81% to 120% of AMI)	658	13%
Above Moderate Income (more than 120% of AMI)	2,071	41%
Total	5,034	100%

Source: City of Norwalk 2021.
Note: AMI = Area Median Income

Housing Forecast

Based on the 2020 decennial Census data, SCAG forecasts show that the number of dwelling units in Norwalk will decrease by 541 dwelling units between 2020 and 2045, as shown in Table 5.12-5. Dwelling unit forecasts for Los Angeles County are provided as a comparison.

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Table 5.12-5 Dwelling Unit Forecast, the City of Norwalk and Los Angeles County 2020-2045

	2020	2045	Change, 2020-2045	Percent Change, 2020-2045
City of Norwalk	28,455	27,914 ^a	(541)	-1.9%
Los Angeles County	3,591,981	4,326,786 ^b	734,805	20.5%

Sources: Census 2020a; SCAG 2020.

Notes:

^a SCAG projects 27,300 households in Norwalk by 2045, including occupied housing units. The city's vacancy rate (2.2 percent) from the 2020 Census was applied to households to estimate housing units in Norwalk in 2045.

^b SCAG projects 4,119,100 households in Norwalk by 2045, which only includes occupied housing units. The county's vacancy rate (4.8 percent) from the 2020 Census was applied to households to estimate the county's housing units in 2045.

Employment

Employment Projections

SCAG employment projections for Norwalk and Los Angeles County are shown in Table 5.12-6.

Table 5.12-6 Employment Projections, the City of Norwalk and Los Angeles County 2016-2045

	2020 ^a	2045	Change, 2016-2045	Percent Change, 2016-2045
City of Norwalk	26,044	28,100	2,400	9.3%
Los Angeles County	4,835,000	5,382,200	547,200	11.3%

Source: SCAG 2020.

Notes:

^a Employment projection for 2020 is prorated from SCAG's 2016 projections.

5.12.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to population housing if the project would:

- P-1 Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through the extension of roads or other infrastructure).
- P-2 Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

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5.12.3 Environmental Impacts

5.12.3.1 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.12-1: The proposed project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the project area, either directly or indirectly. [Threshold P-1]

Construction Phase

Construction of the proposed project would bring workers to the project site, starting with site preparation through the complete buildout of the proposed project. Construction would occur over one phase that would last approximately 23 months and begin in 2023. Construction would include the following activities: grading and excavation, demolition and removal of hardscapes, trenching for site utilities and irrigation, building construction, architectural coatings, driveway and walkway construction, landscaping, signage, and street connection improvements. General construction labor is expected to be available from the local and regional labor pool. Additionally, construction jobs are short-term, spanning the length of the construction phase. Given the short-term nature of construction work, the proposed project's construction would not result in a long-term increase in employment and is therefore not expected to attract new residents to the area. Thus, the proposed project's construction would not directly or indirectly result in unplanned population growth in the project area, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Operation Phase

At full buildout, the proposed project would include approximately 110,000 square feet of new commercial space, which would consist of a mix of food and beverage establishments, retail, and supermarket uses—and up to 350 residential units. While the exact mix of commercial uses may vary, for purposes of this analysis it is conservatively assumed that the commercial uses would consist of 35,000 square feet of food and beverage establishments (consisting of both fine dining and high-turnover sit down restaurant), 35,000 square feet of retail and 40,000 square feet of supermarket uses. The dwelling units would have a mix of unit sizes, with an anticipated average of approximately 1,000 square feet per unit. A minimum of 15 percent or 53 total units would be reserved as affordable dwelling units. The residential component of the proposed project can directly generate population growth, and the commercial part of the proposed project has the potential to generate population growth indirectly.

Direct Population Growth

The proposed project would develop up to 350 dwelling units. Assuming an average of 3.61 residents per dwelling unit,¹ the proposed project would generate approximately 1,264 new residents. Table 5.12-7 shows the proposed project's contribution to housing and population in the City and County. As shown in Table 5.12-7,

¹ This rate is based on Norwalk's 2020 population (102,773) and the total number of dwelling units in the city (28,455) (U.S. Census 2022).

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the current 2020 number of housing units exceeds the 2045 projection of housing units. The proposed project's housing units would add to this exceedance. However, the proposed project's housing units are well within the projected growth for Los Angeles County. The proposed project's population contribution is within the projected growth for both Norwalk and Los Angeles County. Additionally, the proposed project would contribute to the City's 5,034-unit RHNA number and is cited in the City's Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element Update as a proposed residential development credited to the 2021-2029 RHNA. Therefore, the population generated by the proposed project would not result in unplanned population growth in the project area, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Table 5.12-7 Proposed Project's Population and Housing Contribution

	Current (2020)	Future (2045)	Project	Current + Project	Remaining to Future (2045)
City of Norwalk					
Population	102,773	107,000	1,264	104,037	2,963
Housing	28,455	27,914 ^a	350	28,805	(891)
Los Angeles County					
Population	10,014,009	11,673,600	1,264	10,015,273	1,658,327
Housing	3,591,981	4,326,786 ^b	350	3,592,331	734,455

Sources: Census 2020a; SCAG 2020.

Notes:

a SCAG projects 27,300 households in Norwalk by 2045, including occupied housing units. The city's vacancy rate (2.2 percent) from the 2020 Census was applied to households to estimate housing units in Norwalk in 2045.

b SCAG projects 4,119,100 households in Los Angeles County by 2045, which only includes occupied housing units. The county's vacancy rate (4.8 percent) from the 2020 Census was applied to households to estimate the county's housing units in 2045.

Indirect Population Growth (Employment)

The proposed project includes 110,000 square feet of new commercial space, including a restaurant, retail, and a supermarket. Table 5.12-8 summarizes the different types of commercial uses and the number of employees each use would be expected to generate based on available data provided by the US Green Building Council (USGBC).

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Table 5.12-8 Proposed Project Employee Generation

	Square Footage	Generation Rate	Project Generated Employees
Fine Dining Restaurant	17,500	134 of/employee	131 employees
High-Turnover Sit-Down Restaurant	17,500	100 of /employee	175 employees
Retail	35,000	383 sf /employee	92 employees
Supermarket	40,000	938 sf/employee	43 employees
Total	110,000	--	441 employees

Source: USGBC 2008.

Notes: sf = square feet

^a The generation rate for "Community Retail" was used for Retail to present a conservative estimate and also includes health and wellness uses included in the project.

Employees rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 5.12-9 provides a prorated employment estimate based on the data from Table 5.12-6, which gave employment estimates and projections for 2020 and 2045. Table 5.12-9 shows the proposed project's contribution to employment in the city and county. The proposed project's employment contribution is within the projected growth for both the city and the county. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in indirect unplanned population growth in the project area by creating employment opportunities, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Table 5.12-9 Proposed Project's Employment Contribution

	Current (2020)	Future (2045)	Project	Current + Project	Remaining to Future (2045)
City of Norwalk					
Employees	26,044	28,100	441	26,485	1,615
Los Angeles County					
Employees	4,835,000	5,382,000	441	4,835,441	546,559

Sources: Census 2022f, 2022g; SCAG 2020.

Notes: 2019 numbers prorated from data in Table 5.12-6.

Two thousand forty-five employment projections for Los Angeles County and Norwalk from SCAG 2020.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.12-2: Project implementation would not displace people and housing. [Threshold P-2]

The project site is approximately 13.2 acres; about half of the project site is the City Hall Lawn, and the other half is developed for civic uses, such as City Hall and parking lots. No dwelling units or residential uses currently occupy the project site. Thus, the proposed project would not displace housing or people. Therefore, **no impact** would occur.

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Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: No impact.

5.12.4 Cumulative Impacts

The area is considered for cumulative impacts in the City of Norwalk. Impacts are analyzed using SCAG's SoCal Connect Growth Forecast. There are nine cumulative development projects in Norwalk—one mixed use, four residential projects, one retail project, one drive-through restaurant project, one hotel project, and one office park project. The four residential projects would add a combined 823 dwelling units, equaling 2,971 new residents (based on the conservative population/dwelling unit rate of 3.61). The cumulative population and the proposed project would generate 4,235 new residents in the City of Norwalk, which is eight persons beyond the projected 2045 population for the City². The combined population is well within the County's anticipated population growth by 2045. The 3.61 population/dwelling unit rate used for this project's calculations is highly conservative for the proposed project. The cumulative projects since all developments include the construction of apartment units (except for Cumulative Project N1, which provides for the construction of one single-family home). As such, the development of the proposed project in conjunction with the list in Table 4-3, *Cumulative Projects List*, in Chapter 4 of this DEIR would be within the anticipated population growth for the City of Norwalk through 2045 and the number of housing units identified in the draft Housing Element through 2029. Therefore, the proposed project combined with related projects would not result in cumulatively considerable substantial unplanned growth population growth. Because the project would not displace housing or people, it would not contribute to cumulative displacement impacts.

The proposed project would not contribute to a potentially significant cumulative population and housing impacts and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.12.5 References

Department of Finance (DOF). 2021, February 21. Report E-5: Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State 2011-2019 with 2010 Census Benchmark.
<http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/e-5/>.

Norwalk Community Development Department. 2021, September. City of Norwalk Draft 2021–2029 Housing Element Update.
<https://www.norwalk.org/home/showpublisheddocument/26035/637680952591330000>.

² Cumulative population and dwelling unit projections do not include the Heart of Norwalk Vision Plan as it is unknown at this time.

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- Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). 2012. 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment Final Allocation Plan, 1/1/2014–10/1/2021. <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/6th-cycle-rhna-final-allocation-plan.pdf?1625161899>.
- . 2020, September 3. Demographics and Growth Forecast. Technical Report. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocial_demographics-and-growth-forecast.pdf?1606001579.
- US Census Bureau (Census). 2010. Decennial Census.
- . 2020a. Decennial Census.
- . 2020b. American Community Survey. Table C24050, Industry by Occupation for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over. 5-year 2020 Estimate.
- United States Green Building Council (USGBC). 2008. Building Area per Employee by Business Type.
- Weltz, Jerry. 2003. Jobs-Housing Balance. Planning Advisory Service Report Number 516. American Planning Association.

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5.13 PUBLIC SERVICES

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) addresses the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Project (proposed project’s) impacts on public services that provide fire protection and emergency services, police protection, school services, park services, and library services. Utilities and service systems, including water, wastewater, and solid waste services and systems, are addressed in Section 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*. The analysis of this section is based in part on the following responses from service providers, which can be found in Appendix L:

- *Notice of Preparation Environmental Impact Report, “Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Plans Project,”* FFER2022002337-Revised, Ronald Durbin, Chief, Los Angeles County Fire Department, April 7, 2022.
- *Request for Sherriff’s Department Service Information in Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan,* Tracey Jue, Director, Los Angeles County Sherriff’s Department, March 31, 2022.
- *Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan Project EIR School Services Questionnaire – Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District,* Elizabeth Jaimes, Facilities Planning Technician, Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District, April 1, 2022.
- *Request for Service Providers Information for the Environmental Impact Report for the Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan Project,* Skye Patrick, Los Angeles County Library, March 29, 2022.

Public comments were received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) related to public services. Residents submitted verbal comments (during the public scoping meeting) and written comments in response to the NOP that addressed changes to the City Hall Lawn. Additionally, one comment letter was received from the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD), and two comment letters were received from the County of Los Angeles Fire Department (LACFD)—regarding the proposed project’s potential to increase demand for law enforcement and emergency services, and fire safety building requirements. The relevant issues raised from the public comments and comment letters are addressed throughout this section. Refer to Appendix A for the response to the NOP comment letters.

5.13.1 Fire Protection and Emergency Services

5.13.1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

State and local laws, regulations, plans, and guidelines related to fire protection and emergency services and apply to the proposed project are summarized below.

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State

California Building Code

The California Building Code (CBC), located in Part 2 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, establishes the minimum state building standards. The CBC is currently updated every three years. The most recent update is the 2019 CBC, effective starting January 1, 2020. It is based on the 2018 International Building Code but amended to account for California conditions. The CBC is generally adopted on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis, subject to further modification based on local needs. Commercial and residential buildings are plan-checked by City building officials for compliance with the CBC. Typical fire safety requirements of the CBC include installing sprinklers in all high-rise buildings; establishing of fire resistance standards for fire doors, building materials, and particular types of construction; and clearing debris and vegetation within a prescribed distance from occupied structures in wildfire hazard areas.

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code (CFC; California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 9) sets forth emergency access, emergency egress routes, interior, and exterior design and materials, fire safety features, including sprinklers, and hazardous materials. The CFC is issued on a three-year cycle; the 2019 edition took effect July 1, 2019, and was adopted and incorporated by reference in Chapter 15.08 (Fire Code) of the Norwalk Municipal Code (NMC).

California Health and Safety Code

California Health and Safety Code Sections 13000 et seq. includes fire regulations for building standards (also in the CBC), fire protection and notification systems, fire protection devices such as extinguishers and smoke alarms, high-rise buildings and childcare facilities standards, and fire suppression training.

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration

In accordance with the California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Sections 1270, “Fire Prevention,” and 6773, “Fire Protection and Fire Fighting Equipment,” the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration has established minimum standards for fire suppression and emergency medical services. The standards include but are not limited to guidelines on the handling of highly combustible materials, firehouse sizing requirements; restrictions on the use of compressed air; access roads; and the testing, maintenance, and use of all firefighting and emergency medical equipment.

Los Angeles County Fire Department Strategic Fire Plan

The LACFD is one of the six-county agencies that executed a contract with the State of California to provide wildland fire protection in State Responsibility Areas and to implement the state’s 2010 Strategic Fire Plan for California. The LACFD’s 2016 Strategic Fire Plan, last updated on June 1, 2016, outlines its pre-fire management strategies and tactics for fire prevention, vegetation management, fire suppression, fire protection, and pre-fire projects for fire hazard reduction habitat restoration, and training.

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Local

City of Norwalk Municipal Code

The following provisions from the NMC focus on fire service impacts associated with new development projects and are relevant to the proposed project:

- **Chapter 15.08 (Fire Code).** The Norwalk City Council adopts and incorporates by reference into the NMC the 2019 CFC. The CFC sets forth requirements including emergency access, emergency egress routes, interior and exterior design and materials, fire safety features including sprinklers, and hazardous materials.

City of Norwalk General Plan

The City of Norwalk is committed to maintaining a safe environment by minimizing fire hazards to existing and new developments. The following policies to reduce the risks associated with urban fires are relevant to the proposed project:

- **Safety Element Goal:** To ensure the availability and effective response of emergency services.
 - **Policy:** Consult with the County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and Fire Department or any other emergency response agency during the review of development projects or land use entitlement applications.

Existing Conditions

Los Angeles County Fire Department

The project site is served by LACFD, which provides fire and emergency response services to all unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and 60 cities. The LACFD has 176 fire stations, 251 engine companies, 73 paramedic units, and 34 truck companies. It also has specialized resources, including three hazardous material squads, five swift-water rescue units, two urban search and rescue squads, two fireboats, and various additional specialized equipment (LACFD 2021a). The LACFD is responsible for fire response, vehicle accidents, public assistance, medical emergencies, water rescue, and hazardous material response. LACFD is also responsible for disaster preparedness and other services, such as building plan review, fire prevention, and fire hydrant testing.

There are eight fire stations within three miles of the project site (see Table 5.13-1, *Fire Stations Near the Project Site* and Figure 5.13-1, *Public Services Serving the Project Site*). Fire Station 20, at 12110 E. Adoree Street in Norwalk, is the closest to the project site, approximately 0.2 miles to the east, and would serve the project site. According to LACFD, Fire Station 20 includes a four-person engine, a two-person squad car, and a four-person quint. Fire Station 20's typical daily staffing consists of two captains, two firefighter specialists, four firefighters, and two firefighter-paramedics. Other nearby LACFD fire stations that may serve the project site are Fire Station 115 at 11317 Alondra Boulevard in Norwalk and Fire Station 96 at 10630 South Mills Avenue in Whittier (LACFD 2022b). There are an additional 20 stations, including LACFD, Santa Fe Springs, and Downey, within five miles of the project site (LACFD 2022a). The LACFD has an automatic aid agreement with the City of Santa Fe Springs, and any of their stations could provide additional support (LACFD 2022b).

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The LACFD uses national guidelines to set response goals. Its goal is to respond to all calls, from emergency medical service calls to fire calls in urban areas, within five minutes for the first arriving unit and eight minutes for paramedic response (LACFD 2022b). The current average response time for Fire Station 20 is 5:21 minutes (LACFD 2022b).

During the building and fire plan check phase before construction, the LACFD inspects construction projects to ensure that all new and remodeled buildings and facilities meet state and local building and fire code requirements. In addition, the LACFD implements a vigorous building inspection program to ensure compliance with applicable standards and regulations, including requirements for emergency access. The LACFD is primarily funded by a share of property tax and special tax; LACFD does not collect development impact fees (LACFD 2022b).

Table 5.13-1 Fire Stations within Three Miles of the Project Site

Station Number	Address	Estimated Travel Distance (miles)
LACFD Station No. 20	12110 E. Adoree St. Norwalk, CA 90650	0.2
City of Santa Fe Springs Department of Fire and Rescue	11300 Greenstone Ave. Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670	1.2
Santa Fe Springs Station No. 4	11736 Telegraph Rd. Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670	2.2
LACFD Station No. 115	11317 Alondra Blvd. Norwalk, CA 90650	2.2
Santa Fe Springs Station No. 3	15517 Carmenita Rd. Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670	2.3
LACFD Station No. 96	10630 S. Mills Ave. Whittier, CA 90604	2.4
Downey Station No. 4	9349 Florence Ave. Downey, CA 90240	2.8
Downey Station No. 2	9556 Imperial Highway Downey, CA 90242	2.9

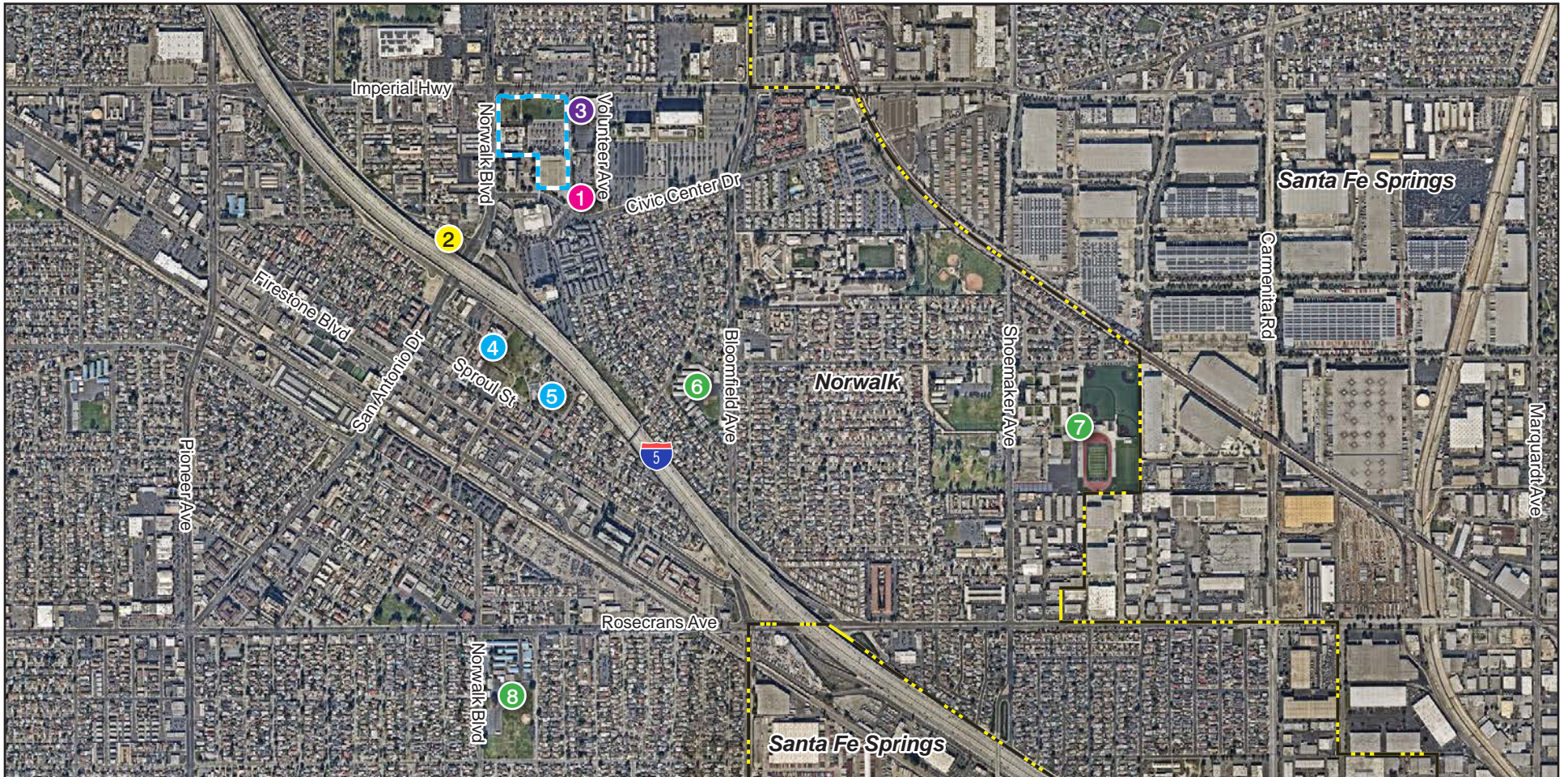
Source: LACFD 2022a.

5.13.1.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to fire protection if the project would:

FP-1 Result in a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provisions of new or physically altered governmental facilities needed for new or physically limited governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection services.

Figure 5.13-1 - Public Services Serving the Project Site
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--- Project Boundary

--- City Boundary

1 Norwalk Sheriff Station
(Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department)

2 Fire Station 20
(County of Los Angeles Fire Department)

3 Norwalk Public Library (Los Angeles County Library)

4 Norwalk Arts & Sports Complex
(City of Norwalk Parks)

5 Sproul Recreation Center
(City of Norwalk Parks)

6 Moffitt Elementary School
(Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District)

7 John Glenn High School
(Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District)

8 Waite Middle School
(Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District)



Source: Nearmap, 2022

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5.13.1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact Analysis

The following impact analysis addresses the threshold of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.13-1: The proposed project would introduce new structures and residents into the LACFD service boundaries but would not result in the need for new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts. [Threshold FP-1]

A significant environmental impact could result if the implementation of the proposed project increased demand for fire protection services to the extent that the construction of new or physically altered fire protection facilities would be needed and could cause physical impacts.

The proposed project would increase the demand for fire protection services that LACFD would accommodate. According to the LACFD, the proposed project would be serviced by Fire Station 20, located 0.2 miles from the project site. Two additional LACFD fire stations, Fire Station 115 and Fire Station 96, are in close proximity to the project site and may respond to the project site in the event of a service call (LACFD 2022b).

A deficiency in the provision of adequate fire protection and emergency medical services response times in and of itself is not a CEQA impact because it does not result in a foreseeable direct or indirect physical impact on the environment. Where a project causes a need for additional fire protection and emergency medical services resulting in the market to construct new facilities or additions to existing facilities, the construction or operation of which results in a potential impact on the environment, then the effect would need to be assessed in this DEIR. The County of Los Angeles has no current capital improvement plans to construct or expand fire facilities in the project vicinity (LACFD 2022b).

Construction

During the construction phase of the proposed project (approximately 23 months), construction workers would temporarily be on-site. Construction of the proposed project would be required to comply with state and local building and fire codes to ensure onsite safety during construction. The code includes standards for building and construction in the city, requirements for emergency access, hazardous material handling, and fire protection systems. Construction plans of the proposed project would be reviewed and inspected by LACFD to ensure all requirements are met, such as adequate emergency access to the project site during construction. Construction of the proposed project would further implement Occupational Safety and Health Administrative (OSHA) regulations to ensure the building would not interfere with access and travel of emergency vehicles. In addition, as identified in Section 5.15, *Transportation*, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure TRA-1, which requires the preparation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan (TMP). This plan would identify the processes for establishing detours, construction signage to advise motorists of reduced construction zone speed limits, and flag persons to ensure safe traffic operations. Therefore, project construction would not affect fire/emergency response protection services to the extent that new or physically altered fire facilities would be needed to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other

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performance objectives for fire protection services, construction-related impacts on fire protection would be **less than significant**.

Operation

The new development of up to 350 residential units and 110,000 square feet of commercial uses (and its associated increase in population) is expected to increase emergency calls and calls for fire protection services. Without additions to fire protection staff and facilities, the buildout of the proposed project may increase the average response time from LACFD. According to correspondence with LACFD, Fire Station 20's current average response time is 5:21 minutes. LACFD has confirmed that sufficient resources are available to serve the proposed project and meet its response time objectives and has no plans to construct or expand fire stations in the project area (LACFD 2022b). LACFD's Land Development Unit would review all building plans for the proposed project during the building permit plan check to ensure that there is sufficient access and water system requirements are met, and that the proposed project meets all applicable building code requirements—including automatic sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the Norwalk General Plan goal to ensure the availability and effective response of emergency services.

Compliance with the CBC, applicable standards, regulations, and LACFD's available capacity would ensure that the proposed project would be adequately served by existing LACFD facilities and would not result in service level problems. Accordingly, the project is not anticipated to generate or contribute to a demand for new or modified fire facilities. Project operation would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection services. Further, the proposed project would construct residential units and commercial uses, which would contribute to the City's property taxes and sales taxes, which are used to fund the fire protection services. Therefore, impacts on fire protection services from project operation would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.13.1.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Correspondence with LACFD determined that the current fire stations in the project vicinity can meet the demands associated with the proposed project (LACFD 2022b). Additionally, LACFD identified no new construction or expansion of existing facilities within the project area. (LACFD 2022b). Development of the project is not expected to significantly contribute to a cumulative impact on fire service response, equipment, and personnel. In addition, the LACFD, as well as the City, will review each additional project to ensure consistency with service levels and General Plan policies. Therefore, the construction and operation of the proposed project in combination with the cumulative projects is not anticipated to result in a cumulatively considerable increase in fire protection services demand that would require new or expanded fire facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, and the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be **less than significant**.

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Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impact.

5.13.2 Public Safety Protection

5.13.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

Local laws, regulations, plans, and guidelines related to police protection and apply to the proposed project are summarized below.

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

The City of Norwalk is committed to maintaining a safe environment by ensuring adequate public safety protection for existing and new developments. The following policies to minimize the risks associated with the provision of public safety are relevant to the proposed project:

- **Safety Element Goal:** To ensure the availability and effective response of emergency services.
 - **Policy.** Consult with the County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and Fire Department or any other emergency response agency during the review of development projects or land use entitlement applications.

Measure P Sales Tax

Measure P sales tax is the Norwalk Essential Services and Public Safety Measure which is a three-quarter-cent local sales taxes. Money generated from this sales tax would go to the City's general fund, which the City Council could use to support all City-services, including Sherriff response times and neighborhood patrols, gang prevention and youth anti-violence programs, repairs to streets and sidewalks, parks and recreation programs and facilities, and homeless prevention services, as well as expanding important emergency services like traffic and pedestrian safety (Norwalk 2022).

Existing Conditions

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

The project site is served by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD). The Norwalk Station, located at 12335 Civic Center Drive, is less than a mile east of the project site and services approximately 9.76 square miles of Norwalk, 7.84 square miles of La Mirada, and 6.43 square miles of unincorporated Los Angeles County (see Figure 5.13-1, *Public Services Serving the Project Site*) (LASD 2019, 2021, 2022).

According to LASD, the current population of the Norwalk Station Service area is 220,000 people. The Norwalk Station is currently staffed with 165 sworn personnel and 37 professional staff, including 56 patrol

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cars and two motorcycles. The Norwalk Station is understaffed and has a shortage of office and support staff space and new equipment (LASD 2022).

LASD sets goals for response times of 10 minutes for emergency calls, 20 minutes for priority calls, and 60 minutes for routine calls. For 2020-2021, the Norwalk Station average response times for emergency, priority, and regular calls were 3.8, 7.9, and 38.3 minutes, respectively (LASD 2022).

5.13.2.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to police protection if the project would:

PP-1 Result in a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provisions of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the need for new or physically changed governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection services.

5.13.2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact Analysis

The following impact analysis addresses the threshold of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.13-2: The proposed project would introduce new structures and residents into the LASD service boundaries but would not result in the need for new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts [Threshold PP-1]

A significant environmental impact could result if the implementation of the proposed project increased demand for police protection services to the extent that the construction of new or physically altered sheriff's facilities would be needed and could cause physical impacts.

A deficiency in the provision of adequate public safety services in and of itself is not a CEQA impact because it does not result in a foreseeable direct or indirect physical impact on the environment. Where a project causes a need for additional public safety services resulting in the market to construct new facilities or additions to existing facilities, the construction or operation of which results in a potential impact on the environment, then the effect would need to be assessed in this DEIR. The ultimate determination of whether there is a significant impact on the environment related to public safety services from a project is determined by whether the construction of new or expanded public safety facilities is a reasonably foreseeable direct or indirect effect of the project. The County of Los Angeles has no current capital improvement plans for constructing or expanding public safety facilities in the project vicinity.

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Construction

During the construction phase of the proposed project, construction workers would temporarily be on-site. Construction of the proposed project would maintain emergency access and emergency egress routes during project construction. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to consult with LASD during the plan check process for the proposed project before construction. The project site would be fenced during the construction phase, and construction site access would be limited to authorized personnel. In addition, as identified in Section 5.15, *Transportation*, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure TRA-1, which requires the preparation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan. This plan would identify the processes for establishing detours, construction signage to advise motorists of reduced construction zone speed limits, and flag persons to ensure safe traffic operations. Therefore, the temporary construction of the proposed project would not materially increase the demand for police protection services. It would not result in the need for physically altered or new sheriff facilities, which could result in environmental impacts, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Operation

The proposed project is assumed to provide a total service population of 1,705 residents and employees in the LASD service area and patrons who visit the site. This resident and employee service population is comprised of 1,264 residents and 441 employees. The businesses in the proposed project would operate during typical business hours (8:00 am to 10:00 pm), and patrons would visit within the hours of operation.

Development of the proposed project would include several design features and security measures that would reduce the opportunity for criminal activity to occur onsite, which meet the goals of Crime Prevention Thru Environmental Design (CPTED) as referenced by LASD. For example, the specific plan provides for the organization of City Hall and the new residential and commercial uses around a central open space, providing for visibility and accessibility that serve to minimize opportunities for crime. The proposed project would further include lighting throughout the project site to provide adequate visibility at night. In addition to overall increased pedestrian activity onsite that serves to deter illegal activities, the proposed project would include private security to be present onsite. Parking would be located in the existing parking structure and new parking areas onsite to limit theft. Further, access to the residential component of the proposed project would only be accessible to residents and their guests. The proposed projects' storefronts would be secured during non-business hours. Inclusion of residential uses would also provide increased "eyes on the street" to help deter crime.

LASD indicates that Sheriff protection services are from contracts with the cities of Norwalk and La Mirada, and Los Angeles County (in the project site area). LASD indicates that the Norwalk Sheriff Station is understaffed; however, they also report meeting response time goals. To meet current demands and projected future orders (including the project but also other future growth), LASD indicates that the addition of more personnel, space, and equipment would be needed. The proposed project's demand for police protection services would contribute to this deficiency (LASD 2022b). According to LASD, the proposed project and other intensification of land use in the area may require expansion of existing facilities to meet the needs generated by the proposed project. However, the specific requirement is not confirmed now, and there are no

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definitive plans (LASD 2022b). LASD would conduct additional space planning and feasibility assessments to determine the exact needs resulting from a general land use intensification in the service area, including the proposed project. If and when LASD determines that additional space in the form of physical expansion is needed, they would be required to conduct a separate evaluation of environmental impacts through the CEQA process. Given the absence of plans for new or modified facilities for police protection, any assessment of specific construction or its potential for adverse impacts would be speculative and beyond the scope of this DEIR.

The proposed project would generate a new source of property taxes and Measure P sales taxes for the City of Norwalk, which could be used, in part, to fund sheriff protection services. Thus, while no future expansion is contemplated, portions of tax revenue could be used for future expansion if needed.

The Norwalk Station is well within its goals for response time for emergency, priority, and routine calls. Given the proposed project's design features and security measures, its proximity to the Norwalk Sheriff Station, and no identified needs or plans for new or modified police facilities, the proposed project would not result in a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provisions of new or physically altered police protection facilities nor need for new or physically altered police protection facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection services. A **less-than-significant** impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.13.2.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

As indicated by LASD, the Norwalk Sheriff's department is currently understaffed, and continued population growth would require additional personnel, equipment, and facilities. Cumulative projects that the Norwalk Sheriff Station serves have the possibility of combining with the proposed project to increase demand for LASD services and facilities. Like the proposed project, the construction site for each cumulative project served by the Norwalk Sheriff Station is expected to be fenced and secured to limit access to authorized personnel, which would deter criminal activity during construction. Before construction, each cumulative project would be reviewed by the City of Norwalk and LASD, ensuring that construction activities, such as road closures (if needed), would not interfere with the LASD operations.

Like the proposed project, each development project is expected to integrate design concepts to reduce the potential of unwanted activity on their respective sites and comply with applicable regulatory requirements related to security and safety during construction and operation. There are no current plans for a new sheriff's station nor plans to expand the existing sheriff's station. The need for an additional facility is not contingent on the project's development and, if necessary, would occur regardless of project implementation. Future expansion of sheriff's stations would require environmental review to determine its environmental impacts. Finally, identify the location and nature of any future new or expanded LASD and any environmental effects associated with any such construction. Beyond the scope of this DEIR, cumulative impacts would be **less than significant**.

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Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.13.3 School Services

5.13.3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

State and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to school services and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

State

Senate Bill 50

Senate Bill (SB) 50 (funded by Proposition 1A, approved in 1998) limits the power of cities and counties to require mitigation of school facilities impacts as a condition of supporting new development. It provides instead for a standardized developer fee. SB 50 generally provides a 50/50 match of state and local school facilities funding. SB 50 also provides for three levels of statutory impact fees. The application-level depends on whether state funding is available, whether the school district is eligible for state funding, whether the school district meets specific additional criteria involving bonding capacity, year-round school, and the percentage of moveable classrooms in use.

California Government Code, Section 65995(b), and Education Code Section 17620

SB 50 amended California Government Code Section 65995, which contains limitations on Education Code Section 17620, the statute that authorizes school districts to assess development fees within school district boundaries. According to inflation adjustments, the Government Code Section 65995(b)(3) requires the maximum square footage assessment for development to be increased every two years. Per California Government Code Section 65995, the payment of fees is deemed to mitigate the impacts of new development on school facilities fully.

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

The following policies related to school services are relevant to the proposed project:

- Educational and Cultural Resources Element
 - **Policy.** Coordinate with the Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District, Little Lake Unified School District, Whittier Union High School, and ABC Unified School District to ensure quality educational service and facilities are provided for the children of Norwalk residents.

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Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District

Developer fees are levied by the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District under Section 17620 of the Education Code and Sections 65995 and 66001 of the Government Code. Any residential or commercial/industrial construction project within the School District boundary may be subject to the fee (Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District 2022).

Existing Conditions

Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District

The Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District (NLMUSD) provides prekindergarten to 12th-grade schooling for the Norwalk and La Mirada area. NLMUSD operates 19 elementary schools, five middle schools, five high schools, a preschool, and two adult learning sites. Districtwide enrollment in the 2020-2021 school year was 16,209 (CDE 2022). The project site would be served by the following public schools: Moffitt Elementary School, Waite Middle School, and John Glenn High School. Additionally, charter and private schools are located in the vicinity (see Figure 5.13-1, *Public Services Serving the Project Site*).

As shown in Table 5.13-2, NLMUSD has experienced a steady decline in student enrollment over the last seven years, from 18,960 students in 2014/2015 to an estimated 16,209 students in 2020/2021 (CDE 2022).

NLMUSD identifies that Moffitt Elementary School, Waite Middle School, and John Glenn High School have available capacity for 312, 121, and 391 students, respectively, based on the enrollment capacity for each school and the 2020/2021 student enrollment. NLMUSD provides a student generation rate for commercial and multifamily residential uses, as shown in Table 5.13-3 below (NLMUSD 2022).

Table 5.13-2 Student Enrollment for Public Schools Serving the Project Site

	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	Enrollment Capacity	Available Capacity
Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District	18,960	18,704	18,374	17,890	17,387	16,930	16,209	-	-
Moffitt Elementary School	469	458	465	444	409	418	388	700	312
Waite Middle School	697	672	658	590	567	540	527	648	121
John Glenn High School	1,553	1,450	1,346	1,322	1,248	1,247	1,202	1,593	391

CDE 2022; NLMUSD 2022.

5.13.3.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to school services if the project would:

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SS-1 Result in a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provisions of new or physically altered governmental facilities needs for unique or physically modified governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for school services.

5.13.3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact Analysis

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.13-3: The proposed project would introduce new residents to the project site, including school-aged children, that could attend NLMUSD schools, but the proposed project would not result in the need for new or physically altered facilities that cause significant environmental impacts. [Threshold SS-1]

The proposed project's development would add 350 multifamily residential units and 110,000 square feet of commercial use. Based on the NLMUSD's fee justification study, for a conservative estimate, it is assumed all employees generated by the project would live in the school district, which would have households per employee factor of 0.5748. As such, the proposed project's employees (441) would generate 254 homes, which would be used for estimating the project student population (NLMUSD 2021). As shown in Table 5.13-3 and based on the NLMUSD-provided generation rates, project buildout is anticipated to yield approximately 288-kindergarten to 12th-grade students (132 elementary, 67 middle schools, and 89 high school students). Table 5.13-2 shows that Moffitt Elementary School, Waite Middle School, and John Glenn High School have available capacity for 312, 121, and 391 students, respectively. Based on the student generation rate application, John Glenn High School, Moffitt Elementary School, and Waite Middle School have sufficient capacity to serve the proposed project. Since the proposed project is a multi-family residential development, a portion of its units would be studio and one-bedroom units, which generally do not generate school-aged children; a smaller amount of the proposed project's 350 dwelling units would generate school-aged children. Additionally, students have various educational options beyond the local public school (e.g., charter, private, home school, out-of-district transfers), which would further reduce the ultimate number of students who would likely attend local NLMUSD schools. Additionally, as illustrated in Table 5.13-2, enrollment has steadily declined over the last several years, a trend that is expected to continue, providing additional capacity that can absorb the students generated by the proposed project.

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Table 5.13-3 NLMUSD Estimated Student Population

School Level	Student Generation for Multifamily Residential ¹	Student Generation for Commercial ²	Total Student Generation from Proposed Project	Exceeds Capacity of Schools?
Elementary School	70	62	132	No
Middle School	35	32	67	No
High School	47	42	89	No
Total	152	136	288	

Source: NLMUSD 2021.

Notes:

¹ Student generation rates for multifamily residential use include Elementary School: 0.1954; Middle School: 0.0998; and High School: 0.1341 per dwelling unit.

² Based on the NLMUSD's fee justification study, student generation from new commercial is based on employee households. For a conservative estimate, it is assumed all employees generated by the project would live in the district, which would have a household per employee factor of 0.5748. The proposed project's employees (441) would generate 254 households. The 254 households and the generation factors below determine student generation based on the proposed project's commercial component. Student generation rates for commercial use include Elementary School: 0.2407; Middle School: 0.1245; and High School: 0.1648 per dwelling unit.

The proposed project would be required to pay school impact fees under SB 50, which fees are collected at the time of issuance of building permits. Under Government Code Section 65995, the payment of these fees is considered complete mitigation of project-related school services impacts. Therefore, the cost of the applicable development school fees would offset any potential effects of additional school enrollment and has implications for school services would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.13.3.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts on school services would occur when the proposed project, in combination with other recent, current, and proposed projects in the area (see Table 4-3, *Cumulative Projects*), causes a substantial increase in the student population that would trigger the need for the construction of new school facilities which causes significant environmental effects. Based on the student generation factor provided by NLMUSD, the proposed project is expected to be within the available capacity for the schools serving the project site. Additional students generated by cumulative projects could exceed the available capacity for schools serving each cumulative project, although exceedance may be reduced due to overall declining enrollment trends. However, along with the proposed project, each cumulative project would be required to pay development impact fees under SB 50. Under Government Code Section 65995, payment of these fees would be considered complete mitigation for impacts on public school facilities generated by the cumulative projects. Cumulative impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

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5.13.4 Parks

5.13.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

Local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to park services and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

The City of Norwalk General Plan includes the following policies about parks and recreation.

■ Open Space Element

- To provide programs and facilities to meet the varied needs of the City of Norwalk residents, including the elderly and handicapped.
- To provide parks recreational facilities designed, landscaped, and maintained to provide a high-quality recreational experience.
- Expand the permanent supply of usable recreational open space by obtaining new land areas, or requiring new developments, such as residential subdivisions, to provide adequate on-site recreational facilities.
- Require that developers contribute to providing parks and recreational facilities to offset additional demands brought about by new development, including the use of the Quimby Act, Parkland, Park and Recreation Dedications Fees.

Measure P Sales Tax

Measure P sales tax is the Norwalk Essential Services and Public Safety Measure which is a three-quarter-cent local sales taxes. Money generated from this sales tax would go to the City's general fund, which the City Council could use to support all City-services, including Sherriff response times and neighborhood patrols, gang prevention and youth anti-violence programs, repairs to streets and sidewalks, parks and recreation programs and facilities, and homeless prevention services, as well as expanding important emergency services like traffic and pedestrian safety (Norwalk 2022).

Existing Conditions

City and County Parks and Recreation

The City of Norwalk provides 12 parks, one recreational center, and one county owned park, as shown in Table 5.14-1, *Parks and Recreational Facilities in the City of Norwalk*. Norwalk Arts & Sports Complex (Norwalk Park) and Sproul Recreation Center are within a mile to the south of the project site (see Figure 5.13-1, *Public Services Serving the Project Site*). Norwalk Park and Sproul Recreation Center are 0.5 miles south on approximately 13 acres. The Norwalk Park and Sproul Recreation Center contain various passive and active recreational

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opportunities, including a community center, open space, hardcourts, the Sproul Museum, and an aquatics pavilion.

In addition to City parks, regional parks in Los Angeles County provide recreational opportunities for Norwalk residents. According to Los Angeles County Parks, three county parks are within three miles of the project site. The closest county parks are Don Knabe Golf Center and Junior Academy, approximately two miles from the project site; Amelia Mayberry Park, two miles from the project site; and Adventure Park, about three miles from the project site (LACPR 2022).

Project Site

The City Hall Lawn is not a designated City recreational facility. However, it does contain an open landscaped area that is publicly accessible and available for passive recreational uses. The City Hall Lawn is also used for City-sponsored events throughout the year, as programmed by the City. City sponsored and organization-led special events on the City Hall Lawn have included seasonal and holiday events, some of which have occurred on an annual basis. Examples of past annual City-sponsored special events include New Year's Celebration, Lunar New Year, Easter Festival, Cinco de Mayo, Fourth of July, Summer Concert Series, Labor Day, Halloween, and holiday Tree Lighting. These events generally range in size from 2,000 to 4,000 attendees. The City's largest event is Fourth of July, which has typical attendance of approximately 8,000 people. These events have typically included amplified music or sound.

Organization-led special events include fundraiser and non-profit events. The City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot have also been used for regularly scheduled activities, such as the Norwalk Farmers Market (which occurs weekly on Tuesday and Saturday). The City Hall Lawn is also utilized for recruit training. These events and activities may also include amplified music or sound in coordination with the City. The number, size, and duration of events and activities varies and is determined by the City. The size of these events can include up to a few hundred attendees. See Section 3, *Project Description*, for more information regarding the use of City Hall Lawn.

5.13.4.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to parks and recreation if the project would:

- PS-1 Results in a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provisions of new or physically altered governmental facilities needs for unique or physically modified governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for park services.

5.13.4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact Analysis

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

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Impact 5.13-4: The proposed project would introduce new structures and residents that would require park service but would not require new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts. [Threshold PS-1]

Residential Demand

Norwalk Park and Sproul Recreation Center are approximately one mile of the project site on approximately 13 acres; they include a community center, sports fields, and an aquatics pavilion. These parks are within walking distance of the project site. These parks are anticipated to be the primary active recreational facilities used by future residents of the proposed project and active and passive recreational uses on the project site.

Development of the proposed project would add up to 350 residential units generating an additional 1,264 residents, resulting in potential increased demand for park resources. This demand would be met by providing on-site private and shared open spaces and a publicly accessible open space. The proposed project includes the development of residential open space for project residents and their guests and open space that is publicly accessible but privately operated and maintained, which would offer both passive and active recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors. Project residents would be expected to utilize onsite private residential open space to meet many of their recreational needs. Residents and employees within the project site, as well as within the surrounding area, would also utilize the publicly accessible open space of the project, which would be improved and activated to provide more usable and attractive spaces for gathering, relaxing and recreating. The open spaces that are publicly accessible but privately operated and maintained would offer both passive and active recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The provision of residential open space would also be consistent with the Norwalk General Plan's Open Space Element policies for providing private residential open space and recreational facilities to large scale residential and commercial developments.

Special Events and Community Activities

While the proposed project would result in changes to the City Hall Lawn, including the development of new structures, the proposed project would include open space that is publicly accessible but privately maintained and operated would provide both active and passive recreational uses. The proposed project would re-orient the site's primary landscaped open spaces to a north-south configuration, integrating with the new commercial services and City Hall and providing connectivity within the project and to other existing civic, entertainment, and commercial areas. Portions of the project's publicly accessible open space would be available for events and programming.

Regular activities or events (such as the farmers market) and periodic City-sponsored special events occur onsite. During temporary construction activities, events and activities could be accommodated in other City locations, such as Front Street, as determined and coordinated by the City. Accommodation of special events in other locations would be consistent with both typical City siting of special events, and the City's ongoing and independent efforts to identify various locations throughout the City for larger seasonal and holiday events. Since the construction of the proposed project would be temporary, construction would not result in the need for new or expanded recreational facilities to accommodate activities and events. The temporary relocation of these events during construction would not result in the need for construction or expansion of recreational facilities which could result in adverse impacts.

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During operation of the proposed project, portions of the project's publicly accessible open space (minimum of 100,000 square feet) could accommodate special events and activities such as some of those that already occur on the project site (i.e., farmers markets, concerts, holiday events, among others). Smaller gatherings and activities (e.g., community bingo, yoga, back to school and job fairs) would also be expected to occur within the proposed project's publicly accessible open space. Table 3-2, *Potential Events on the Project Site*, in Section 3, *Project Description*, outlines examples of events and activities that currently occur onsite and may continue in the future. As discussed above and in Section 3, *Project Description*, the City is in the process of identifying additional locations throughout the City for larger City sponsored special events, as part of its independent effort to activate different areas of the City and facilitate accessibility to special events by residents throughout the City. The identification of additional locations, and the ongoing siting of City sponsored special events in other locations throughout the City, is not a part of the proposed project and would occur independently of the proposed project.

Conclusion

The proposed project would contribute property taxes and sales taxes, including Measure P sales taxes, a portion of which could be used to contribute to the provision and maintenance of parks in the city. The combination of onsite publicly accessible open space and private residential open space as well as existing park and recreation facilities with capacity for project residents and employees would ensure that the proposed project would not trigger the need for new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could result in adverse impacts. Therefore, impacts for the proposed project related to the need for new or altered park facilities would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.13.4.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts to park services would occur when the proposed project, in combination with other recent, current, and proposed residential projects in the area (see Table 4-3, *Cumulative Projects*), causes a substantial increase in the population that would trigger the need for a new park and recreation facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. Each new residential project would provide open space and recreational amenities onsite and would contribute property taxes, which would contribute to the provision and maintenance of parks in the city; therefore, cumulative impacts for park services would be **less than significant**, and project impacts would be negative not be cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

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5.13.5 Library Services

5.13.5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

State and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to library services and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

The following policies are related to library services:

- **Educational and Cultural Resources Element**
 - **Policy.** Cooperate with the Los Angeles County Library system to expand service to meet the needs of residents, such as book fairs and bookmobiles, and acquire additional multilingual and multicultural materials.

Existing Conditions

Los Angeles County Library (LACL) serves the city. LACL has three branches around the project area: the Norwalk Public Library adjacent to the project site, South Whittier Library, 3.2 miles east of the project site, and Alondra Library, 2.5 miles south of the project site (LACL 2022a).

LACL's service-level guidelines are a minimum of 0.50 gross square feet of library space per capita, 3.0 items (books and other library materials) per capita for regional libraries, 2.75 items per capita for community libraries, and 1.0 public access computers per 1,000 people served (LACL 2022b).

Norwalk Public Library is a regional library and would serve the project site. It is adjacent to the east of the project site across from Avenida Manuel Salinas. Branch hours are Tuesday and Wednesday from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm and Thursday through Saturday from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm (see Figure 5.13-1, *Public Services Serving the Project Site*). Currently, Norwalk Public Library is a 33,749-square-foot facility that houses a collection of 115,549 books, magazines, and media and 30 public computers. The Norwalk Public Library also offers various electronic print services and databases that may be accessed at branch libraries or from home.

The Norwalk Public Library does not currently meet the service guidelines for a minimum of 0.50 gross square feet of library space per capita nor the target of 3.0 items per capita. The Norwalk Public Library currently has a deficiency of 67,370 collections items and 31 public computers (LACL 2022b).

5.13.5.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to library services if the project would:

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LS-1 Result in a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provisions of new or physically altered governmental facilities needs for unique or physically changed governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for library services.

5.13.5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.13-5: The proposed project would introduce new residents into the LACL service boundaries but would not require new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts. [Threshold LS-1]

The proposed project's development would increase the number of residents within the LACL service area by approximately 1,264 persons and 441 employees, increasing the demand for library services provided at the Norwalk Public Library.

The Norwalk Public Library currently has a deficit for collection items and computers for its current service area (LACL 2022a). Based on the LACL service guidelines and the proposed project population of 1,252 people, LACL calculated the proposed project would generate a need for an additional 3,756 collection items and one public access computer. The proposed project would also require an additional 626 square feet of building space, but LACL has identified that the Norwalk Public Library has sufficient facility space to accommodate the proposed project's demand for library services. LACL indicated that the Norwalk Library has sufficient land and building capacity to accommodate the proposed project's demand in its existing facility. The proposed project would not generate a need for new or expanded library facilities (LACL 2022a). Therefore, the proposed project would not result in physical impact, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.13.5.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts on library services would occur when the proposed project, in combination with other recent, current, and proposed residential projects in the area (see Table 4-3, *Cumulative Projects*), cause a substantial increase in the demand for library services, creating a need for new facilities the construction of which could result in significant environmental impacts. Cumulative projects are expected to generate approximately 943 dwelling units and additional 47,980 square feet of commercial spaces.

LACL indicated that the Norwalk Library has sufficient capacity to meet the building and land demands of the proposed project, and the proposed project would not generate a need for new or expanded library facilities. The overall population in Norwalk is expected to increase, and demands for library services in the city will increase as the population increases. Plans for future expansion and population growth within the City of

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Norwalk are far in the future. Such development would occur with or without this project; the proposed project would only contribute a small percentage of population growth and is within the city's projected population growth. Because any future projects would require environmental review to determine environmental impacts and identify the location and nature of any future new or expanded LACL, and any environmental effects associated with any such construction, would be speculative. Beyond the scope of this DEIR, cumulative impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

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5.14 RECREATION

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential impacts of the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Project (proposed project) to parks and recreation.

Public comments were received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) related to recreation related to the changes to the City Hall Lawn. The relevant recreation issues raised from the public comments are addressed throughout this section. Refer to Appendix A for NOP comments.

5.14.1 Environmental Setting

5.14.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to recreation and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

The City of Norwalk General Plan includes the following policies with regard to parks and recreation:

Open Space Element

- To provide programs and facilities to meet the varied needs of residents of the City of Norwalk, including the elderly and handicapped.
- To provide parks and recreational facilities which are designed, landscaped and maintained to provide high quality recreational experience.
- Expand the permanent supply of usable recreational open space by obtaining new land area, or requiring new developments, such as residential subdivisions, to provide adequate on-site recreational facilities.
- Require that developers contribute to provide parks and recreational facilities to off-set additional demands brought about by new development, including use of Quimby Act, Parkland, Park and Recreation Dedications Fees.
- To ensure that open space land for recreation purposes is provided in adequate quantities and within reasonable proximity to meet the needs of the citizens of Norwalk.
- Promote the provision of private open space and recreation facilities in largescale residential developments in order to meet the open space and recreation needs that will be generated by the development.
- Encourage the inclusion of private outdoor and indoor recreation facilities in large commercial/industrial projects as a benefit for employees and as a means of reducing demand on public facilities.

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Recreation Open Space Standard

According to the City of Norwalk's General Plan, the City has a goal to provide one acre of usable public recreational open space per 1,000 persons (Norwalk 1996).

Measure P Sales Tax

Measure P sales tax is the Norwalk Essential Services and Public Safety Measure which is a three-quarter-cent local sales taxes. Money generated from this sales tax would go to the City's general fund, which the City Council could use to support all City services, including Sheriff response times and neighborhood patrols, gang prevention and youth anti-violence programs, repairs to streets and sidewalks, parks and recreation programs and facilities, and homeless prevention services, as well as expanding important emergency services like traffic and pedestrian safety (Norwalk 2022c).

5.14.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Los Angeles County Parks and Recreational Department (LACDPR) provides regional recreational services to the County of Los Angeles. The County owns and operates regional park and recreational facilities in in Los Angeles County. LACDPR includes approximately 73,214 acres of parkland and manages 182 parks with over 475 sports amenities, operates a network of 9 regional parks, 38 neighborhood parks, 20 community parks, 15 wildlife sanctuaries, 10 nature centers, 36 public swimming pools, more than 200 miles of multi-use trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding, and the largest municipal golf system in the nation, consisting of 20 golf courses (LACDPR 2021). Los Angeles County provides recreational opportunities for Norwalk residents via three regional county parks that are located within three miles of the proposed project site. The closest county parks are Don Knabe Golf Center and Junior Academy, approximately two miles southeast of the project site; Amelia Mayberry Park, approximately two miles northeast of the project site; and Adventure Park, approximately three miles northeast of the project site (LACDPR 2022).

City of Norwalk Parks and Recreational Facilities

The City of Norwalk provides 12 parks and one recreation center within the City, as shown in Table 5.14-1, *Parks and Recreational Facilities in the City of Norwalk*, which total approximately 87.3 acres of land (Norwalk 2022a). In addition, the City of Norwalk has plans to add 15 acres of recreational uses to Holifield Park (this is identified as a cumulative project in Section 4, *Environmental Setting*). Norwalk Arts & Sports Complex (Norwalk Park) and Sproul Recreation Center are both approximately 0.5 miles to the south of the project site. Norwalk Park and Sproul Recreation Center are immediately adjacent to each other on approximately 13 acres. The Norwalk Park and Sproul Recreation Center contains various passive and active recreational opportunities, including a community center, open space, hardcourts, the Sproul Museum, and an aquatics pavilion (Norwalk 2022b).

According to the City of Norwalk's General Plan, the City has a goal to provide one acre of usable public recreational open space per 1,000 persons (Norwalk 1996). Based on the City's existing population of approximately 102,773 persons, and the total usable public recreational open space currently available, as shown

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in the chart below, the City’s current recreational open space ratio is 0.85 acres per 1,000 persons. As such, the City is currently not meeting its goal to provide one acre of usable public recreational open space per 1,000 persons.

Table 5.14-1 Parks and Recreational Facilities in the City of Norwalk

Park Name	City or County Operated	Address	Distance from project site (miles/direction)
Don Knabe Golf Center and Junior Academy	County	13717 Shoemaker Ave.	2 SE
Gerdes Park	City	15711 Pioneer Blvd.	2.8 S
Glazier Park	City	10810 Excelsior Dr.	3.6 SW
Hermosillo Park	City	11959 162nd St.	2.8 S
Holifield Park	City	12500 Excelsior Dr.	2.1 S
Lakeside Park	City	11620 Studebaker Rd.	2.4 NW
New River Park	City	13432 Halcourt Ave.	2.4 W
Norwalk Arts & Sports Complex (Norwalk Park)	City	13000 Clarkdale Ave.	0.5 S
Ramona Park	City	13244 Mapledale St.	2.8 SE
Robert White Park	City	12120 Hoxie Ave.	3.9 W
Sara Mendez Park	City	11660 Dune St.	1.5 NW
Sproul Recreation Center	City	12239 Sproul St.	0.5 S
Vista Verde Park	City	11459 Ratliffe St.	1.7 W
Zimmerman Park	City	13031 Shoemaker Ave.	1.6 SE

Source: Norwalk 2022

Project Site

A portion of the project site is currently developed with the approximately 4.3-acre City Hall Lawn. The City Hall Lawn is not a designated as a City park or recreational facility. However, it does contain an open landscaped area and walking paths that are publicly accessible and used primarily for passive recreational uses (walking/jogging, informal small gatherings, employee lunch breaks, etc.). The City Hall Lawn and/or the surface parking lot have also been utilized periodically for City sponsored special events, organized-led special events and activities sponsored by organizations and/or the City, and various regularly scheduled activities.

City sponsored special events on the City Hall Lawn have included seasonal and holiday events, some of which have occurred on an annual basis. Examples of past annual City-sponsored special events include New Year’s Celebration, Lunar New Year, Easter Festival, Cinco de Mayo, Fourth of July, Summer Concert Series, Labor Day, Halloween, and holiday Tree Lighting. These events generally range in size from 2,000 to 4,000 attendees. The City’s largest event is Fourth of July, which has typical attendance of approximately 8,000 people. These events have typically included amplified music or sound.

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Organization-led special events include fundraiser and non-profit events. The City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot have also been used for regularly scheduled activities, such as the Norwalk Farmers Market (which occurs weekly on Tuesday and Saturday). The City Hall Lawn is also utilized for recruit training. These events and activities may also include amplified music or sound in coordination with the City. The number, size, and duration of events and activities varies and is determined by the City. The size of these events can include up to a few hundred attendees.

Independent of the proposed project, the City of Norwalk is in the process of identifying alternate locations for many larger City sponsored seasonal and holiday special events. Prior to release of the Notice of Preparation for this EIR, the City began investigating opportunities to relocate larger special events from the City Hall Lawn to other locations throughout the City to better accommodate larger events, and activate different areas of the City. To date, the City has identified three other locations for City sponsored special events, in addition to the City Hall Lawn:

- **Expanded Holifield Park.** The City is independently pursuing the expansion of Holifield Park to include an additional 15 acres currently owned by the City and adjacent to the existing Holifield Park, and has identified the expanded park as a potential location for City sponsored special events. This expansion of Holifield Park, which would include a lawn and parking area that could accommodate events, is included as a cumulative project in this Draft EIR (see Chapter 4, *Environmental Setting*).
- **Front Street (temporary street closure).** Front Street is a residential street and this location is generally bound by San Antonio Drive, Clarkdale Avenue, Funston Avenue, and Firestone Boulevard. This area is currently used for periodic special events.
- **Norwalk Park.** Norwalk Park contains a large grass area that could accommodate special events.

5.14.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to park and recreation if the project would:

- R-1 Would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.
- R-2 Includes recreational facilities or requires the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

5.14.3 Environmental Impacts

5.14.3.1 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the threshold of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

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Impact 5.14-1: The proposed project would not increase the use of existing park and recreational facilities such that a substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. [Threshold R-1]

The nearest local parklands are the Norwalk Park and Sproul Recreation Center which are each within one mile of the project site and adjacent to one another on approximately 13 acres; they include a community center, sports fields, and an aquatics pavilion (Norwalk 2022). The Norwalk Park and Sproul Recreation Center are approximately 0.5 miles south of the project site and are anticipated to be the primary active recreational facilities used by future residents of the proposed project. Additionally, the nearest regional facilities are Don Knabe Golf Center and Junior Academy, a golf course and driving range, located approximately two miles from the project site, and Amelia Mayberry Park located two miles from the project site and includes baseball fields, basketball courts, a skate park, a splash pad, and multiuse fields (LACPR 2022).

Construction

Given the distance of the nearest park and recreational facility from the project site, the temporary nature of construction activities, and the nature of a typical construction workday that is focused on the project site, it is unlikely that construction workers for the proposed project would use parks in the area such that there is physical deterioration.

Operation

Development of the proposed project would add up to 350 housing units, which would generate 1,264 residents¹, and could result in an increased demand for park and recreational resources by approximately 1.3 acres. The new residents generated by the proposed project would be expected to increase the use of existing local and regional parks and recreational facilities surrounding the project site. However, this demand would be partially offset by the provision of private residential open space (reserved for residents and their guests) and publicly accessible but privately operated and maintained open space onsite. Project residents would be expected to utilize onsite private residential open space to meet many of their recreational needs. Residents within the project site, as well as within the surrounding area, would also utilize the publicly accessible open space of the project, which would be improved and activated to provide more usable and attractive spaces for gathering, relaxing and recreating. The open space that are publicly accessible but privately operated and maintained would offer both passive and active recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The provision of residential open space would also be consistent with the Norwalk General Plan's Open Space Element policies for providing private residential open space and recreational facilities to large scale residential and commercial developments.

Additionally, any future employees will have access to passive recreation within the project site though publicly accessible open space and are expected to utilize the onsite recreational opportunities. If employees would decide to use the parks, it would be expected to be on a short-term basis during lunch or breaks.

¹ The proposed project population generation of 1,264 persons is based on the citywide persons per dwelling unit rate (3.61), which is based on 2020 decennial Census (102,773 persons / 28,455 dwelling units).

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The proposed project would generate additional property and Measure P sales tax revenue, a portion of which could be available for maintenance and provision of parks and recreational facilities in the city. The combination of onsite residential open space and publicly accessible open space, as well as property and sales tax revenue that could be available to contribute to maintenance and provision of existing recreation facilities, would ensure that the proposed project would not cause or accelerate substantial deterioration of existing neighborhood or regional recreational facilities. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant prior to mitigation.

Impact 5.14-2: Project implementation would not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. [Threshold R-2]

Residential Demand

As described above, development of the proposed project would add up to 350 housing units, and conservatively generate 1,264 residents, which could increase the demand for park and recreational resources by approximately 1.3 acres. The proposed project's demand for park and recreational resources would be partially offset by the onsite residential open space and publicly accessible open space and would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Physical environmental impacts associated with the development of the onsite residential and publicly accessible open space components are addressed in Section 3, *Project Description*, and throughout this Draft EIR. Where appropriate, mitigation measures for physical impacts are identified for construction (see for example Section 5.4, *Cultural Resources*). The proposed project would further contribute to the generation of property and sales taxes, including Measure P sales taxes a portion of which could be available for use in provision and maintenance of parkland and recreational facilities in the City. No recreational facilities and parkland space beyond the recreational facilities and open space provided onsite as part of the proposed project are proposed nor anticipated as a result of the proposed project. Development of the proposed project would not remove dedicated parkland space, since none of the 12 City parks are onsite and the City Hall Lawn is not a park. With the combination of onsite recreational facilities and generation of property and sales tax revenue, the proposed project would not be expected to result in the need for construction or expansion of recreational facilities which could result in adverse impacts. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Special Events and Community Activities

As discussed above, a number of regular activities or events (such as the farmers market) and periodic City-sponsored special events occur within the existing City Hall Lawn and/or surface parking lot. During temporary construction activities, events and activities could be accommodated in other City locations, such Front Street, as determined and coordinated by the City. Accommodation of special events in other locations would be consistent with both typical City siting of special events, and the City's ongoing efforts to identify various locations throughout the City for larger seasonal and holiday events. Since the construction of the proposed project would be temporary, construction would not result in the need for new or expanded recreational

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facilities to accommodate these events. The temporary siting of these events during construction would not result in the need for construction or expansion of recreational facilities which could result in adverse impacts.

During operation of the proposed project, portions of the project's 100,000 square feet (minimum) of publicly accessible open space could accommodate special events and activities such as some of those that already occur on the project site (i.e., farmers markets, concerts, holiday events, among others). Smaller gatherings and activities (e.g., community bingo, yoga, back to school and job fairs) would also be expected to occur within the project's publicly accessible open space. Table 3-2, *Potential Events on the Project Site*, in Section 3, *Project Description*, outlines examples of the types of events and activities that currently occur onsite and may continue in the future. As discussed above and in Section 3, *Project Description*, the City is in the process of identifying additional locations throughout the City for larger City sponsored special events, as part of its independent effort to activate different areas of the City and facilitate accessibility to special events by residents throughout the City. The identification of additional locations, and the ongoing siting of City sponsored special events in other locations throughout the City, is not a part of the proposed project and would occur independently of the proposed project. The provision and use of onsite publicly accessible open space, including for special events and activities, is evaluated in Section 3, *Project Description*, and throughout this Draft EIR. The use of onsite open space areas would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Conclusion

The proposed project would not result in the need for construction of new or expansion of existing recreational facilities which could result in adverse impacts. Therefore, impacts resulting from construction of the proposed project related to the need to construct new facilities or expand existing recreational facilities would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.14.4 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts to park and recreational services would occur when the proposed project, in combination with cumulative projects in the area (see Table 4-3, *Cumulative Projects*), would cause substantial physical deterioration of the existing neighborhood or regional parks that would require the construction of new or the expansion of existing facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. As discussed above, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact to recreation, and no mitigation measures are required.

Each new residential project would provide open space and/or recreational amenities onsite consistent with its jurisdiction's municipal code (such as NMC Chapter 17.05, *Residential Zones*) or consistent with a project-level specific plan which would be reviewed and approved by the appropriate lead agency to ensure that adequate open space and recreational facilities are provided onsite. While the City of Norwalk does not currently meet its recreational open space ratio, this ratio is not mandatory and is a citywide target. The City of Norwalk is

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independently expanding Holifield Park, which would in part help the City meet its ratio. Each cumulative residential project in the City of Norwalk would be required to provide onsite open space and/or recreational amenities, which would offset the project's demand on parks and recreational facilities. Further, each cumulative project would be required to undergo environmental review to evaluate project impacts to recreation and incorporate mitigation measures if necessary to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, the proposed project's residential component would not combine with cumulative residential projects to create a substantial physical deterioration or cause the construction of new, or the expansion of existing recreational facilities.

There are no existing parks or recreational facilities within walking distance of the proposed project. As such, construction workers and employees generated by the proposed project would be unlikely to use area parks and recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute temporary construction workers or employees that could combine with cumulative project to create a substantial physical deterioration or cause the construction of expansion of recreational facilities.

Further, as with the proposed project, each cumulative project would pay applicable property taxes and sales taxes (including Measure P sales taxes for projects in the City of Norwalk) which could in part contribute to the provision and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities in the area. Since the proposed project and cumulative projects would be required to provide open space onsite and the proposed project and each cumulative project would contribute to taxes, cumulative impacts for park and recreation services. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and project impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.14.5 References

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5.15 TRANSPORTATION

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential impacts on transportation from implementing the Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan Project (proposed project).

The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical report(s):

- *Transportation Study for the Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan Project*, Gibson Transportation Consulting, Inc., June 2022
- *Shared Parking Analysis for the Norwalk Entertainment District Civic Center Specific Plan Norwalk, California*, Gibson Transportation Consulting, Inc., June 2022

A complete copy of the transportation and shared parking studies are included in the Technical Appendices to this Draft EIR (Appendix M.1 and M.2, respectively).

Three comment letters pertaining to transportation were received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP), including from Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and a resident. The comment letters address the proposed projects potential impacts related to vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Responses to the comment letters and analysis regarding VMT are incorporated into this section. Refer to Appendix A for NOP comments.

5.15.1 Environmental Setting

5.15.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State, regional, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to transportation that are applicable to the proposed project are summarized in this section.

State

Senate Bill 743

On September 27, 2013, Senate Bill (SB) 743 was signed into law. The legislature found that with the adoption of SB 375, the state had signaled its commitment to encourage land use and transportation planning decisions and investments that reduce VMT and thereby contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as required by Assembly Bill (AB) 32. Additionally, AB 1358, described subsequently, requires local governments to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users.

SB 743 started a process that fundamentally changes transportation impact analysis as part of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance. These changes include the elimination of auto delay, level of service (LOS), and similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion as the basis for determining significant impacts in many parts of California (if not statewide). As part of the new CEQA Guidelines, the new criteria “shall promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal

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transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses” (California Public Resources Code section 21099[b][1]). On January 20, 2016, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) released proposed revisions to its CEQA Guidelines for the implementation of SB 743. OPR developed alternative metrics and thresholds based on VMT. The guidelines were certified by the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency in December 2018, and automobile delay, as described solely by LOS or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion, shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment. As of July 1, 2020, lead agencies are required to consider VMT as the metric for determining transportation impacts under CEQA. The guidance provided relative to VMT significance criteria is focused primarily on land use projects, such as residential, office, and retail uses. However, as noted in the updated CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, agencies are directed to choose metrics that are appropriate for their jurisdiction to evaluate the potential impacts of a project in terms of VMT.

Assembly Bill 1358: The California Complete Streets Act

The California Complete Streets Act (AB 1358) of 2008 was signed into law on September 30, 2008. Beginning January 1, 2011, AB 1358 requires circulation elements to address the transportation system from a multimodal perspective. The bill states that streets, roads, and highways must “meet the needs of all users in a manner suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan.” Essentially, this bill requires a circulation element to plan for all modes of transportation where appropriate, including walking, biking, car travel, and transit.

The Complete Streets Act also requires circulation elements to consider the multiple users of the transportation system, including children, adults, seniors, and the disabled. AB 1358 tasks the OPR to release guidelines for compliance, which are so far undeveloped.

Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375) was signed into law on September 30, 2008. The SB 375 regulation provides incentives for cities and developers to bring housing and jobs closer together and to improve public transit. The goal behind SB 375 is to reduce automobile commuting trips and length of automobile trips, thus helping to meet the statewide targets for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions set by the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32). SB 375 requires each metropolitan planning organization to add a broader vision for growth, called a “sustainable communities strategy” (SCS), to its transportation plan. The SCS must lay out a plan to meet the region’s transportation, housing, economic, and environmental needs in a way that enables the area to lower greenhouse gas emissions. The SCS should integrate transportation, land use, and housing policies to plan for achievement of the regional emissions target.

Regional

Southern California Association of Governments

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a council of governments representing Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. SCAG is the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for this region, which encompasses over 38,000 square

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miles. SCAG is a regional planning agency and a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SCAG is also the regional clearinghouse for projects requiring environmental documentation under federal and state law. In this role, SCAG reviews proposed development and infrastructure projects to analyze their impacts on regional planning programs. The southern California region's MPO, SCAG cooperates with South Coast AQMD, the Caltrans, and other agencies in preparing regional planning documents. SCAG has developed regional plans to achieve specific regional objectives, as discussed below.

Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) provides a regional transportation plan for six counties in Southern California: Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles, Ventura, and Imperial. The primary goal of the RTP/SCS is to increase mobility for the region. With recent legislation, this plan also encompasses sustainability as a key principle in future development. Current and recent transportation plan goals generally focus on balanced transportation and land use planning that:

- Maximize mobility and accessibility for all people and goods in the region.
- Ensure travel safety and reliability for all people and goods in the region.
- Preserve and ensure a sustainable regional transportation system.
- Maximize the productivity of our transportation system.
- Protect the environment and health of residents by improving air quality and encouraging active transportation (e.g., bicycling and walking).
- Encourage land use and growth patterns that facilitate transit and active transportation.

On September 3, 2020, SCAG's Regional Council unanimously voted to approve and fully adopt *Connect SoCal: The 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy of the Southern California Association of Governments* (2020–2045 RTP/SCS or Connect SoCal), and the addendum to the Connect SoCal Program Environmental Impact Report. Connect SoCal is a long-range visioning plan that builds on and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles, including SCAG's 2016 RTP/SCS, to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern. The 2020–2045 RTP/SCS focuses on the continued efforts of the previous RTP/SCSs for an integrated approach in transportation and land use strategies in development of the SCAG region through horizon year 2045. It projects that the SCAG region will meet the GHG per-capita reduction targets established for the SCAG region of 8 percent by 2020 and 19 percent by 2035. Additionally, it is projected that implementation of the plan would reduce VMT per capita for year 2045 by 4.1 percent compared to baseline conditions for the year. The 2020–2045 RTP/SCS includes a “core vision” that centers on maintaining and better managing the transportation network for moving people and goods while expanding mobility choices by locating housing, jobs, and transit closer together and increasing investments in transit and complete streets.

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Local

City of Norwalk Municipal Code

The following provisions from the City of Norwalk Municipal Code focus on fire service impacts associated with new development projects and are relevant to the proposed project:

- Chapter 15.08 (Fire Code). The Norwalk City Council adopts and incorporates by reference into the NMC the 2019 California Fire Code (CFC). The CFC sets forth requirements including emergency access, circulation design, and emergency egress routes.

The City of Norwalk Municipal Code (NMC) Title 17, Zoning, is also relevant to potential transportation impacts of the proposed project. Chapter 17.03.080, Transportation Demand Management serves to promote alternative transportation methods, such as carpools, vanpools, transit, bicycles, walking and park-and-ride lots, improvement in the balance between jobs and housing, and other strategies, including flexible work hours, telecommuting and parking management programs. It identifies development standards for nonresidential projects of 100,000 square feet or more. Applicable development standards may include accessible public transportation information, reduced parking ratios, bicycle parking, vanpool parking, bus stop improvements, and pedestrian connectivity.

City of Norwalk General Plan

The Circulation Element of the City of Norwalk General Plan (Norwalk 1996) identifies goals, objectives, and policies pertaining to the City's circulation system. The following are applicable to the proposed project:

- **Policy 1.13.** Provide for the safe and expeditious transport of hazardous materials.
- **Policy 1.14.** Limit driveway access to arterial streets to maintain a desired quality of arterial traffic flow.
- **Goal 3:** A circulation system that maximizes efficiency through the use of transportation system management and demand management strategies.
- **Policy 3.1.** Encourage new development which facilitates transit services, provides for non-automotive circulation and minimizes vehicle miles traveled.
- **Policy 3.4.** Encourage the implementation of employer Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements included in the City's adopted TDM ordinance and in the Southern California Air Quality Management District's Regulation 15 Program.
- **Goal 4:** An efficient public transportation system that provides mobility to all City residents, employees, and visitors.
- **Policy 4.3.** Promote new development that is designed in a manner which (1) facilitates provision or expansion of transit service, (2) provides on-site commercial and recreational facilities to discourage mid-day travel and (3) provides non-automobile circulation within the development.

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- **Policy 4.4.** Encourage developers to work with agencies providing transit service with the objective of maximizing the potential for transit use by residents and/or visitors.
- **Goal 5:** An efficient bicycle and pedestrian circulation system that encourages these alternative forms of transportation.
- **Policy 5.5.** Encourage the provision of showers, changing rooms and an accessible and secure area for bicycle storage at all new and existing developments and public places.
- **Policy 5.6.** Require developers, whenever feasible, to provide facilities for pedestrian travel such as sidewalks and to design developments to provide pedestrian access to the development on sidewalks and not require that pedestrians use driveways to access the development.
- **Goal 7:** Well-designed and convenient parking facilities.
- **Policy 7.1.** Provide sufficient on- and off-street parking.
- **Policy 7.3.** Consolidate parking, where appropriate, to eliminate the number of ingress and egress points onto arterials. Encourage the use of right-tum-in, right-tum-out type of driveways to reduce crossing conflicts on the arterials.
- **Policy 7.4.** Encourage the use of shared parking facilities among different land uses, by means of parking districts or other mechanisms. Shared parking is defined as parking spaces that can be used to serve two or more individual developments without conflict or encroachment (based on the time-differing nature of individual peaks). Experience indicates that the prudent and careful combining of uses result in a parking demand that is less than the demand generated by separate freestanding developments of similar size and character.

These goals, objectives, and policies are also discussed in Chapter 5.10, *Land Use and Planning*.

City of Norwalk Bicycle Master Plan

The Norwalk Bicycle Master Plan was adopted in February 2022. The City of Norwalk Bicycle Master Plan establishes a comprehensive approach to improving biking in the City by identifying facility needs, improvement projects, programs, and policies to encourage biking throughout the City. The Bicycle Master Plan aims to provide convenient and safe places to bike and create a more welcoming and encouraging environment for bicyclists, improving the community's health, and cultivating its identity. The Bicycle Master Plans identifies a number of goals and objectives to achieve its vision. The goals and objectives are focused on three main categories: accessibility, safety, and encouragement.

Accessibility: Provide safe, direct, and comfortable bike routes.

Developing a network of direct and comfortable bike facilities allows bicyclists of all ages and abilities to bike to key locations within and outside the city, helping increase the number of bike trips taken for work, school, recreation, and shopping.

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- Improve local biking connectivity between the City's neighborhoods and local destinations such as retail and schools.
- Improve connectivity to regional facilities and destinations.
- Remove or mitigate barriers to bicycling in the City.
- Improve biking connections to transit stations.
- Develop a network that serves bicyclists of all ages and abilities.

Safety: Improving safety for bicyclists.

Creating a safer environment for people biking can help reduce both the frequency and severity of bicycle-involved crashes and injuries. Methods to address safety can include engineering improvements, enforcement, and education.

- Improve bicyclists' perception of safety while using Norwalk's circulation network.
- Reduce conflicts between bikes and other modes such as automobiles, pedestrians, and transit vehicles along roads, at intersections, and at local destinations.
- Develop and implement safety education programs for bicyclists.
- Partner with law enforcement to equitably enforce safety laws for all road users. Improve safety for students using local roads to bike to and from local schools.

Encouragement: Promote biking and encourage people to bike in Norwalk, improving community health and identity.

A welcoming and friendly biking environment invites more people to bike and can result in improved community health due to increased physical activity. Encouraging residents to bike between areas of the city through improved connectivity can also help foster a sense of local identity.

- Provide end-of-trip bike facilities such as bike parking at key destinations.
- Partner with schools and local organizations to encourage biking.
- Use the City's resources, such as social media channels, to promote biking.
- Facilitate bike connectivity to recreational destinations such as parks and trails.
- Incorporate bike-oriented wayfinding into the City's transportation network.

5.15.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Street System

The existing street system near the project site and the surrounding area consists of a regional roadway system including freeways, major and secondary highways, and collector and local streets. These facilities provide regional, sub-regional, or local access and circulation within the project site and the surrounding area. Typically,

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the speed limits range between 25 and 40 miles per hour (mph) on the streets and highways, and between 55 and 65 mph on freeways.

Street classifications are designated in the City's General Plan (February 1996) (General Plan). The available facilities within the project site and the surrounding area are defined in the General Plan as follows:

- Freeways are six to 10 lane divided roadways with full access control and a typical right-of-way (ROW) in excess of 150 feet, designed and maintained by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).
- Major Highways are five or six lane divided roadways, with a typical ROW width of 100 feet and a curb-to-curb width of 80 feet.
- Secondary Highways are four-lane divided or undivided roadways, with a typical ROW width of 80 feet and a curb-to-curb width of 64 feet.
- Collector Roads are two-lane undivided roadways, with a typical ROW width of 54 to 60 feet and a curb-to-curb pavement width of approximately 40 feet. Its function is to distribute traffic between local streets, major and secondary arterials. Although some collectors serve as through routes, their primary function is to provide access to surrounding land uses.

Primary regional access to the project site is provided by I-5 and I-605. The streets providing regional and local access to the project site include Imperial Highway, Norwalk Boulevard, Bloomfield Avenue, and Firestone Boulevard. The following is a brief description of the major roadways near the project site and the surrounding area and their designations in the General Plan.

Existing Roadways

A description of roadways surrounding the project site that have been identified by the City as the study area for the Transportation Study is provided below. The study area includes 20 signalized intersections and six street segments as shown in Figure 5.15-1, *Transportation Study Area*. The study area was established in consultation with the City based on the existing intersection/corridor operations, distribution of project vehicular trips, and potential operational changes due to project-generated traffic. Also refer to Figure 5.15-2, *General Plan Street Designations*, for a map of the roadways with their designations.

- **Lakeland Road** – Lakeland Road is a designated Collector Road. It generally travels in the east-west direction and is located north of the project site. It provides one lane in each direction. On-street parking is generally permitted on both sides of the street west of Norwalk Boulevard.
- **Crewe Steet** – Crewe Street is a designated Collector Road west of Norwalk Boulevard and a designated local street west of Norwalk Boulevard. It generally travels in the east-west direction and is located north of the project site. It provides one lane in each direction. On-street parking is generally permitted on both sides of the street.
- **Imperial Highway** – Imperial Highway is a designated Major Highway. It generally travels in the east-west direction and is located along the northern boundary of the project site. It provides six travel lanes, three

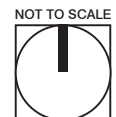
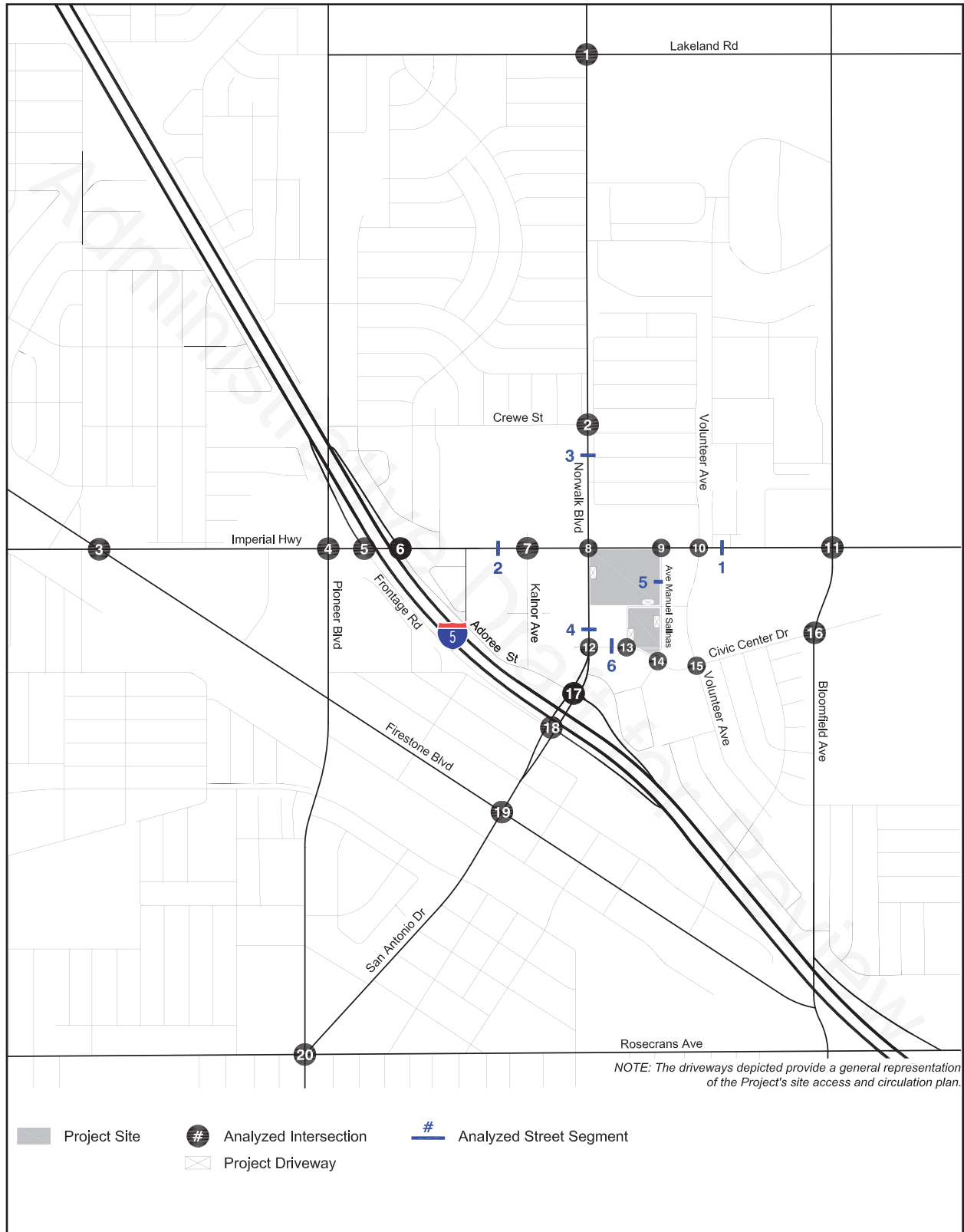
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lanes in each direction. Left-turn lanes are provided at major intersections. No parking is permitted on both sides of the street. The Los Angeles County Public Works Department identifies Imperial Highway as disaster route.

- **Civic Center Drive** – Civic Center Drive is a designated Collector Road. It generally travels in the east-west direction and is located south of the project site. It provides four travel lanes, two lanes in each direction, west of Bloomfield Avenue. It provides one lane in each direction east of Bloomfield Avenue. Left-turn lanes are provided at major intersections. On-street parking is generally permitted on both sides of the street east of Bloomfield Avenue.
- **Firestone Boulevard** – Firestone Boulevard is a designated Secondary Highway. It generally travels in the southeast-northwest direction and is located southwest of the project site. It provides four to six travel lanes, two to three lanes in each direction. Left-turn lanes are provided at major intersections. On-street parking is generally permitted on the north side of the street between Woods Avenue and Pioneer Boulevard and on both sides of the street east of Pioneer Boulevard.
- **Rosecrans Avenue** – Rosecrans Avenue is a designated Major Highway. It generally travels in the east-west direction and is located south of the project site. It provides four to six travel lanes, two to three lanes in each direction. Left-turn lanes are provided at major intersections. On-street parking is generally permitted on the south side of the street.
- **Pioneer Boulevard** – Pioneer Boulevard is a designated Major Highway. It travels in the north-south direction and is located west of the project site. Left-turn lanes are provided at major intersections. It provides four travel lanes, two lanes in each direction. On-street parking is generally permitted on the east side of the street south of Orange Street and on both sides of the street between Firestone Boulevard and Imperial Highway and north of I-5.
- **Norwalk Boulevard** – Norwalk Boulevard is a designated Major Highway. It travels in the north-south direction and is located along the western boundary of the project site. It generally provides four to six travel lanes, two to three in each direction. Left-turn lanes are provided at major intersections. On-street parking is generally not permitted on either side of the street. The Los Angeles County Public Works Department identifies Norwalk Boulevard as disaster route.
- **Kalnor Avenue** – Kalnor Avenue is a local street. It travels in the north-south direction and is located west of the project site. It provides two travel lanes, one in each direction. On-street parking is permitted on both sides of the street.
- **Avenida Manuel Salinas** – Avenida Manuel Salinas is a local street. It travels in the north-south direction and is located along the eastern boundary of the project site. It provides two travel lanes, one in each direction. On-street parking is not permitted on either side of the street.

Figure 5.15-1 - Transportation Study Area
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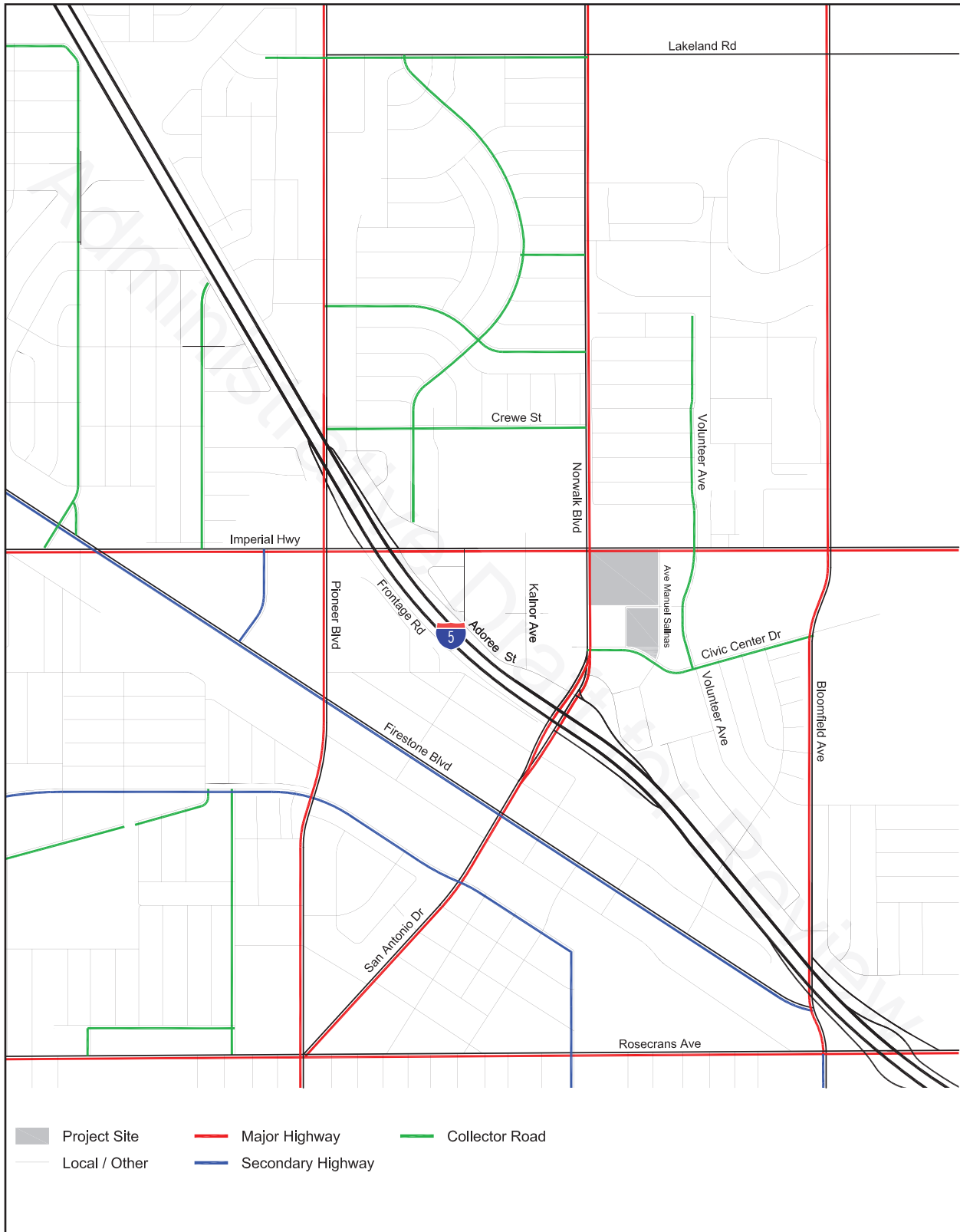


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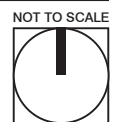
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Figure 5.15-2 - General Plan Street Designations
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Source: Gibson Transportation Consulting, Inc, 2022



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- **Volunteer Avenue** – Volunteer Avenue is a designated Collector Road. It travels in the north-south direction and is located east of the project site. It provides two travel lanes, one in each direction. On-street parking is generally permitted on both sides of the street north of Imperial Highway and south of Civic Center Drive.
- **Bloomfield Avenue** – Bloomfield Avenue is a designated Major Highway north of Rosecrans Avenue and a designated Secondary Highway south of Rosecrans Avenue. It travels in the north-south direction and is located east of the project site. It provides four travel lanes, two lanes in each direction. Striped bicycle lanes are provided on both sides of the street north of Imperial Highway. On-street parking is not permitted on either side of the street.
- **San Antonio Drive** – San Antonio Drive is a designated Major Highway. It travels in the southwest-northeast direction and is located southwest of the project site. It provides four to six travel lanes, two to three lanes in each direction. On-street parking is generally permitted on both sides of the street south of Olive Street.

Existing Pedestrian Facilities

The walkability of existing facilities is based on the availability of pedestrian routes necessary to accomplish daily tasks without the use of an automobile. These attributes are quantified by Walk Score which assigns communities a score between zero and 100 points (100 being best). Based on proximity to other commercial businesses and cultural facilities, the current walkability of the project site and the surrounding area is approximately 79 points.

The sidewalks that serve as routes to the project site provide connectivity to pedestrian crossings at intersections near the project site. The signalized intersections of Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway, Avenida Manuel Salinas and Imperial Highway, Courthouse-AMC Theater and Civic Center Drive, and Avenida Manuel Salinas and Civic Center Drive provide pedestrian facilities including marked pedestrian crossings, pedestrian phasing, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant curb ramps to limit mid-block crossings to the project site.

Existing Bicycle System

The project site and the surrounding area consists of a limited coverage of bicycle lanes (Class II and IV) and bicycle routes (Class III). Bicycle lanes are a component of street design with dedicated striping, separating vehicular traffic from bicycle traffic. These facilities offer a safer environment for both cyclists and motorists. Bicycle routes are identified as bicycle-friendly streets where motorists and cyclists share the roadway and there is no dedicated striping of a bicycle lane. Bicycle routes are preferably located on collector and lower volume arterial streets.

Bicycle facilities are not currently provided adjacent to the project site. However, within the Study Area, striped bicycle lanes are provided on Bloomfield Avenue north of Imperial Highway and Foster Road west of Pioneer Boulevard within the surrounding area. In addition, Norwalk Boulevard and Pioneer Boulevard north of Lakeland Road and Lakeland Road between Pioneer Boulevard and Norwalk Boulevard are designated bicycle routes. None of the roadways immediately bordering the project site are designated bicycle routes; however,

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there is a planned Class IV Cycle Track along Norwalk Boulevard between Imperial Highway and Foster Road. The Bicycle Master Plan further recommends a Class IV Cycle Track along Civic Center Drive south of the project site and a Class II (buffered) bicycle route along Norwalk Boulevard north of Imperial Highway (Norwalk 2022).

Existing Transit System

The project site and the surrounding area is served by bus routes operated by Metro and Norwalk Transit System (NTS) along Imperial Highway, Norwalk Boulevard, Bloomfield Avenue, and Civic Center Drive. Additionally, the Metrolink Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center is also located approximately 0.61 miles east of the project site, and the Los Angeles County Metro C (Green) Line Norwalk Station is located approximately 1.7 miles west of the project site. Table 5.15-1, Existing Transit Service, summarizes the transit route operating in the near the project site and the surrounding area, the type of service (peak vs. off-peak, express vs. local), and frequency of service. The average frequency of transit service during the peak hour (otherwise known as “headways”) was derived from the number of peak-period stops made at the stop nearest to the project site. A bus stop serving NTS Line 4 is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the project site along Imperial Highway. Additional bus stops in the vicinity of the project site are provided along Imperial Highway at Norwalk Boulevard, which serves NTS Lines 2 and 4, Norwalk Boulevard at Imperial Highway, which serves NTS Lines 1 and 3, Norwalk Boulevard at Civic Center Drive, which serves Metro Line 62, and Civic Center Drive at Norwalk Boulevard, which serves NTS Lines 3 and 7.

Table 5.15-1 Existing Transit Service

Provider, Route, & Service Area	Service Type	Hours of Operation	Average Headway (minutes) ¹			
			Morning Peak Period		Afternoon Peak Period	
			NB/EB	SB/WB	NB/EB	SB/WB
Metro						
62. Downtown Los Angeles – Hawaiian Gardens via Telegraph Road	Local	4:30 AM – 11:30 PM	48	30	30	40
460. Downtown Los Angeles – Disneyland via Harbor Transitway & Norwalk C Line Station	Express	4:30 AM – 11:15 PM	30	27	24	30
Norwalk Transit System (NTS)						
1. Rio Honda – Bellflower via Norwalk Boulevard	Local	5:30 AM – 11:00 PM	30	30	30	34
2. Norwalk – Cerritos via Norwalk Boulevard & Studebaker Road	Local	6:00 AM – 8:00 PM	34	34	34	40
3. Santa Fe Springs – Norwalk via Norwalk Boulevard	Local	5:30 AM – 8:00 PM	60	60	60	60
4. La Mirada – Norwalk C Line Station via Imperial Highway	Local	5:30 AM – 11:00 PM	20	22	24	20
5. La Mirada – Norwalk C Line Station via Rosecrans Avenue	Local	4:30 AM – 7:30 PM	48	48	48	48
7. El Monte – Norwalk C Line Station via Bloomfield Avenue	Local	5:30 AM – 9:00 PM	48	48	48	48

Source: Gibson 2022

NB: Northbound, SB: Southbound, EB: Eastbound, WB: Westbound

Metro: Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

AM Peak from 6 AM – 10 AM

PM Peak from 3 PM – 7 PM

¹ Average headways are based on the total number of trips during the peak period as indicated in Metro, and NTS data from June 2021 and May 2020, respectively.

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5.15.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- T-1 Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.
- T-2 Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).
- T-3 Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).
- T-4 Result in inadequate emergency access.

5.15.3 Environmental Impacts

5.15.3.1 METHODOLOGY

The overall evaluation of transportation impacts for the proposed project was determined in close coordination with the City of Norwalk and the methodology and study area was defined in the Transportation Study Scope document that was approved by the City in March 2022 (see Appendix M). This Transportation Study Scope defines the quantitative approach to evaluating both CEQA (VMT) impacts as well as addressing circulation-related issues that are outside of the scope of CEQA (intersection analyses, level of service, turning movements). For a detailed review of Transportation Study assumptions and methodology, please see Appendix M.

Project Trip Generation

The number of trips expected to be generated by the proposed project were estimated using rates published in *Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition*. The proposed project trip generation estimates including trip reductions are summarized in Table 5.15-2, *VMT Development*. Trip reductions are assumed to account for the internal capture of vehicle trips that occur within a multi-use development, consistent with the NCHRP 8-51 Internal Trip Capture Estimation Tool (*National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 684 – Enhancing Internal Trip Capture Estimation for Mixed-Use Developments*, Transportation Research Board and National Research Council, 2011), as well as transit usage and walk-in arrivals from surrounding neighborhoods and adjacent commercial developments. As shown in Table 5.15-2, after accounting for the reductions detailed in Table 5.15-2, the proposed project is estimated to generate 8,699 trips on a typical weekday and 80,291 daily VMT (prior to mitigation¹).

¹ Although TDM strategies are inherent to the project's design (e.g., reduced parking ratios, bicycle and pedestrian enhancements, etc.), to provide a conservative analysis, no additional reductions were applied to the project VMT, prior to mitigation

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Table 5.15-2 VMT Development

Land Use	Size	Daily Trip Rate ¹	Average Trip Length ²	Prior to Mitigation		With Mitigation (20% TDM)	
				Total Daily Trips	Total Daily VMT	Total Daily Trips	Total Daily VMT
Multi-Family Residential	350 du	4.54	10.6	1,589	16,843		
<i>Transit/Walk-In Reduction</i>	5%			(79)	(842)		
Residential with Reductions				1,510	16,001	1,208	12,805
Retail	35,000 sf	67.52	9.5	2,363	22,449		
<i>Mixed-Use/Internal Capture</i>	20%			(473)	(4,490)		
<i>Transit/Walk-In</i>	5%			(95)	(898)		
Retail with Reductions³				1,795	17,061	1,436	13,642
Supermarket	40,000 sf	93.84	8.6	3,754	32,284		
<i>Mixed-Use/Internal Capture</i>	20%			(751)	(6,457)		
<i>Transit/Walk-In</i>	5%			(150)	(1,291)		
Supermarket with Reductions³				2,853	24,536	2,282	19,625
Fine Dining Restaurant	17,500 sf	83.84	9.1	1,467	13,350		
<i>Mixed-Use/Internal Capture</i>	20%			(293)	(2,670)		
<i>Transit/Walk-In</i>	5%			(59)	(534)		
Fine Dining Restaurant with Reductions³				1,115	10,146	892	8,117
High-Turnover Sit-Down Restaurant	17,500 sf	107.20	8.8	1,876	16,509		
<i>Mixed-Use/Internal Capture</i>	20%			(375)	(3,302)		
<i>Transit/Walk-In</i>	5%			(75)	(660)		
High-Turnover Sit-Down Restaurant with Reductions³				1,426	12,547	1,141	10,041
Total Project				11,049	101,435		
Total Net Project with Trip Reductions				8,699	80,291	6,959	64,230

Source: Gibson 2022

Notes

¹ Daily trip rates based on Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition (ITE, 2021).

² Average vehicle trip lengths based on outputs from the California Emissions Estimator Model Version 2020.4.0. (CAPCOA, 2022).

³ The VMT analysis is based on the total trips generated to the Project Site, therefore, no pass-by reductions are applied.

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VMT Impact Criteria

Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)(1) a lead agency has discretion to choose the most appropriate method to evaluate the project's VMT, and the City, as the lead agency, has the discretion to select the appropriate thresholds of significance and methodologies for evaluating a project's VMT, including whether or not to express the change in absolute terms, per capita, per household or in another measure. The City has not adopted specific guidelines for evaluating VMT. However, as detailed in *Technical Advisory on Evaluation Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (Governor's Office of Planning and Research, December 2018) (OPR Technical Advisory), a lead agency has discretion to rely on thresholds recommended by other agencies. As such, the City has recognized thresholds from *Los Angeles County Public Works Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines* (County Department of Public Works, July 23, 2020) (County TIA Guidelines) to determine VMT impacts.

Section 3.1 of the County TIA Guidelines addresses whether a project causes substantial VMT and is generally applied to development projects, including non-retail and retail projects. Section 3.1.1 inquires whether the project would conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)(1). This subdivision states that (for land use projects) "vehicle miles travelled exceeding an applicable threshold of significance may indicate a significant impact." The impact criteria identified in the County TIA Guidelines are based on guidance published in OPR Technical Advisory and *California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan* (California Air Resources Board, January 2019).

The County TIA Guidelines outline screening criteria to determine if a development project would require further CEQA transportation impact analysis or if a project could be determined to have a less than significant CEQA impact. Per Section 3.1.2.1 of County TIA Guidelines, the project would meet the requirements for further VMT analysis, as detailed in Table 5.15-3, *Transportation Impact Analysis Screening – CEQA Analysis*.

The following describes the methodology by which vehicle trips and VMT were calculated for the project including appropriate reductions for internal trip capture, which was determined in consultation with the City in the Transportation Study Scope. The VMT analysis was based on the daily trip generation estimates from *Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition*, as calculated above in Table 5.15-2, and average trip length outputs from the *California Emissions Estimator Model Version 2020.4.0* (California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, 2022) (CalEEMod) to estimate the project-generated daily VMT. The population and employment projections based on data provided by the United States Census Bureau and the United States Green Building Council, respectively, were utilized to compare the project's VMT impact with the efficiency-based thresholds (e.g., residential VMT per capita).

The County TIA Guidelines provides VMT impact criteria for development (non-retail and retail) projects. As detailed in Section E-3 of the OPR Technical Advisory, analysis of specific plans may also utilize the same thresholds identified for development projects. The proposed project is located within the South County, as determined in the County TIA Guidelines. Therefore, the existing baseline VMT and VMT impact criteria for the South County area were applied to the Project's VMT analysis. In accordance with OPR Technical Advisory, the County TIA Guidelines direct mixed-use development projects to independently apply the applicable impact criteria to each project land use component (e.g., residential, employment, retail, etc.) included in a project.

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- **Non-Retail Development Projects:** The impact criteria for non-retail development projects are based on the residential and employment generated VMT, as the location and characteristics of residences and workplaces are often the main drivers of regional VMT. The County TIA Guidelines identifies the following existing baseline VMT and impact criteria (16.8 percent below the existing baseline VMT) for residential and employment VMT:
 - Residential VMT
 - Existing Baseline: 12.7 residential VMT per capita
 - Impact Criteria: 10.6 residential VMT per capita
 - Employment VMT
 - Existing Baseline: 18.4 employment VMT per employee
 - Impact Criteria: 15.3 employment VMT per employee

The residential VMT thresholds apply to residential land uses and the employment VMT impact thresholds apply to office, manufacturing, and institutional land uses. The proposed project includes residential uses, and therefore, the residential VMT impact thresholds were applied to the project's residential VMT analysis. However, the proposed project does not include office, manufacturing, or institutional land uses². Therefore, the employment VMT criterion does not apply to the proposed project, and the proposed project would not result in an employment VMT impact.

- **Retail Development Projects:** As detailed in the OPR Technical Advisory, retail projects (including general retail, supermarket, and restaurant land uses) typically reroute travel from other retail destinations rather than create new trips, which could lead to increases or decreases in VMT depending on the existing retail travel patterns of the area. A regional-serving retail project can lengthen trips and increase VMT because it is likely to shift business away from local-serving commercial options. Conversely, local-serving retail tends to shorten trips and reduce VMT because it attracts trips from nearby residences and businesses that would otherwise travel farther to find suitable options. As detailed in the OPR Technical Advisory and the County TIA Guidelines, and as outlined in the Transportation Study Scope provided in Appendix A to the Transportation Study, non-office retail uses that do not exceed 50,000 sf within mixed-use development projects are considered local-serving and are assumed to have less than significant VMT impacts.

As detailed in Section 3.1.4.2 of the County TIA Guidelines, when mixed-use developments include retail uses greater than 50,000 sf, Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) Travel Demand Forecasting (TDF) model³ is run to determine the net change in daily VMT with development of a project. For mixed-use projects with retail components greater than 50,000 sf, the daily VMT "with retail" is subtracted from the daily VMT "without retail" to determine the net change in VMT. If the retail component of a mixed-use development results in a net increase in VMT, the VMT impact would be considered significant, and mitigation would be required.

² Existing institutional land uses on the project site at Norwalk City Hall would continue and would not be changed by the project.

³ The SCAG RTP/SCS TDF model for *Connect SoCal: The 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy of the Southern California Association of Governments* (SCAG, Adopted September 2020) (2020-2045 RTP/SCS) is not readily available for public use. Therefore, the *2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy* (SCAG, Adopted April 2016) (2016 RTP/SCS) TDF model is utilized

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Table 5.15-3 Transportation Impact Analysis Screening – CEQA Analysis

County of Los Angeles Screening Criteria ¹	Met by Project
Development Projects (Section 3.1)	
Does the development project generate a net increase of 110 or more daily vehicle trips?	Yes
Does the project contain retail uses that exceed 50,000 square feet of gross floor area?	Yes
Is the project located within a one-half mile radius of a major transit stop or an existing stop along a high-quality transit corridor?	No
VTM Analysis Required (Any Criteria Met)	Yes
Transportation Projects (Section 3.2)	
Would the project include the addition of through traffic lanes on existing or new highways, including general purpose lanes, high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, peak period lanes, auxiliary lanes, and lanes through grade-separated interchanges (except managed lanes, transit lanes, and auxiliary lanes of less than one mile in length designed to improve roadway safety)?	No
VTM Analysis Required	No
Notes:	
¹ Screening criteria from the County TIA Guidelines Section 3, CEQA Transportation Impact Analysis Process.	

Impact 5.15-1: The proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. [Threshold T-1]

General Plan

The City’s transportation network includes roadways and pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit facilities to allow for the movement of persons and goods in the City. The goals, objectives, and policies of the City’s General Plan Circulation Element that are applicable to the proposed project are summarized above in Section 5.15.1.1, *Regulatory Background*. The goals, objectives, and policies applicable to the proposed project relate local thoroughfares and transportation routes, the transportation system, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and parking. As discussed below and discussed in Chapter 5-10, *Land Use and Planning*, the proposed project would be consistent with the City’s General Plan, Circulation Element.

The proposed project would include the operation of a mixed-use development, which would provide for multifamily residential, retail, commercial, restaurant, and grocery store uses, and would generate vehicle trips consistent with such uses. As such, the proposed project would generate passenger car vehicle trips associated with residents, their guests, employees and patrons, as shown in Table 5-15.2 above.

The proposed project would not involve the routine use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials, except small quantities of potentially hazardous materials used for cleaning and maintenance, landscaping, and pool maintenance typical of mixed-use projects. Such use and transport of these materials would be provided in a safe and expeditious manner (consistent with Policy 1.13).

The proposed project would provide one ingress-egress driveway off Norwalk Boulevard, three ingress-egress driveways off Avenida Manuel Salinas, and the use of the driveway off of Civic Center Way through the County parcel. Of these five driveways, only the driveway on Norwalk Boulevard, which would lead to the northwest

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building, would be considered a new driveway. Driveways along Avenida Manuel Salinas and Civic Center Drive already exist, and while the proposed project may alter the ingress/egress movements of these driveways it would not introduce new driveways along these roadways. Dedicated truck loading zones would be provided within the new parking facilities with access provided via Norwalk Boulevard and Avenida Manuel Salinas. Providing such driveways in these locations would disperse traffic flow for vehicles entering and exiting the project site, as well as limit interruptions to vehicle traffic passing the project site. As such, the proposed project is consistent with Policy 1.14, and would limit driveway access to arterial streets.

As further discussed in Impact 5.15-2, below, the proposed project through its mixed-use design, its accessibility to the public, and location near transit services would reduce VMT as compared to a single-use project in a non-urbanized area without regional transportation connections. Additionally, the proposed project would incorporate a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program (see Mitigation Measure TRA-1). As such, the proposed project would be consistent with Goal 3 and Policies 3.1 and 3.4.

The proposed project would be consistent with Circulation Element Goal 4 (public transportation) and Goal 5 (bicycle and pedestrian facilities), along with associated applicable policies. The proposed project would provide pedestrian and bicycle access from Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard leading to the interior of the project site on the ground level. Improvements to the existing sidewalks along both these main thoroughfares could be implemented as part of the project. Pedestrian and bicycle access would also be provided via existing sidewalk facilities along Civic Center Drive and Avenida Manuel Salinas. The following describes the three proposed primary pedestrian and bicycle access points, based on the conceptual site plan:

- **Imperial Highway** – Located in the northernmost portion of the Project Site, the pedestrian and bicycle entrance along Imperial Highway would provide access to the ground floor retail in the northwest corner, the northeast retail center, and the central spine of open space.
- **Avenida Manuel Salinas/Civic Center Drive/Existing Parking Garage** – Located in the southern portion of the Project Site, the pedestrian and bicycle entrance point located between the southeast ground floor retail, new parking facilities, and the existing parking garage would provide access to the central spine of open space, City Hall, and ground-floor retail.
- **Norwalk Boulevard** – Located on the western boundary of the Project Site, the pedestrian and bicycle entrance along Norwalk Boulevard between City Hall and the new mixed-use structure on the northwest corner of the Project Site would provide access to the ground floor open space and ground floor retail.

Pedestrians would be able to directly access the parking structure onsite from Avenida Manuel Salinas and the County Courthouse. The proposed project may also include the construction of an elevated pedestrian bridge that would connect the existing parking garage to the proposed project's new development to allow for direct and efficient access. The proposed project would also extend the bus turnout on Imperial Highway to center the bus stop with central publicly accessible open space areas onsite and would provide onsite bicycle parking. These project features would support and encourage an efficient public transportation system, bicycle system, and pedestrian circulation system.

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Further, as indicated in the Transportation Study, the project site area currently has a Walking Score of 79 points out of 100 due to the proximity of other commercial and cultural facilities. As the proposed project would provide more pedestrian and bicycling facilities and pedestrian-friendly uses on the project site, the proposed project would further encourage walkability in the project site area.

The proposed project would provide well-designed and convenient parking facilities onsite that would serve the project site and the surrounding entertainment district and civic center. Parking for the proposed project would include a mix of new on-site parking and the use of the parking structure on site (see Appendix M.2). The parking structure would function as a joint-use for the project's commercial uses, City and other nearby civic uses, and for the other commercial uses to the south. Parking onsite would be sufficient to serve the proposed project and would help provide for consolidated and shared parking facilities in the area. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with Goal 7 and Policies 7.1, 7.3, and 7.4.

Norwalk Municipal Code Consistency

As further described below, the project requires Mitigation Measure TRA-1 which includes a comprehensive transportation demand management (TDM) program designed to reduce VMT associated with project operations. The key elements identified in the TDM program, some of which are inherent to the project, such as improvement in the balance between jobs and housing, bicycle amenities, reduced parking ratios, vanpool parking, bus stop improvements, and pedestrian connectivity, are consistent with NMC Title 17, Chapter 17.03.080, Transportation Demand Management.

SCAG Connect SoCal Consistency

The proposed project's consistency with the 2020 SCAG RTP/SCS, Connect SoCal, is detailed in Table 5.10-2, *SCAG Connect SoCal Goals (2020-2045)*, of Section 5.10, *Land Use and Planning*. The goals of Connect SoCal are related to housing, transportation technologies, equity, and resilience. As discussed in Section 5.10, *Land Use and Planning*, the proposed project would implement the City's Economic Development Opportunities Plan by revitalizing the project site with community-focused mixed-use development that contributes to the City's economic base and encourages and supports current and future transit use and other alternative forms of transportation while providing sufficient parking to meet the City's existing and future needs.

Norwalk Bicycle Master Plan Consistency

As discussed under Section 5.15.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, the Bicycle Master Plan includes goals and policies to encourage bicycling in the City. While the Bicycle Master Plan focuses on implementing bicycle facilities and supporting bicycle use along public rights-of-way, the proposed project would support the Bicycle Master Plan and would not hinder the implementation of the planned bicycle routes. The proposed project would be designed to encourage connectivity and public use of the project site by providing publicly accessible open space and paths throughout, with the three primary access points and potentially improved sidewalks on Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway to better support bicycle connections to the project site from the surrounding area. The proposed project would also provide bicycle parking onsite for project residents, visitors, patrons, and commercial tenants. Through proper engineering and the City's review of all final design plans would ensure that the proposed project's driveways would be designed to maintain adequate line of sight, which

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would limit vehicle and bicycle conflicts. Therefore, the proposed project would support safe and accessible bicycle use and network and would encourage bicycling. The proposed project would be consistent with the Bicycle Master Plan.

Conclusion

As discussed above, the proposed project would be consistent with the General Plan Circulation Element, SCAG Connect SoCal, and the Bicycle Master Plan. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, and a **less than significant impact** would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.15-2: The proposed project could conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b). [Threshold T-2]

Residential VMT

As shown in Table 5.15-4, *Proposed Project VMT With and Without Mitigation* the proposed project would generate 16,001 daily residential VMT, based on the trip generation estimates and the average residential trip length output from CalEEMod (see also Table 15.2). As detailed in Table 5.15-4, the proposed project is projected to have a total residential population of 1,264 residents, based on projections from the United States Census Bureau. Thus, the proposed project would generate daily residential VMT per capita of 12.7, exceeding the residential VMT per capita threshold of 10.6. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a **potentially significant** residential VMT impact

Retail VMT

The proposed project includes approximately 110,000 sf of commercial uses, which for purposes of the transportation analysis were assumed to consist of approximately 35,000 sf of retail uses, a 40,000sf supermarket, and approximately 35,000 sf of high-turnover and fine dining restaurant uses. None of the individual commercial tenants would exceed 50,000 sf threshold. Furthermore, as stated in the OPR Technical Advisory, adding retail opportunities, including supermarket and restaurant uses, into the urban fabric improves retail destination proximity and therefore shortens trips and reduces VMT. The proposed project would add commercial uses proximate to residential uses on the project site. As such, the commercial uses of the project would provide retail and restaurant opportunities within walking distance of the project's residential units, as well as the existing civic center, entertainment, and residential uses in the surrounding project area. The proposed project is also intended to implement the City's Economic Development Plan, which identified the project site as an opportunity for enhanced retail and commercial uses to take advantage of existing trips and demographics in the area. Thus, the commercial uses of the proposed project would not be considered regional-serving and would instead serve the local community.

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However, because the combined commercial uses of 110,000 sf would exceed 50,000 sf, additional review of total VMT was conducted. Based on the VMT methodology outlined in Section 3.1.4.2 of the County TIA Guidelines, the SCAG 2016 RTP/SCS TDF model was used to determine the net change in regional VMT. As detailed in *Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Project VMT Modeling Summary* (Iteris, Inc., June 2022) provided in Appendix C to the Transportation Study (which is found in Appendix M.1), the County-wide VMT would remain the same when comparing the project both with and without the proposed 110,000 sf of retail uses. Therefore, the inclusion of the project's proposed 110,000 sf of commercial retail uses would not result in an increase in total VMT. Thus, the commercial component of the proposed project would not result in a significant retail VMT impact and a **less than significant impact** would occur.

Mitigation Measures:

TRA-1 A comprehensive transportation demand management (TDM) program shall be implemented as part of the proposed project's mitigation program aimed at reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and vehicular trips to the project site and the project area through transportation services, education programs, and incentive programs intended to promote non-auto travel and the reduction of single occupancy vehicle trips. This mitigation measure identifies a menu of available TDM strategies that the proposed project could implement to result in a quantitative reduction in VMT and vehicular trips.

The proposed project would be subject to annual monitoring to provide a reasonable sample period of travel characteristics, including but not limited to the percentage of modes of travel to and from the project site, parking hour utilization, and/or peak hour trips, to ensure that the consistency with the TDM target. The monitoring program would continue until the project has shown that achievement of the target has been met for five consecutive years following full operations of the proposed project. Should the proposed project fail to meet the target after a given monitoring year, the proposed project would be required to review and implement enhancements to the components of the TDM Program, subject to review and monitoring by the City, to increase the effectiveness of TDM in meeting the VMT and trip reduction goals the following year.

The proposed project's TDM program shall include, but is not limited to, the following measures, which are further described below:

- **Educational Programs/On-Site TDM Coordinator.** A key component of a successful TDM program is to make residents, employees, and visitors at the project site aware of the various programs offered. To this end, a TDM coordinator would reach out to residents, employers, and employees directly to promote the benefits of TDM.
- **Transportation Information Center/Kiosks.** In compliance with the Norwalk Municipal Code Chapter 17.03.080, Transportation Demand Management, the proposed project would provide a Transportation Information Center, where project residents, employees and visitors can obtain information regarding commute programs, and individuals can obtain real-time information for planning travel without using an

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automobile. A Transportation Information Center would be centrally-located and would provide information about transit schedules, commute planning, rideshare, and bicycle and pedestrian plans.

- **Project Design Features to Promote Bicycling and Walking.** The proposed project would incorporate features for bicyclists and pedestrians, such as exclusive access points, upgraded pedestrian facilities, and bicycle parking. Additionally, the project site would be designed to be a friendly and convenient environment for pedestrians through publicly accessible open space and walkways.
- **Bikeway Improvements.** The proposed project would contribute funding toward the implementation of bicycle facility improvements within the project site area.
- **Promotion and support of carpools and rideshare.** The TDM program would provide services to match residents and employees to establish carpools and vanpools. Carpools/vanpools provide the potential for residents to go to work relaxed and/or work during the commute and reduce the number of vehicle trips to and from the project site.
- **Incentives for using alternative travel modes.** The TDM program would incorporate various incentives for use of its programs. In accordance with the City's TDM Ordinance, carpool and vanpool users could be offered preferential load/unload areas or convenient designated parking spaces. Employees who choose not to drive their own cars and park them at the project site could receive a "parking cash-out" subsidy. For example, discounted transit passes could be offered to eligible residents and employees. Project employees who purchase transit passes from the project's Transportation Coordinator would automatically be registered in a Guaranteed Ride Home Program by which, upon request to the Transportation Coordinator, the employee will be given a voucher to travel home on transit or Uber/Lyft (or similar shared ride service) in case of illness or emergency. Each employee would receive a limited number of Guaranteed Ride Home passes per year.
- **Parking incentives.** The proposed project would provide a reduced parking supply as compared to the City's Municipal Code requirements. Limiting the amount of parking available would limit the convenience of driving and disincentivize driving as a preferred mode of travel, and thus would decrease VMT. Unbundled parking is a program wherein parking spaces are rented or sold separately from the building space, which allows for a separate charge for parking and the flexibility to vary the number of spaces rented. Unbundling parking is an essential first step toward getting people to understand the economic cost of parking. Without unbundled parking, tenants often assume that parking is free.
- **Mobility hub support.** The proposed project would support existing and/or future efforts by the City to provide first-mile and last-mile service for transit users. Mobility hubs, typically located at or near public transit centers, would provide amenities such as, but not limited to, bicycle parking and transit information. The proposed project could

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provide space for similar amenities at the project site to complement future mobility hubs in the surrounding entertainment district and civic center areas.

- **Community-wide transportation management organization.** The project area is a candidate for alternative modes of transportation, including convenient walking and bicycling, carpooling and vanpooling, use of public transit, short-term automobile rentals, etc., due to the proximity of existing employment, residential, and commercial uses, as well as the Metrolink Norwalk Station, the Metro C (Green) Line Norwalk Station, and numerous bus stops. At present, there is no organization to administer these options to the public. A Communitywide Transportation Management Organization would help promote these services to a community by providing information about available public transportation options and ridesharing services. Many of the strategies described above could be enhanced through participation in the Communitywide Transportation Management Organization

Significance After Mitigation: *Trip Generation Handbook, 3rd Edition and Handbook for Analyzing Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions, Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, and Advancing Health and Equity: Designed for Local Governments, Communities, and Project Developers* (California Air Pollution Control Officers Association [CAPCOA], December 2021) (CAPCOA GHG Handbook) provides a summary of research of TDM programs and the effectiveness of the TDM programs at reducing VMT. The combined effect of the various strategies implemented as part of the TDM program would result in a reduction in VMT and vehicular trips by offering services, actions, specific facilities, etc., aimed at encouraging use of alternative transportation modes as compared to single occupancy vehicles (e.g., transit, bus, walking, bicycling, carpool, etc.). Based on the project's suburban center location, a VMT reduction of up to 20 percent would be achievable with implementation of a TDM program, as identified in CAPCOA GHG Handbook. Thus, it would be reasonable to assume that implementation of the project's TDM program, as detailed in TRA-1 above, would achieve a VMT reduction of 20 percent⁴ from the baseline VMT (i.e., VMT prior to mitigation). While the 20 percent reduction is necessary to reduce the identified significant residential VMT impact, through application of the TDM program defined in TRA-1, the TDM would reduce VMT for all components of the project, including retail (which was determined to have a less than significant VMT impact).

As shown in Table 5.15-4, with implementation of a TDM program (Mitigation Measure TRA-1) and the aforementioned monitoring compliance, the proposed project is estimated to generate 12,805 daily residential VMT. Thus, assuming a total population of 1,264 residents, the proposed project would generate daily residential VMT per capita of 10.1, which would fall below the residential VMT per capita threshold of 10.6. Thus, with implementation of the TDM program, the project's daily residential VMT per capita would be reduced to a **less than significant** level with the incorporation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1.

⁴ Per the CAPCOA GHG Handbook, the combined effectiveness of the TDM measures related to Land Use, Neighborhood Design, Trip Reduction Programs, Parking Management, Transit, Parking or Road Pricing/Management, and Clean Vehicles and Fuel reduce VMT. The effectiveness of the TDM strategies is based on research documented in the CAPCOA GHG Handbook, as well as other industry research and local conditions.

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Table 5.15-4 Proposed Project VMT With and Without Mitigation

Project Information		
Project Land Uses		
	Housing Multi-Family	350 du
	Retail Shopping Center	35,000 sf
	Retail Supermarket	40,000 sf
	Retail Fine Dining Restaurant	17,500 sf
	Retail High-Turnover Restaurant	17,500 sf
	Total Population	1,264
	Total Employees	441
Los Angeles County Baseline Area		South County
	Residential VMT Impact Threshold	10.6
	Work VMT Impact Threshold	15.3
VMT Analysis	Prior to TDM	With TDM Program (Mitigation Measure TRA-1)
Total Daily Residential Trips	1,510	1,208
Total Daily Residential VMT	16,001	12,805
Household VMT per Capita	12.7	10.1
Significant Impact?	Yes	No
Source: Gibson 2022		

Impact 5.15-3: The proposed project would not increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). [Threshold T-3]

Construction

The construction of the proposed project may require temporary lane closures for utility hook ups and to be used as construction staging areas. However, such closures would be temporary and done in coordination with the City. These lane closures, if needed, would not create sharp curves nor dangerous intersections. The project site is located in an urban area and construction activity is common; therefore, construction activity would not represent incompatible uses. As such, the construction phase of the proposed project would not increase hazards due to a geometric design features or incompatible uses and a **less than significant impact** would occur. In addition, as further discussed under Impact 5.15-4, the proposed project would incorporate Mitigation Measure TRA-2, which would require the preparation and implementation of a Construction Management Plan.

Operation

Geometric Design Features

The proposed project would not introduce any geometric design features that could increase hazards. The driveways developed by the proposed project would be designed, constructed, and used in accordance with the NMC Chapter 15.08 which would prevent sharp curves and dangerous intersections to ensure emergency

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vehicle accessibility. As discussed under Impact 5.15-1, of the proposed project's five driveways, only the driveway on Norwalk Boulevard would require the installation of a new driveway, as no driveways currently exist along the Norwalk Boulevard frontage. Due to the existing raised median along Norwalk Boulevard and the proximity to the adjacent signalized intersection of Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway, vehicle access to and from this driveway would be limited to right in and right out; no left turn would be allowed. The project driveways would not create a hazard due to a geometric design feature. The operation of the proposed project would not include sharp curves nor dangerous intersections, and a **less than significant impact** would occur.

Incompatible Uses

The proposed project would allow for the operation of a mixed-use project that would include multifamily residential and various commercial uses, such as grocery store, restaurant, and retail, as described in Section 3, *Project Description*. These uses are typical of an urban area, such as the City of Norwalk, and do not represent an incompatible use. As such, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impacts.

Impact 5.15-4: The proposed project may result in inadequate emergency access during construction. [Threshold T-4]

Construction

All construction activities would be primarily contained within the project site boundaries; however, it is expected that construction fences may temporarily encroach into the public right-of-way (e.g., sidewalks and roadways) and the sidewalks along Imperial Highway, Norwalk Boulevard, and Avenida Manuel Salinas may temporarily be used for construction access and/or right of way improvements. Additionally, project construction would result in truck traffic (haul trucks, delivery trucks, cement trucks) and worker traffic to and from the project site on a daily basis. Public right-of-way would be maintained to the extent feasible along the Imperial Highway, Norwalk Boulevard, Avenida Manuel Salinas, and Civic Center Drive project frontages throughout the construction period. No staging of construction equipment would occur within the public right of ways. Temporary traffic controls would be needed to direct traffic and/or pedestrians safely around any closures. Temporary traffic diversion truck haul routes and impacts to the roadway would be coordinated with the City and applicable emergency response agencies, including the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) and Los Angeles County Sheriff Department (LASD), to ensure adequate access along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard during construction of the proposed project. Due to the potential encroachment onto the public right-of-way for construction staging and temporary roadway closures, the proposed project could result in inadequate emergency access during construction. A **potentially significant impact** would occur.

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Operation

The Los Angeles County Public Works Department identifies Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard as disaster routes, which border the project site to the north and west, respectively. Imperial Highway provides access out of the City of Norwalk eastbound and allows access to I-5, which is also identified as an evacuation route in both north and south directions. Norwalk Boulevard provides access out of Norwalk northbound to I-5 and would continue to do so for the proposed project.

All project driveways and circulation aisles would be designed and maintained to provide adequate access for emergency vehicles to the project site and the surrounding area. The new parking garage access along Norwalk Boulevard would be designed to maximize internal queuing areas to minimize the potential for queue spillover into the public right-of-way and impacts to emergency vehicle access. In addition, the proposed project is required to meet NMC Chapter 15.08 requirements for adequate emergency access and comply with Los Angeles County Fire Department access requirements. Therefore, impacts to emergency access during operation of the proposed project would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures:

TRA-2 **Construction Management Plan**

A detailed Construction Management Plan, including haul routes and a staging plan, shall be prepared and submitted to the City of Norwalk, Los Angeles County Fire Departments, and Los Angeles County Sheriff Department for review and approval, prior to commencing construction. The Construction Management Plan shall formalize how construction would be carried out and identify specific actions that would be required to reduce effects on the surrounding community. The Construction Management Plan shall be based on the nature and timing of the specific construction activities and other development projects in the vicinity of the project site, and shall include, but not be limited to, the following elements, as appropriate:

- Advance, bilingual notification of adjacent property owners and occupants of upcoming construction activities, including durations and daily hours of operation
- Prohibition of construction worker or equipment parking on adjacent streets
- Prohibition of haul truck staging on any streets adjacent to the Project, unless specifically approved as a condition of an approved haul route
- Scheduling of construction related traffic restricted to off-peak hours and in consideration of any other traffic-causing events or overlapping nearby construction activities, to the extent feasible.
- Containment of construction activity within the Project Site boundaries except where access and/or right of way improvements may be necessary

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- Implementation of safety precautions for pedestrians and bicyclists through such measures as alternate routing and protection barriers
- Scheduling of construction-related deliveries, haul trips, etc., to occur outside the commuter peak hours to the extent feasible
- Provision of flagging or other directional signage to direct traffic as needed.
- Spacing of trucks so as to discourage a convoy effect
- Sufficient dampening of the construction area to control dust caused by grading and hauling and reasonable control at all times of dust caused by wind
- Maintenance of a log, available on the job site at all times, documenting the dates of hauling and the number of trips (i.e., trucks) per day
- Identification of a construction manager and provision of a telephone number for any inquiries or complaints from residents regarding construction activities posted at the site readily visible to any interested party during site preparation, grading, and construction

Significance After Mitigation: The proposed project's transportation impacts during construction would be **less than significant** with implementation of Mitigation Measure TRA-2. The operation of the proposed project is less than significant prior to mitigation.

5.15.4 Cumulative Impacts

Consistency with Applicable Plans, Ordinances, and Policies

As substantiated above, the proposed project would comply with applicable plans, ordinances, and policies that guide circulation. Similar to the proposed project, each cumulative project would be expected to show its consistency with existing programs, plans, ordinances, and policies that address its jurisdiction's circulation system (such as the Circulation Element and Norwalk Bicycle Master Plan). Additionally, each cumulative project would be expected to show consistency with SCAG's Connect SoCal plan. No significant cumulative impacts are anticipated to which both the proposed project and the cumulative projects would contribute in regard to City circulation policies or standards adopted to protect the environment and support multimodal transportation options. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulative impact and a **less than significant impact** would occur.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

Cumulative VMT effects of development projects are determined based on the consistency with the air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals of *Connect SoCal: The 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy of the Southern California Association of Governments* (SCAG, Adopted September 2020) (2020-2045 RTP/SCS) in terms of development location, density, and intensity. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS presents a long-term vision for the region's transportation system through Year 2045 and balances the region's future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals.

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For projects that do not demonstrate a project impact by applying an efficiency-based impact threshold (i.e., residential VMT per capita) in the project impact analysis, a less than significant impact conclusion is sufficient in demonstrating there is no cumulative VMT impact, as those projects are already shown to align with the long-term VMT and GHG goals of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS.

As described above, the proposed project would not result in a significant and unavoidable VMT impact with the incorporation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1. Mitigation Measure TRA-1 requires a variety of transportation options through a TDM program and is consistent with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS goal of maximizing mobility and accessibility in the region. Thus, with the incorporation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1, the proposed project would result in a less than significant cumulative VMT impact and would not be cumulatively considerable.

Geometric Features and Incompatible Uses

A potentially cumulative impact may occur if the proposed project would combine with a cumulative project to create or substantially increase hazards due to geometric design feature or incompatible uses. The nearest cumulative projects to the project site are the fast-food restaurant with drive-through at 12843 Norwalk Boulevard (#6) and the 121-room hotel at 13111 Sycamore Street (#7). These cumulative projects are approximately 665 feet southwest and approximately 874 feet south of the project site, respectively. The proposed project along with the cumulative projects would not add driveways that could combine to create hazardous geometric features. Additionally, the proposed project's multifamily residential uses and commercial uses along with the cumulative projects' uses are typical of an urban area and would not introduce incompatible uses. The proposed project along with the cumulative projects would not contribute to a cumulative impact and a **less than significant impact** would occur.

Emergency Access

Construction-related activities could adversely impact emergency access in adjacent roadways when combined with other cumulative projects. However, not all cumulative projects would be constructed at the same time, and none of the cumulative projects are immediately adjacent to the project site. Each construction project would be required to prepare and implement site-specific construction worksite staging and construction plans to reduce potential impacts to emergency access, and potentially incorporate mitigation measures. As part of the City review process of Construction Management Plans, potential overlapping construction activities and proposed haul routes would be reviewed to minimize the impacts of cumulative construction activities on any particular roadway. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure TRA-2, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in a cumulatively significant emergency access impact during construction. A **less than significant impact** would occur.

Prior to the issuance of construction permits, each applicable agency would review the proposed project and each cumulative projects' architectural packages (including site plans with driveway access) and transportation study that would ensure that the projects do not result in inadequate emergency access. Each project is anticipated to be constructed and operate in accordance with its jurisdiction's municipal code. Since none of the cumulative projects are adjacent to the project site, the proposed project would not combine with a

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cumulative project to result in an inadequate emergency access during operation that would be cumulatively significant. A **less than significant impact** would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.15.5 References

Gibson Transportation Consulting, Inc. 2022, June. Transportation Study for the Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan Project.

Norwalk, City of. 2022, February. Bicycle Master Plan.

_____. 1996. February. Vision Norwalk. The City of Norwalk General Plan.
<https://www.norwalk.org/home/showpublisheddocument/20041/636561304601230000>

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5.16 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential for implementation of the proposed project to impact tribal cultural resources. The analysis in this section is based, in part, on a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search conducted by the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), project notification letters submitted by the City to Native American tribes, and follow-up Native American consultation pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and SB 18. Potential impacts to other cultural resources (i.e., historic resources, archaeological resources, and human remains) are evaluated in Section 5.4, *Cultural Resources*. The analysis in this section is based in part on information in the following report:

- *Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Assessment Report of the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Project*, City of Norwalk, Los Angeles County, California, Cogstone, June 2022

A complete copy of this study is in Appendix F of this Draft EIR.

5.16.1 Environmental Setting

5.16.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to tribal cultural resources and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Federal

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act is a federal law passed in 1990 that mandates museums and federal agencies to return certain Native American cultural items—such as human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony—to lineal descendants or culturally affiliated Indian tribes.

State

Public Resources Code

Archaeological resources are protected pursuant to a wide variety of state policies and regulations enumerated under the California Public Resources Code (PRC). In addition, cultural resources are recognized as nonrenewable resources and therefore receive protection under the PRC and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

- **PRC Sections 5097.9 to 5097.991** provide protection to Native American historical and cultural resources and sacred sites and identify the powers and duties of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). These PRC Sections also require notification to descendants of discoveries of Native American human remains and provide for treatment and disposition of human remains and associated grave goods.

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- **PRC Section 5097.9** states that no public agency or private party on public property shall “interfere with the free expression or exercise of Native American Religion.” The Code further states that:

No such agency or party [shall] cause severe or irreparable damage to any Native American sanctified cemetery, place of worship, religious or ceremonial site, or sacred shrine... except on a clear and convincing showing that the public interest and necessity so require. County and city lands are exempt from this provision, except for parklands larger than 100 acres.

Health and Safety Code

The discovery of human remains is regulated by California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, which states that:

In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation...until the coroner...has determined...that the remains are not subject to...provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible.... The coroner shall make his or her determination within two working days from the time the person responsible for the excavation, or his or her authorized representative, notifies the coroner of the discovery or recognition of the human remains. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and...has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission.

Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52)

The Native American Historic Resource Protection Act (AB 52) took effect July 1, 2015, and amended California Public Resources Code Section 5097.94, and added Public Resources Code Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 21084.3. The primary intent of AB 52 was to involve California Native American Tribes early in the environmental review process and to establish a new category of resources related to Native Americans that require consideration under CEQA, known as Tribal Cultural Resources. AB 52 requires tribal consultation and analysis of potential impacts to tribal cultural resources into the CEQA process. AB 52 further requires that impacts to tribal cultural resources be analyzed like any other CEQA topic and establishes a consultation process for lead agencies and California tribes. Projects that require a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an environmental impact report (EIR) or Notice of Intent (NOI) to adopt a (Mitigated) Negative Declaration are subject to AB 52. A significant impact on a tribal cultural resource is considered a significant environmental impact, requiring feasible mitigation measures.

Tribal cultural resources must have certain characteristics:

1. Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historic Resources or included in a local register of historical resources. (PRC Section 21074[a][1])

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2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. (PRC Section 21074[a][2])

The first category requires that the tribal cultural resource qualify as a historical resource according to PRC Section 5024.1. The second category gives the lead agency discretion to qualify that resource—under the conditions that it support its determination with substantial evidence and consider the resource’s significance to a California tribe. Following is a brief outline of the process, paraphrased from PRC Sections 21080.3.1 and 3.2.

1. A California Native American tribe asks agencies in the geographic area with which it is traditionally and culturally affiliated to be notified about projects. Tribes must ask in writing.
2. Within 14 days of deciding to undertake a project or determining that a project application is complete, the lead agency must provide formal written notification to all tribes who have requested it.
3. A tribe must respond within 30 days of receiving the notification if it wishes to engage in consultation.
4. The lead agency must initiate consultation within 30 days of receiving the request from the tribe.
5. Consultation concludes when both parties have agreed on measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect to a tribal cultural resource, OR a party, after a reasonable effort in good faith, decides that mutual agreement cannot be reached.
6. Regardless of the outcome of consultation, the CEQA document must disclose significant impacts on tribal cultural resources and discuss feasible alternatives or mitigation that avoid or lessen the impact.

Public Resources Code Section 21082.3(c)(1) states that any information, including, but not limited to, the location, description, and use of the tribal cultural resources, that is submitted by a California Native American tribe during the environmental review process shall not be included in the environmental document or otherwise disclosed by the Lead Agency or any other public agency to the public without the prior consent of the tribe that provided the information. If the Lead Agency publishes any information submitted by a California Native American tribe during the consultation or environmental review process, that information shall be published in a confidential appendix to the environmental document unless the tribe that provided the information consents, in writing, to the disclosure of some or all of the information to the public. However, confidentiality, does not apply to data or information that are, or become publicly available, are already in lawful possession of the project applicant before the provision of the information by the California Native American

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tribe, are independently developed by the project applicant or the project applicant's agents, or are lawfully obtained by the project applicant from a third party that is not the Lead Agency, a California Native American tribe, or another public agency.

Senate Bill 18 (SB 18)

Prior to the enactment of Senate Bill 18 (SB 18) (Cal. Gov't. Code Sections 65352.3 et seq.) related to traditional tribal cultural places in 2004, state law provided limited protection for Native American prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, and ceremonial places. These places may include sanctified cemeteries, religious and ceremonial sites, shrines, burial grounds, prehistoric ruins, archaeological or historic sites, Native American rock art inscriptions, or features of Native American historic, cultural, and sacred sites.

SB 18 placed new requirements on local governments for developments within or near traditional tribal cultural places. SB 18 requires local jurisdictions to provide opportunities for involvement of California Native Americans tribes in the land-planning process for the purpose of preserving traditional tribal cultural places. The Final Tribal Guidelines recommends that the NAHC provide written information as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after the receipt of the notification to inform the lead agency if the proposed project is determined to be in proximity to a traditional tribal cultural place, and another 90 days for tribes to respond to if they want to consult with the local government to determine whether the project would have an adverse impact on the traditional tribal cultural places. There is no statutory limit on the consultation duration. Prior to the adoption or substantial amendment of a general plan or specific plan, a local government must refer the proposed action to those tribes that are on the NAHC contact list and have traditional lands located within the lead agency's jurisdiction. The referral must allow for 45-day comment period.

The SB 18 tribal consultation is a requirement of the planning process for specific plans and/or general plans and not the CEQA process. Nevertheless, since the proposed project includes a specific plan, the SB 18 process is discussed in this section.

5.16.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Tribal cultural resources are defined by the California PRC Section 21074 as sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) or included in a local register of historical resources, or a resource determined by the Lead Agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant. Historical resources, unique archaeological resources, or non-unique archaeological resources may also be tribal cultural resources if they meet these criteria.

Ethnographic Setting

Ethnographically, the project area is within the territory of the Gabrieleño (Tongva) (Cogstone 2022). Their territory encompassed an area of more than 2,500 square miles—from Topanga Canyon in the northwest, to the base of Mount Wilson in the north, San Bernardino in the east, Aliso Creek in the southeast, and out to the Southern Channel Islands (Cogstone 2022). The Gabrieleño language is part of the Takic language family.

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At European contact, the tribe consisted of more than 5,000 people living in various settlements throughout the area. Some of the villages could be quite large, housing up to 150 people.

The Gabrieleño are considered to have been one of the wealthiest tribes and to have greatly influenced tribes they traded with. Houses were domed, circular structures thatched with tule or similar materials (Bean and Smith 1978:542). The best-known artifacts were made of steatite and were highly prized. Many common everyday items were decorated with inlaid shell or carvings reflecting an elaborately developed artisanship.

Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)

The NAHC performs searches of its Sacred Lands Inventory to alert agencies of the existence, but not the location, of Native American sacred sites in a project's area of potential effects (NAHC 2020). A request for a Sacred Lands File search was sent to the NAHC on January 4, 2022. The NAHC responded on March 7, 2022 and indicated that there are no sacred lands or resources known within the same USGS Quadrangle, Township, Range, and Section as the project site.

Cultural Resource Investigations

A records search for the project site was conducted on January 4, 2022 at the South Central South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) housed at the California state University, Fullerton. The records search included a review of all previously documented cultural resources and cultural resources investigations within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site. Results of the record search indicate that no previous studies have been completed within the project site and that six studies have been completed previously within a half-mile radius.

The project site is in an urban area and entirely developed with a parking structure, a surface parking lot, a portion of the County accessory building, City Hall Lawn, and City Hall. An archaeological survey of the project site was conducted on March 3, 2022. The entire project site was observed to be either landscaped or hardscaped. Native sediments were not seen during the survey. No archaeological or potential tribal cultural resources were identified during the pedestrian survey.

Tribal Consultation (AB 52)

In compliance with the requirements set forth in AB 52, the City of Norwalk provided formal notification of the proposed project and requested consultation to four tribes that are on the City's request for notification list on February 7, 2022. These letters were emailed and certified mailed to the following:

- Andrew Salas, Chairperson, Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians–Kizh Nation
- Anthony Morales, Chief, San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
- Joseph Ontiveros, Cultural Resource Director, Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
- Michael Mirelez, Cultural Resource Coordinator, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

On February 8, 2022, a response email was received from the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians–Kizh Nation (Kizh Nation) indicating they were "...in agreement with the specific plan amendment. However, our

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Tribal government would like to request consultation for any and all future projects when ground disturbance will be occurring within this location.” Although the proposed project includes a specific plan, because of the nature of the proposed project (a proposed physical redevelopment within a defined geographic area), the City contacted the tribe again to request consultation at this time; the Kizh Nation agreed. In lieu of a consultation meeting, the Kizh Nation elected to consult via email. None of the other three contacted tribes responded to the request for consultation.

Through this consultation, the Kizh Nation provided supporting information including text and maps regarding potential tribal cultural resources in the proposed project vicinity via email on May 24, 2022. Additionally, the tribe provided suggested mitigation measures regarding the potential presence of tribal cultural resources in the project vicinity (Kizh Nation 2022). Based on information provided and reviewed, the Kizh Nation did not indicate the known presence of a tribal cultural resource within the project site.

SB 18 Consultation

The SB 18 tribal consultation is a requirement of the planning process for specific plans and/or general plans and not the CEQA process. Nevertheless, since the proposed project includes a specific plan, the SB 18 process is discussed in this section. In accordance with SB 18 requirements, the NAHC provided a list of tribal representatives. The City sent invitation letters to the Native American contacts provided by the NAHC on March 15, 2022. Letters were emailed and certified mailed to:

- Andrew Salas, Chairperson, Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians–Kizh Nation
- Anthony Morales, Chairperson, Gabrieleño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
- Sandonne Goad, Chairperson, Gabrieleño/Tongva Nation
- Robert Dorame, Chairperson, Gabrieleño Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
- Christina Conley, Chairperson, Gabrieleño Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
- Charles Alvarez, Gabrieleño-Tongva Tribe
- Matias Belardes, Chairperson, Juaneño Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation–Belardes
- Joyce Perry, Tribal Manager, Juaneño Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation–Belardes
- Lovina Redner, Tribal Chair, Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Isaiah Vivanco, Chairperson, Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians
- Joseph Ontiveros, Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians

One response was received from Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation. Since consultation was being pursued with Kizh Nation consistent with AB 52, no further consultation was requested.

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5.16.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to tribal cultural resources if the project would:

- TCR-1 Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
- i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or
 - ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

5.16.3 Environmental Impacts

The following impact analysis addresses the threshold of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.16-1: The proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or that has been determined to be significant by the lead agency pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. [Threshold TCR-1.i, ii]

Based on information provided via consultation, there is the potential during ground disturbing activities to discover previously unknown archaeological resources which might qualify as tribal cultural resources. No prehistoric archaeological resources have been previously recorded within the project site or within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site. The Sacred Lands File (SLF) search conducted by the NAHC indicated that the project site was negative for known sacred tribal lands. While the Kizh Nation indicated that the project site was within their tribal territory and nearby to known village sites, trade routes, sacred water courses, and other sensitive areas for buried archaeological sites that could be determined to be tribal cultural resources, no known tribal cultural resources within the project site have been identified as a result of the research or consultation with the tribe. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a known tribal cultural resource, either listed in the California Register of Historic Resources or in a local register, or that is determined by the Lead Agency (here the City of Norwalk), in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, within the project site.

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Based on all available information, including that provided by the Kizh Nation during AB 52 consultation, the City does not have evidence of known tribal cultural resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074. However, given the information provided by the Kizh Nation during consultation and the amount of ground disturbance proposed on the project site, there is a high potential for ground disturbing activities associated with construction activities that result in ground disturbance to result in the inadvertent disturbance of resources that may qualify as tribal cultural resources. If this occurs, the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an identified tribal cultural resource, or one that is determined by the Lead Agency (here the City of Norwalk), in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, and impacts would be **potentially significant impact**.

Mitigation Measures:

- TCR-1 Retain a Native American Monitor Prior to Commencement of Ground-Disturbing Activities
- A. The project applicant/lead agency shall retain a Native American Monitor from or approved by the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation (Tribe or Kizh). The monitor shall be retained prior to the commencement of any “ground-disturbing activity” for the proposed project at all project locations (i.e., both on-site and any off-site locations that are included in the project description/definition and/or required in connection with the project, such as public improvement work). “Ground-disturbing activity” shall include, but is not limited to, demolition, pavement removal, potholing, auguring, grubbing, tree removal, boring, grading, excavation, drilling, and trenching.
 - B. A copy of the executed monitoring agreement shall be submitted to the Norwalk Planning Division prior to the commencement of any ground-disturbing activity, or the issuance of any permit necessary to commence a ground-disturbing activity.
 - C. The Native American Monitor will complete daily monitoring logs that will provide descriptions of the relevant ground-disturbing activities, the type of construction activities performed, locations of ground- disturbing activities, soil types, cultural-related materials, and any other facts, conditions, materials, or discoveries of significance to the Tribe. Monitor logs will identify and describe any discovered TCRs, including but not limited to, Native American cultural and historical artifacts, remains, places of significance, etc., (collectively, tribal cultural resources, or “TCR”), as well as any discovered Native American (ancestral) human remains and burial goods. Copies of monitor logs will be provided to the project applicant/lead agency upon written request to the Tribe.
 - D. On-site tribal monitoring shall conclude upon either of the following, whichever occurs later, (1) written confirmation to the Kizh from a designated point of contact for the project applicant/lead agency that all ground-disturbing activities and phases that may involve ground-disturbing activities on the project site or in connection with the project are complete; or (2) a determination and written notification by the Kizh to the project applicant/lead agency that no future, planned construction activity and/or

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development/construction phase at the project site possesses the potential to impact Kizh TCRs.

- E. Upon discovery of any TCRs, all construction activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery shall cease (i.e., not less than the surrounding 50 feet) and shall not resume until the discovered TCR has been fully assessed by the Kizh-approved Native American Monitor and/or Kizh-approved archaeologist. The Kizh will recover and retain all discovered TCRs in the form and/or manner the Tribe deems appropriate, in the Tribe's sole discretion, and for any purpose the Tribe deems appropriate, including for educational, cultural and/or historic purposes.

TCR-2 Unanticipated Discovery of Human Remains and Associated Funerary Objects

- A. Native American human remains are defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.98 (d)(1) as an inhumation or cremation, and in any state of decomposition or skeletal completeness. Funerary objects, called associated grave goods in PRC Section 5097.98, are also to be treated according to this statute.
- B. If Native American human remains and/or grave goods are discovered or recognized on the project site, then all ground-disturbing activities shall immediately cease. Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 dictates that any discoveries of human skeletal material shall be immediately reported to the County Coroner and all ground-disturbing activities shall immediately halt and shall remain halted until the coroner has determined the nature of the remains. If the coroner recognizes the human remains to be those of a Native American or has reason to believe they are Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission, and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 shall be followed.
- C. Human remains and grave/burial goods shall be treated alike per California Public Resources Code section 5097.98(d)(1) and (2).
- D. Construction activities may resume in other parts of the project site at a minimum of 200 feet away from discovered human remains and/or burial goods, if the Kizh-approved Native American Monitor determines in its sole discretion that resuming construction activities at that distance is acceptable and provides the project manager express consent of that determination (along with any other measures the Kizh-approved monitor and/or archaeologist deems necessary). (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(f).)
- E. Preservation in place (i.e., avoidance) is the preferred manner of treatment for discovered human remains and/or burial goods.
- F. Any discovery of human remains/burial goods shall be kept confidential to prevent further disturbance.

TCR-3 Procedures for Burials and Funerary Remains

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- A. As the Most Likely Descendant (“MLD”), the Koo-nas-gna Burial Policy shall be implemented. To the Tribe, the term “human remains” encompasses more than human bones. In ancient as well as historic times, Tribal Traditions included, but were not limited to, the preparation of the soil for burial, the burial of funerary objects with the deceased, and the ceremonial burning of human remains.
- B. If the discovery of human remains includes four or more burials, the discovery location shall be treated as a cemetery, and the Tribe shall create a separate treatment plan.
- C. The prepared soil and cremation soils are to be treated in the same manner as bone fragments that remain intact. Associated funerary objects are objects that, as part of the death rite or ceremony of a culture, are reasonably believed to have been placed with individual human remains either at the time of death or later; other items made exclusively for burial purposes or to contain human remains can also be considered as associated funerary objects. Cremations will either be removed in bulk or by means as necessary to ensure complete recovery of all sacred materials.
- D. In the case where discovered human remains cannot be fully documented and recovered on the same day, the remains will be covered with muslin cloth and a steel plate (that can be moved by heavy equipment) to protect the remains. If this type of steel plate is not available, a 24-hour guard should be posted outside of working hours. The Tribe will make every effort to recommend diverting the project and keeping the remains in situ and protected. If the project cannot be diverted, it may be determined that burials will be removed.
- E. In the event preservation in place is not possible despite good faith efforts by the project applicant/developer and/or landowner, before ground-disturbing activities may resume on the project site, the landowner shall arrange a designated site location within the project site for the respectful reburial of the human remains and/or ceremonial objects.
- F. Each occurrence of human remains and associated funerary objects will be stored using opaque cloth bags. All human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony will be removed to a secure container on site if possible. These items should be retained and reburied within six months of recovery. The location of reburial/repatriation shall be on the project site but at a location agreed upon between the Tribe, lead agency, and the landowner at a location to be protected in perpetuity. There shall be no publicity regarding any cultural materials recovered.
- G. The Tribe will work closely with the Kizh-approved archaeologist to ensure that the excavation is treated carefully, ethically and respectfully. If data recovery is approved by the Tribe, documentation shall be prepared and shall include (at a minimum) detailed descriptive notes and sketches. All data recovery and data recovery-related forms of documentation shall be approved in advance by the Tribe prior to starting data recovery and documentation activities. If any data recovery is performed, once complete, a final

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report shall be submitted to the Tribe and the NAHC. The Tribe does NOT authorize any scientific study or the utilization of any invasive and/or destructive diagnostics on human remains.

Significance After Mitigation: With the incorporation of Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-3, which outline procedures for monitoring during ground disturbing activities and procedures in the event that tribal cultural resources, human remains or funerary objects are encountered, impacts related to tribal cultural resources would be reduced to a less than significant level.

5.16.4 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts to tribal cultural resources would occur when the impacts of the proposed project, in conjunction with other cumulative projects in the City, result in multiple and/or cumulative impacts to tribal cultural resources in the area. The presence of tribal cultural resources is site specific. The proposed project incorporates Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-3, which would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. Similar to the proposed project, it is anticipated that other cumulative projects would consult with NAHC and comply with AB52 as required. If requested, each cumulative project would consult with Native American tribes that request consultation and develop appropriate mitigation measures. With compliance with federal and state regulations for the treatment of Native American and archaeological resources, and appropriate mitigation measures, the proposed project in conjunction with the cumulative projects would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact to tribal cultural resources. A **less than significant impact** would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impact.

5.16.5 References

Cogstone. 2022, June. Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Assessment Report of The Norwalk Entertainment District - Civic Center Specific Plan Project, City of Norwalk, Los Angeles County, California. DEIR Appendix F.

Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians–Kizh Nation (Kizh Nation). Personal communication including conveyance of confidential materials. May 24, 2022.

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5.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential for implementation of the Norwalk Entertainment Center – Civic Center Specific Plan (specific plan) to impact utilities and services systems. Utilities and services systems include wastewater (sewage) treatment and collection systems, water supply and distribution systems, storm drainage, solid waste collection and disposal, and other public utilities. Potential impacts to hydrology (e.g., flooding) and water quality are provided in Section 5.8, *Hydrology and Water Quality*. Storm drainage, though discussed below, is also addressed in Section 5.8, *Hydrology and Water Quality*.

The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical report:

- *Water Supply and Demand Analysis Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center*, PlaceWorks, April 2022

A complete copy of this study is in the Technical Appendices to this Draft EIR (Appendix J).

5.17.1 Wastewater Treatment and Collection

5.17.1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to wastewater treatment and collection and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Federal

Clean Water Act and National Pollution Elimination Discharge System

The Clean Water Act (CWA) establishes regulations to control the discharge of pollutants into the waters of the United States and regulates water quality standards for surface waters (US Code, Title 33, Sections 1251 et seq.). Under the act, the US Environment Protection Agency (EPA) is authorized to set wastewater standards and runs the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program. Under the NPDES program, permits are required for all new developments that discharge directly into Waters of the United States. The federal CWA requires wastewater treatment of all effluent before it is discharged into surface waters. NPDES permits for such discharges in the project region are issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

State

State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB): Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements

The General Waste Discharge Requirements specify that all federal and state agencies, municipalities, counties, districts, and other public entities that own or operate sanitary sewer systems greater than one mile in length which collect and/or convey untreated or partially treated wastewater to a publicly owned treatment facility in the State of California need to develop a sewer master plan. The master plan evaluates existing sewer collection systems and provides a framework for undertaking the construction of new and replacement facilities in order

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to maintain proper levels of service. It includes inflow and infiltration studies to analyze flow monitoring and water use data, a capacity assurance plan to analyze the existing system with existing land use and unit flow factors, a condition assessment and sewer system rehabilitation plan, and a financial plan with recommended capital improvements and financial models.

General Pretreatment Regulations for Existing and New Sources of Pollution

The General Pretreatment Regulations establish the responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments; industry; and the public to implement National Pretreatment Standards to control pollutants that pass through or interfere with treatment processes in publicly owned treatment works or that may contaminate sewage sludge. Pretreatment standards are pollutant discharge limits that apply to industrial users.

Local

Los Coyotes Water Reclamation Plant NPDES Permit

Wastewater generated by development within the city is discharged to the City's sewer system and conveyed to trunk sewers owned by the Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD) to be treated at the Los Coyotes Water Reclamation Plant (WRP). The Los Coyotes WRP is owned and operated by LACSD and provides primary, secondary, and tertiary wastewater treatment. Wastewater discharge requirements for the Los Coyotes WRP are detailed in NPDES No. CA0054011, Order No. R4-2015-0124. The discharger filed a request for reissuance of its NPDES permit on January 30, 2020. The request was approved by the Los Angeles RWQCB's Board of Directors on December 9, 2021. The permit includes the conditions needed to meet minimum applicable technology-based requirements. The permit includes limitations more stringent than applicable federal technology-based requirements where necessary to achieve the required water quality standards.

Los Angeles County Sanitation District's Connection Fees

Capital improvements to the Los Coyotes WRP are funded from connection fees charged to new developments, redevelopments, and expansions of existing land uses. The connection fee is a capital facilities fee used to provide additional conveyance, treatment, and disposal facilities (capital facilities) required by new users connecting to the LACSD's sewerage system or by existing users who significantly increase the quantity or strength of their wastewater discharge. The Connection Fee Program ensures that all users pay their fair share for any necessary expansion of the system. Estimated wastewater generation factors used in determining connection fees in LACSD's 22 member districts are set forth in the Connection Fee Ordinance for each respective district, available on LACSD's website. The City, including the project site, is in District 18 and development of the proposed project would be subject to the Connection Fee Ordinance.

Los Angeles County Sanitation District's Wastewater Ordinance

The purpose of LACSD's wastewater ordinance is to establish controls on users of the LACSD's sewer system to protect the environment and public health, and to provide for the maximum beneficial use of LACSD's facilities. The provision of this ordinance applies to all direct or indirect discharges to any part of LACSD's sewer system. The ordinance regulates sewer construction and provides for the approval of plans for sewer construction and implements federal and state pollution control regulations. LACSD's wastewater ordinance is

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adopted, with amendments, by the City under Title 13, Chapter 13.12, County Sanitary Sewer and Industrial Waste Ordinance, of the Norwalk Municipal Code (NMC).

City of Norwalk General Plan

The City of Norwalk's General Plan (1996) is primarily a policy document that sets goals, objectives, and policies concerning the community and directs growth and development. In addition, it outlines the programs that were developed to accomplish the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan. Goals, objectives, and procedures related wastewater systems are outlined below.

Utility Infrastructure Element

Placement, Maintenance, and Phasing of Infrastructure

- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure that public infrastructure improvements are compatible with development.
- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure that public infrastructure is upgraded and installed in a timely manner to meet usage requirements and maximize cost efficiency.
- **Citywide Policy:** Encourage infrastructure improvements to be designed to complement the area in which they are located and sited so that they do not adversely impact existing structures.
- **Citywide Policy:** Continue to plan for and coordinate the implementation of infrastructure requirements to meet development demands.
- **Citywide Policy:** Establish mechanisms and fee structures which will enable the City of Norwalk to plan for and finance infrastructure improvements in accordance with new developments, and to eliminate deficiencies in the current system, including overloaded and hard to reach mains.

Sewer Placement

- **Citywide Objective:** To provide adequate sewer systems to efficiently serve existing and future needs in Norwalk.
- **Citywide Policy:** Expand sewer collection systems to accommodate the needs of existing and planned development.
- **Citywide Policy:** Provide maintenance of the sewer systems in a manner that will ensure proper service to existing and new developments.
- **Citywide Policy:** Promote water conservation practices to reduce the sewage flows from existing and future developments.
- **Citywide Policy:** Promote the use of earthquake-resistant materials and construction design in all utility systems.

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UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

City of Norwalk Sewer System Management Plan

The City's Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP) sets forth goals and actions to be followed, and guidelines for various activities involved in managing, operating, maintaining, repairing, replacing, and expanding the sewer system. The SSMP also includes actions to follow when responding to a sewer system overflow in the community, including reporting obligations. Also described are legal authorities for managing the system and ministerial actions required in monitoring, auditing, reporting and communicating with the public and regulators (Norwalk 2014a). All flow from the City's sewer system discharges to the trunk sewers owned by the LACSD.

City of Norwalk Sewer Master Plan

The City's Sewer Master Plan was developed to identify areas of current system capacity and structural deficiencies, and areas of necessary upgrades or new systems based on future growth and development as anticipated by the General Plan. The master plan also identifies a time frame, based on priority, and the cost of maintaining, repairing, replacing, upgrading, and installing new sewer system improvements based on the growth forecast and condition, age, and capacity of existing sewer lines (Norwalk 2015).

City of Norwalk Municipal Code

Chapter 13.14, Sewer Service Charge: The purpose of this chapter is to provide financing for the ongoing maintenance and operation of the sanitary sewer system in the city, including capital replacement costs.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Wastewater Conveyance

The City of Norwalk, through its Public Works Department, owns, operates, and maintains a sanitary sewer collection system, including approximately 164 miles of City sewers. The collection system also includes three lift stations, with approximately 162 feet of force main that were upgraded between 1991 and 2008. Through the years, the City has continued to construct new sewers to meet new development and redevelopment needs and to replace aged sewers as required. All flow from the City's sewer system discharges to the trunk sewers owned by the LACSD (Norwalk 2015). The City Hall building is connected to LACSD's North Norwalk Trunk Sewer in Norwalk Boulevard. The 15-inch-diameter trunk sewer has a capacity of 1.8 million gallons per day (mgd) and conveyed a peak flow of 0.4 mgd when last measured in 2019 (see Appendix A, letter from LACSD dated February 22, 2022).

Wastewater Treatment

The Los Coyotes WRP is located at 16515 Piuma Avenue in Cerritos, California. It has a capacity of 37.5 mgd and currently processes an average flow of 23.1 mgd (see Appendix A, letter from LACSD dated February 22, 2022). Therefore, the plant has a residual capacity of 14.4 mgd.

The Los Coyotes WRP occupies 34 acres at the northwest junction of the San Gabriel River Freeway (I-605) and the Artesia Freeway (SR-91). The plant began operation on May 25, 1970, with an initial capacity of 12.5 mgd. It was expanded in 1975 to its current design capacity of 37.5 mgd. The plant provides primary, secondary,

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and tertiary wastewater treatment and serves a population of approximately 370,000 people. Approximately 6 mgd of recycled water produced from the WRP is used at over 270 sites throughout its service area. Reuses include landscape irrigation of schools, golf courses, parks, nurseries, and greenbelts, and industrial use at local companies for carpet dyeing and concrete mixing. The remainder of the recycled water is discharged to the San Gabriel River (LACSD 2022a).

A small portion of this recycled water is used in Norwalk. The Central Basin Municipal Water District owns one existing recycled water pipeline that services Norwalk. The recycled water line runs along Volunteer Avenue (from Spry Street to Civic Center Drive), along Civic Center Drive (from Volunteer Avenue to Silverbow Street), along Silverbow Avenue (from Civic Center Drive to Dace Street), and along Bloomfield Avenue (from Dace Street to Goller Avenue). There are four existing recycled water connections along this pipeline that use reclaimed water for landscape irrigation within Norwalk (GSWC 2020). The project site is not connected to the recycled water system.

5.17.1.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to wastewater treatment and collection if the project would:

- U-1 Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.¹

- U-3 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.

5.17.1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

¹ Impacts related to the construction or relocation of new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities are discussed in Section 5.17.1.3. Impacts to water, storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities are discussed in subsequent discussions within this section.

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Impact 5.17-1: Existing wastewater infrastructure and treatment facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated wastewater demands and therefore would not require new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities. [Threshold U-1 (part)]

Wastewater Conveyance

Construction

The proposed project would require construction of new, on-site sewer lines. Construction impacts associated with the installation of the sewer lines would primarily involve trenching to place the lines below the surface and would be limited to the project site, with minor off-site work associated with connections to the LACSD's North Norwalk trunk sewer. The construction-related environmental impacts associated with these improvements are analyzed throughout this Draft EIR since it is a component of the proposed project (see for example Section 5.4, *Cultural Resources*). This analysis focuses on whether the City of Norwalk or LACSD would need to expand its wastewater facilities in order to handle the demand generated by the proposed project.

Prior to ground disturbance, project contractors would coordinate with the City and LACSD to identify the locations and depth of all sewer lines. Project contractors would notify LACSD in advance of proposed ground disturbance activities to avoid sewer lines and disruption of sewer service. Furthermore, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure TRA-2, which requires the preparation of a Construction Management Plan (CMP) (refer to section 5.15, *Transportation*). This plan would identify the processes for establishing construction signage to advise motorists of reduced construction zone speed limits and flag persons to ensure safe traffic operations. Therefore, with implementation of traffic mitigation measure and implementation of the CMP, temporary construction work in the public right-of-way to connect wastewater lines would not create a significant environmental effect.

Additionally, wastewater generation would not occur during the construction phase of the proposed project and associated construction workers on-site. Construction workers would utilize portable restrooms, which would dispose of wastewater offsite and would not contribute to wastewater flows to the City's wastewater system. Thus, construction of the proposed project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater infrastructure or result in wastewater generation from construction activities and **no impact** would occur.

Operations

As shown in Table 5.17-1, based on the type of use and generation factors, the proposed project would generate a net increase of approximately 0.15 cubic feet per second or 99,100 gallons per day (gpd) of wastewater. No changes to City Hall are proposed and therefore there would be no change to wastewater generation associated with this use. The current City Hall Lawn does not include a restroom, so there is no existing wastewater generation and no adjustment in projected wastewater generated by the project. The wastewater flow originating from the proposed development would discharge to an on-site sewer system to be appropriately sized and installed within the project site for conveyance to the City's sewer system and LACSD's North Norwalk Trunk Sewer in Norwalk Boulevard. The 15-inch-diameter trunk sewer has a capacity of 1.8 mgd and conveyed a peak flow of 0.4 mgd when last measured in 2019 (see Appendix A, letter from LACSD dated February 22, 2022). Therefore, the trunk main has a residual capacity of 1.4 mgd. Since sewer generation associated with

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implementation of the proposed project is approximately 0.01 mgd it would be well within the available LACSD sewer infrastructure capacity, and would not require the construction of new or expansion of the sewer trunk.

Table 5.17-1 Projected Wastewater Generation

Land Use	Buildout	Wastewater Generation Rates (gpd per unit)	Generated Wastewater (gpd)
Multifamily Home	350 DU	156	54,600
Restaurants	35,000 SF	1	35,000
Retail	35,000 SF	0.1	3,500
Supermarket	40,000 SF	0.15	6,000
Total			99,100

Source: LACSD 2022b.
DU= dwelling units; SF = square feet; gpd = gallons per day.

Furthermore, the City of Norwalk continuously manages and expands its sewer system in compliance with the SSMP. The proposed development would comply with Chapter 13.14, Sewer Service Charge, of the NMC and LACSD's connection fee requirements to provide financing for the ongoing maintenance and operation of the sanitary sewer systems, including capital replacement costs.

The proposed project would not require the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater conveyance infrastructure. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Wastewater Treatment

The proposed project would generate 99,100 gpd of sewer that needs to be treated at the Los Coyotes WRP, which has a residual capacity of 14.4 mgd.² Therefore, the proposed project will contribute an increased sewage flow equivalent to less than 1 percent of Los Coyotes WRP's residual capacity and thus no new or expanded water reclamation plant facilities would be needed; impacts would be less than significant.

The Los Coyotes WRP is required by federal and state law to meet applicable standards of treatment plant discharge requirements subject to NPDES No. CA0054011. The permit includes the conditions needed to meet minimum applicable technology-based requirements. The NPDES permit regulates the amount and type of pollutants that the system can discharge into receiving waters. The Los Coyotes WRP is operating in compliance with and would continue to operate subject to state waste discharge requirements and federal NPDES permit requirements, as set forth in the NPDES permit and order. Furthermore, the proposed project will comply with the LACSD's Wastewater Ordinance as amended by the NMC, which includes the payment of a connection fee, the approval of plans for sewer construction by LACSD, and the prohibition of certain discharges to sewer lines. As described, the additional wastewater (quantity and type) that would be generated by the proposed project and treated by the Los Coyotes WRP would not impede the treatment plant's ability to continue to meet its wastewater treatment requirements and no new or expanded treatment facilities would be required. Therefore, impacts on wastewater treatment would be **less than significant**.

² Appendix A, letter from LACSD dated February 22, 2022.

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Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.17-2: Project-generated wastewater would be adequately treated by the wastewater service provider for the project, which has adequate capacity to serve the project's project demand in addition to existing commitments. [Threshold U-3]

Wastewater from the residential and commercial (restaurants, retail, grocery) uses proposed by the project would not contain substances of any types and amount prohibited by LACSD discharge limits. Discharging oil or petroleum products to the sewer would be prohibited. Thus, project-generated wastewater would not adversely affect LACSD's compliance with the Los Angeles RWQCB's Order No. R4-2015-0124. The proposed project would also be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with the LACSD's Wastewater Ordinance. The Los Coyotes WRP has a residual capacity of 14.4 mgd and the plant can accommodate the additional 99,100 gpd of potential wastewater generated by the proposed project. Therefore, LACSD currently has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.17.1.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The area considered for cumulative impacts to wastewater treatment is the WRP's service area. The area considered for cumulative impacts to wastewater conveyance systems is the LACSD service area and the City's sewer system service area.

As shown in Table 4-3, future growth in the City would result in increases in wastewater generation and flow. These include increases in residential and commercial effluent. The City's Sewer Master Plan projects daily wastewater generation in line with land use changes identified in the General Plan. Sewer collection system expansions and upgrades would be based on needs identified in the Sewer Master Plan. Additionally, all future development within LACSD's larger service would be reviewed on a project-by-project basis to verify that existing capacity exists to convey the wastewater generated by the new development and whether construction of new sewer lines would result in significant environmental effects. Through the use of connection fees and agreements, LACSD is able to maintain and expand its wastewater collection system as necessary and is able to ensure that new developments pay their fair-share costs associated with increased demand, including development that may require General Plan amendments. Therefore, there would be no significant cumulative impacts on wastewater collection.

The City's wastewater effluent is directed to the Los Coyotes WRP and operated by LACSD. Future development in the City would comply with the LACSD's Wastewater Ordinance, as amended by the NMC, to ensure that the Los Coyotes WRP continues to operate in compliance with its NPDES permit. Furthermore, future development would also comply with the LACSD's connection fee requirements to fund future capital

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improvement programs. Accordingly, cumulative impacts on wastewater infrastructure and treatment would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.17.2 Water Supply and Distribution Systems

5.17.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to water supply and distribution systems and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Federal

Federal Safe Drinking Water Act

The Safe Drinking Water Act, the principal federal law intended to ensure safe drinking water for the public, was enacted in 1974 and has been amended several times since it came into law. The Act authorizes the EPA to set national standards for safe drinking water, called the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations, to protect against both naturally-occurring and man-made contaminants. These standards set enforceable maximum contaminant levels in drinking water and require all water providers in the United States to treat water to remove contaminants, except for private wells serving fewer than 25 people. In California, the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) conducts most enforcement activities. If a water system does not meet its standards, then it is the water supplier's responsibility to notify its customers.

State

California Urban Water Management Planning Act

The Urban Water Management Planning Act requires urban water suppliers to prepare an urban water management plan (UWMP) if they provide water for municipal purposes to more than 3,000 customers or provide more than 3,000 acre-feet per year (afy) of water. The intent of the UWMP is to assist water supply agencies in water resource planning given their existing and anticipated future demands. The UWMP must include a water supply and demand assessment that compares total water supply available to the water supplier with the total projected water use over a 20-year period. It is also mandatory that UWMPs be updated every five years.

California Senate Bill 610 and 221

Senate Bill (SB) 610 and SB 221 were amended in 2001 to assure coordination between the local water and land use decisions to confirm that California cities and communities are provided with adequate water supply. Specific projects are required to prepare a Water Supply Assessment (WSA). The WSA is composed of

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information regarding existing and forecasted water demands, as well as information pertaining to available water supplies for the new development.

The following projects are required to prepare a WSA:

- Residential developments consisting of more than 500 homes, or
- A business employing more than 1,000 people or having more than 500,000 square feet;
- A commercial office building employing more than 1,000 people or having more than 250,000 square feet of floor space;
- A hotel having more than 500 rooms;
- An industrial complex with more than 1,000 employees and occupying more than 40 acres of land; or
- A mixed-use project that requires the same or greater amount of water as a 500 dwelling-unit project.

SB 221 requires written verification that there is sufficient water supply available for new residential subdivisions that include over 500 dwelling units or meet the other requirements listed above. The verification must be provided before construction of the project begins. The proposed project does not need to prepare a WSA or written verification per SB 221 as it does not meet the identified thresholds for which compliance is required (i.e., the project proposes fewer than 500 dwelling units and less than 500,000 square feet of business (commercial use)).

The Water Conservation Act of 2009 (Senate Bill X7-7)

The Water Conservation Act of 2009, SB X7-7, requires all water suppliers to increase water use efficiency. The legislation sets an overall goal of reducing per capita water use by 20 percent by 2020, with an interim goal of a 10 percent reduction in per capita water use by 2015. Effective in 2016, urban retail water suppliers who do not meet the water conservation requirements established by this bill are not eligible for state water grants or loans. SB X7-7 requires that urban water retail suppliers determine baseline water use and set reduction targets according to specified standards; it also requires that agricultural water suppliers prepare plans and implement efficient water management practices.

20x2020 Water Conservation Plan

The 20x2020 Water Conservation Plan of 2010 was a byproduct of the Water Conservation Act of 2009. The plan had a threefold effect, establishing: 1) a benchmark of current usage per capita off 2005 baseline data; 2) an intermediate goal for all water providers to meet by 2015; 3) a 20 percent reduction by 2020 of water usage.

Assembly Bill 1668 and Senate Bill 606

On May 31, 2018, Governor Brown signed two bills (Assembly Bill 1668 and Senate Bill 606) that established long-term standards for water suppliers. The bills called for the creation of new urban efficiency standards for indoor use, outdoor use, and water lost to leaks as well as any appropriate variances for unique local conditions. The SWRCB will adopt these standards by regulation no later than June 30, 2022. The indoor water use standard

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will be 55 gallons per person per day until January 2025; the standard will become stricter over time, decreasing to 50 gallons per person per day in January 2030. The outdoor water use standard will be based on land cover, climate, and other factors determined by the Department of Water Resources and the SWRCB. The SWRCB will adopt the outdoor standard by June 2022 and the water leaks standard by July 2020 pursuant to prior legislation (SB 555, 2015).

Mandatory Water Conservation

Following the declaration on July 15, 2014, of a state of emergency due to drought conditions, the SWRCB adopted Resolution No. 2014-0038 for emergency regulation of statewide water conservation efforts. These regulations, which went into effect on August 1, 2014, were intended to reduce outdoor urban water use and persuade all California households to voluntarily reduce their water consumption by 20 percent. Water companies with 3,000 or more service connections were required to report monthly water consumption to the SWRCB. The SWRCB readopted the regulations several times until Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-40-17 in April 2017, ending the drought emergency and directing the SWRCB to rescind portions of its existing drought emergency water conservation regulations but maintain the portions that prohibit wasteful water use practices until permanent requirements are in place. The prohibitions that are still in effect address: 1) the application of potable water to outdoor landscapes in a manner that causes excess runoff; 2) the use of a hose to wash a motor vehicle except where the hose is equipped with a shut-off nozzle; 3) the application of potable water to driveways and sidewalks; 4) the use of potable water in nonrecirculating ornamental fountains; and 5) the application of potable water to outdoor landscapes during and within 48 hours after measurable rainfall. Also, urban water suppliers are still required to submit monthly water monitoring reports to the SWRCB (SWRCB 2014).

Governor's Drought Declarations

Governor Gavin Newsom declared a drought state of emergency on April 21, 2021, and asked state agencies to partner with local water districts and utilities to make Californians aware of drought and encourage actions to reduce water usage by promoting the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) Save Our Water Campaign and other water conservation programs. The proclamation also included measures to be implemented by the DWR, SWRCB, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Department of Food and Agriculture that included coordinated state and local actions to address issues stemming from continued dry conditions.

The governor issued subsequent drought emergency proclamations on May 10, July 8, and October 19 of 2021, and March 28, 2022. The latest proclamation required that the SWRCB adopt emergency regulations by May 25, 2022, including the requirement that all urban water suppliers that have Water Shortage Contingency Plans implement Level 2 shortage response actions. Level 2 shortage response actions are meant to address a water supply shortage up to 20 percent. The Level 2 requirements for urban water suppliers take effect on June 10, 2022. SWRCB also banned the irrigation of non-functional turf at commercial, industrial, and institutional properties with potable water, with an exception of low water use turf. Non-functional turf is solely ornamental and does not apply to turf used for recreation, sports, or civic or community events.

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The Golden State Water Company's (GSWC's) Level 2 requirements include outdoor irrigation limited to three days per week, assigned by address, and occurring between the hours of 7 PM and 8 AM. Water usage that exceeds a customer's baseline would also be charged at the regular rate plus a drought emergency surcharge.

State Water Resources Control Board Resolution No. 2022-002

On January 4, 2022, the SWRCB adopted an emergency regulation by resolution. On January 18, 2022, the emergency regulation became effective and remains in effect for one year from the effective date unless the SWRCB acts to end, modify, or readopt it. The emergency regulation requirements include:

- Turning off decorative water fountains.
- Turning off/pausing irrigation systems when it rains and for two days after rain.
- Using an automatic shut-off nozzle on water hoses.
- Using a broom, not water, to clean sidewalks and driveways.
- Giving trees just what they need and avoid overwatering.

Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006 (AB 1881)

The Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006 (AB 1881) required the DWR to update the State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance by 2009. The state's model ordinance was issued on October 8, 2009. Under AB 1881, cities and counties are required to adopt a state updated model landscape water conservation ordinance by January 31, 2010, or to adopt a different ordinance that is at least as effective in conserving water as the updated model ordinance. It also requires reporting on the implementation and enforcement of local ordinances, with required reports due by December 31, 2015.

2015 Update of the State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (Executive Order B-29-15)

To improve water savings in the landscaping sector, the DWR updated the Model Ordinance in accordance with Executive Order B-29-15. The Model Ordinance promotes efficient landscapes in new developments and retrofitted landscapes. The Executive Order called for revising the Model Ordinance to increase water efficiency standards for new and retrofitted landscapes through more efficient irrigation systems, greywater usage, and on-site stormwater capture, and by limiting the portion of landscapes that can be covered in turf.

New development projects that include landscaped areas of 500 square feet or more—including residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional projects that require a permit, plan check, or design review—are subject to the Model Ordinance. The previous landscape-size threshold for new development projects ranged from 2,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet.

Local

Golden State Water Company: Norwalk Service Area Urban Water Management Plan

The proposed project is within the existing service area of the GSWC. The GSWC is required to prepare a UWMP for its service areas pursuant to Water Code Sections 10610 through 10656 of the Urban Water Management Planning Act, effective January 1, 1984. The Urban Water Management Planning Act requires all urban water suppliers to prepare, adopt, and file a UWMP with the DWR every five years. The Golden State

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Water Company–Norwalk service area’s (GSWC Norwalk) 2020 UWMP outlines current water demands, sources, and supply reliability to the City by forecasting water use based on climate, demographics, and land use changes in the City. The plan also details the Water Shortage Contingency Plan used in case of shortage emergencies. The plan assesses the reliability of all three of GSWC Norwalk’s water sources which include groundwater supplies from the Central Basin, and purchased water through the Central Basin Municipal Water District and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

City of Norwalk General Plan

Goals, objectives, and procedures related to water systems are outlined below.

Utility Infrastructure Element

Placement, Maintenance, and Phasing of Infrastructure

- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure that public infrastructure improvements are compatible with development.
- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure that public infrastructure is upgraded and installed in a timely manner to meet usage requirements and maximize cost efficiency.
- **Citywide Policy:** Encourage infrastructure improvements to be designed to complement the area in which they are located and sited so that they do not adversely impact existing structures.
- **Citywide Policy:** Continue to plan for and coordinate the implementation of infrastructure requirements to meet development demands.
- **Citywide Policy:** Establish mechanisms and fee structures which will enable the City of Norwalk to plan for and finance infrastructure improvements in accordance with new developments, and to eliminate deficiencies in the current system, including overloaded and hard to reach mains.

Water Supply

- **Citywide Objective:** To provide adequate water supply and delivery systems to meet the demands of new and existing development.
- **Citywide Policy:** Promote water conservation in both City operations and in private development to minimize the need for the development of new water sources and facilities.

Conservation Element

- **Citywide Policy:** Encourage the use of drought-tolerant plant materials in compliance with the State of California Water Conservation in Landscaping Act.

City of Norwalk Water Master Plan

The City of Norwalk's Water Master Plan evaluates the capacity of the City’s existing water distribution system, develops a capital improvement program, and assesses the funding needed to implement the program. The plan

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develops a hydraulic model of the water system to analyze existing system operations and evaluates and prioritizes capital improvements necessary to fully utilize the City's water rights. The plan identifies existing and future system deficiencies over a planning period of ten years and develops a phased Water System Improvement Plan (WSIP). Additionally, the plan includes information for use by the City's Water Rate Consultant on the WSIP and a Financing Plan for projects to be considered within the water rate structure for the next five years (Norwalk 2014b).

City of Norwalk Municipal Code

Chapter 13.04, Water Service System: This chapter includes requirements for the connection to the water service system, including applying for water service, monthly rates and other fees and charges, capital improvement charges, the maintenance of water service pressure, and design requirements for water connections.

Chapter 15.30, Green Building Standards Code: Adopts by reference the most current (2019) California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). CALGreen applies to the planning, design, operation, construction, use, and occupancy of every newly constructed building or structure in California, unless otherwise indicated in the code. CALGreen establishes planning and design standards for water conservation measures and requirements that new buildings reduce water consumption by 20 percent below a specified baseline Standards also include low-flow fixtures (not to exceed 1.5 gallons per minute), native landscaping, and dedicated separate landscaping water meters. The building efficiency standards are enforced through the local building permit process.

Chapter 17.03, Development Requirements, Article 1, Landscape Standards, Section 17.03.020, Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance: This section is intended to be as effective in conserving water as the DWR State Model Landscaping Ordinance.

Existing Conditions

Water Supply

GSWC Norwalk includes most of the City of Norwalk (including all of the project site), parts of the surrounding cities of Santa Fe Springs and La Mirada, and a small unincorporated part of Los Angeles County. GSWC Norwalk customers are primarily residential with some commercial and industrial connections. Service-area water supplies have long relied on local groundwater resources along with imported water and have been augmented over time to adapt to changing conditions and provide a diverse and flexible water supply portfolio. GSWC Norwalk's water supply portfolio contains the following rights and contracts:

- Central Basin adjudicated groundwater.
- Purchased water through the Central Basin Municipal Water District and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.
- Emergency connections with neighboring agencies. (GSWC Norwalk 2021)

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Every urban water supplier is required to assess its reliability to provide water service to its customers under normal, dry, and multiple dry water years. The 2020 UWMP states that GSWC Norwalk will be able to meet projected demands between 2025 and 2045 during normal years, single dry years, and multiple dry years (see Table 5.17-2, *Normal, Single Dry, and Multiple Dry Year Supply and Demand (afy)*).

Table 5.17-2 Normal, Single Dry, and Multiple Dry Year Supply and Demand (afy)

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Normal Year					
Supply Totals	4,365	4,367	4,369	4,371	4,374
Demand Totals	4,365	4,367	4,369	4,371	4,374
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0
Single Dry Year					
Supply Totals	4,801	4,804	4,806	4,808	4,811
Demand Totals	4,801	4,804	4,806	4,808	4,811
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0
Multiple Dry Year					
Year 1					
Supply Totals	4,801	4,804	4,806	4,808	4,811
Demand Totals	4,801	4,804	4,806	4,808	4,811
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0
Year 2					
Supply Totals	4,802	4,804	4,807	4,809	4,811
Demand Totals	4,802	4,804	4,807	4,809	4,811
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0
Year 3					
Supply Totals	4,802	4,805	4,808	4,810	4,811
Demand Totals	4,802	4,805	4,808	4,810	4,811
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0
Year 4					
Supply Totals	4,803	4,805	4,808	4,810	4,811
Demand Totals	4,803	4,805	4,808	4,810	4,811
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0
Year 4					
Supply Totals	4,803	4,806	4,808	4,810	4,811
Demand Totals	4,803	4,805	4,808	4,810	4,811
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0

Source: GSWC 2021.

Water Distribution System

GSWC operates an 8-inch water main in Norwalk Boulevard. The water main is connected to a 4-inch potable water line that supplies water to City Hall. The water main also supplies water to two 3-inch irrigation lines on the project site and a water line that feeds the fountain in the northwest corner of the site.

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5.17.2.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to water supply and distribution systems if the project would:

- U-1 Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.³
- U-2 Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.

Impact Analysis

The following impact analysis addresses the threshold of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.17-3: Existing water facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated water demand and would not require nor result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water facilities the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects. [Thresholds U-1 (part)]

Construction

The proposed project would require construction of new, on-site water distribution lines to serve the proposed uses. Construction impacts associated with the installation of water distribution lines would primarily involve trenching in order to place the water distribution lines below the surface and would be limited to on-site water distribution, with minor off-site work associated with connections to the public main. The construction-related environmental impacts associated with these improvements are analyzed throughout this Draft EIR since it is a component of the proposed project (see for example Section 5.4, *Cultural Resources*). This analysis focuses on whether GSWC would need to expand its water facilities in order to handle the demand generated by the project.

Prior to ground disturbance, project contractors would coordinate with GSWC to identify the locations and depth of all lines. The project contractor would notify GSWC in advance of proposed ground disturbance activities to avoid water lines and disruption of water service. Additionally, water needed for construction activities would occur intermittently throughout the construction period, would be temporary in nature, and water required for construction is generally trucked in. Regarding connection to the public water infrastructure, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure TRA-2, which requires the preparation of a CMP (refer to Section 5.15, *Transportation*). This plan would identify the processes for establishing construction signage to advise motorists of reduced construction zone speed limits and flag persons to ensure safe traffic operations. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not require or result in the relocation or

³ Impacts related to the construction or relocation of new or expanded water facilities are discussed in Section 5.17.2.3. Impacts to wastewater treatment facilities are discussed in Section 5.17.1.3 above. Impacts to storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities are discussed in subsequent discussions within this section.

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construction of new or expanded water infrastructure the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Operation

The proposed project would require local-serving infrastructure to be appropriately sized and installed within the project site. Water service to the proposed project would continue to be provided by GSWC Norwalk for domestic and fire protection uses. Prior to the issuance of building permits, the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD) would be required to grant approval of the final building design, including all fire prevention and suppression systems, which would ensure the proposed project is developed pursuant to Fire Code requirements. In addition, on-site water connections would be constructed, as necessary, to comply with the fire flow set for the proposed project by the LACFD during the plan check process. All water connections would also meet the requirements of Chapter 13.04 of the City of Norwalk's municipal code. Additionally, during the engineering design and plan check process, the City and the GSWD would assess the infrastructure needs of the proposed project to ensure that adequate water infrastructure is available.

Furthermore, design of the proposed project would meet requirements set forth in CalGreen, as codified in Part 11 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) regarding water efficiency and conservation. CalGreen, also known as Part II, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, established green building standards for non-residential structures that include new buildings, additions or alterations. Project design would include low-flow fixtures (not to exceed 1.5 gallons per minute), native landscaping, rainwater catchment system, and dedicated separate landscaping water meters. Therefore, implementation of the on-site water system improvements would not cause significant environmental effects and impacts with regard to water infrastructure. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.17-4: Available water supplies are sufficient to serve the proposed project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. [Threshold U-2]

Construction

Construction activities would result in a temporary increase in water demand. Water use would be associated with earthwork and soil compaction, dust control, mixing and placement of concrete, equipment and site cleanup, irrigation for plant and landscaping establishment, water line testing and flushing, and other related short-term activities. The amount of water used during construction would vary depending on weather, soil conditions, the size of the area under construction, and the specific activities being performed. These activities would occur intermittently throughout the construction period and would be temporary in nature. Water required for construction would usually be trucked in. This short-term and intermittent water use during construction is not expected to be substantial when compared to operational water demands.

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Additionally, once the City Hall lawn is removed the construction water demand would be offset by the decrease in irrigation water demand on the project site. Additionally, as concluded in GSWC's 2020 UWMP for the Norwalk service area, projected water demand for the City will be met by available supplies during a normal year, single dry year, and multiple dry year hydrological conditions through 2045. Therefore, the proposed project's construction impacts on water supply would be **less than significant**.

Operation

Development of the proposed project would increase the long-term indoor and outdoor water demand associated with residential and commercial consumption. Water demand associated with each of these uses is addressed in detail below.

The existing outdoor water demand related to areas that would be replaced by the proposed project is calculated using the Estimated Total Water Use methodology, as described in the 2015 Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance Guidebook (DWR 2015). The following equation is used for the estimated total water use:

$$\text{Estimated Total Water Use} = \frac{\text{ETo} \times \text{Plant Factor} \times \text{Landscaped Area SF} \times 0.62}{\text{Irrigation Efficiency}}$$

A reference evapotranspiration (Eto) of 47.8 inches is used as specified in the 2020 UWMP (GSWC 2021). Excluding the fountain, which will remain in place with the proposed project, the City Hall Lawn is estimated to consist of 4.1 acres or 178,569 square feet. The landscaped area of the surface parking lot contains 73 trees, 17 of which are in square tree wells that are about 10 feet by 10 feet. Another eight trees are within circular tree wells that are approximately 20 square feet. The remainder of the trees are within medians that total approximately 12,000 square feet and include some shrubs. The total irrigated landscaped area for the surface parking lot totals approximately 13,860 square feet.

The grass area in City Hall Lawn has overhead spray irrigation which has an irrigation efficiency of 75 percent. The areas with trees and shrubs in the surface parking lot has drip irrigation which has an irrigation efficiency of 81 percent. The plant factor for trees and shrubs is assumed to be 0.3, and the plant factor for grass is assumed to be 0.8 (DWR 2015). Therefore, the total existing outdoor water demand for the areas replaced by the proposed development is approximately 14,818 gpd (see Appendix J).

For proposed indoor water demand, LACSD's wastewater generation rates are referenced (LACSD 2022b). The wastewater generation is conservatively assumed to be 90 percent of the indoor water demand. Therefore, a conservative factor of 110 percent is used to estimate the indoor water demand. As shown in Table 5.17-1, *Projected Wastewater Generation*, the proposed project would generate a net increase of 99,100 gpd of wastewater or 109,010 gpd of indoor water demand.

Project areas requiring irrigation could include up to 128,700 square feet of open space and/or landscaped areas and two new pools. It is assumed that all open space would include spray-irrigated turf, though this is a conservative assumption since much of the open space would be hardscape, structures such as kiosks and pavilions, and/or drought-tolerant landscaping requiring minimal irrigation. The maximum applied water allowance (MAWA) was calculated using an annual precipitation of 12.8 inches per the 2020 UWMP (GSWC

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2021).⁴ The MAWA for the open space is 4,387 gpd (see Appendix J). Since the City’s Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance does not allow outdoor water use that exceeds the MAWA, proposed outdoor water demand for the open space is assumed to be 4,387 gpd. Each of the two pools are assumed to be 50 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 7.5 feet deep. The average pool water evaporation rate is about a quarter of an inch of water per day (American Leak Detection 2022). Assuming both pools are constructed, the outdoor water use needed to account for pool water evaporation is approximately 312 gpd (see Appendix J). Therefore, the total net increase in outdoor water demand is 4,699 gpd.

As shown in Table 5.17-3, the net increase in water demand is 98,891 gpd or 111 afy. The analysis was performed using very conservative water demand factors and the actual water usage by the project is likely to be much less than the calculated amount, with current and future water conservation measures and compliance with the CalGreen building code.

Table 5.17-3 Projected Water Demand

	Water Demand (gpd)
Existing outdoor water demand related to areas that would be replaced by the proposed project	(14,818)
Outdoor water demand for new landscaping	4,387
Outdoor water demand for new pools	312
Indoor water demand for proposed buildings	109,010
Total	98,891

gpd = gallons per day.

GSWC Norwalk would be able to meet project water demands, in addition to its current and projected demands for the service areas, with projected supplies from 2020 to 2045 during normal years, single dry years, and multiple dry years (GSWC 2020). Projected population is based on the current estimated population in the Norwalk service area and projected growth from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The SCAG population projection data for the City of Norwalk was combined with the service area boundary to create a service area specific population growth rate (GSWC 2021).

As discussed in the Water Supply and Demand Analysis (see Appendix J), GSWC supplies are available to serve several neighboring GSWC service areas, including the Norwalk service area, and GSWC manages and moves its water supplies depending upon the needs in a particular GSWC service area. GSWC has a total supply pool of 23,639 afy available for use by GSWC Norwalk and the neighboring GSWC service areas and GSWC Norwalk has the capability of obtaining additional water supplies from GSWC’s pool if the need arises. Additionally, the proposed project’s population and employment contributions are within SCAG projections for the City (see Section 5.12, *Population and Housing*). Since the projected demands in the 2020 UWMP are based on SCAG projections, then the proposed project’s water demand is within these projections.

⁴ The DWR’s State Model Landscaping Ordinance (MWEL0) includes the method to calculate the MAWA. For projects that need to abide by the requirements of MWEL0, the total annual applied water for irrigation shall be less than or equal to the MAWA.

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Furthermore, design of the proposed project would meet requirements set forth in CalGreen, as codified in Part 11 of Title 24 of the CCR regarding water efficiency and conservation, which would reduce the estimated water consumption calculated for the project. Water demand calculations did not account for any reduction in water demand due to the implementation of CalGreen requirements which include low-flow fixtures (not to exceed 1.5 gallons per minute), native landscaping, and dedicated separate landscaping water meters. Additionally, in the event of a water shortage, implementation of GSWC Norwalk's Water Shortage Contingency Plan and demand management measures would ensure that sufficient water supplies were available to serve its customers, including the project and existing and future users (refer to Appendix J for further discussion of these measures). It is anticipated that there would be sufficient water supplies to serve the proposed project during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.17.2.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Water Supply

The geographic context for the cumulative impact analysis on water supply is the GSWC Norwalk service area. The GSWC Norwalk is required to prepare and update its UWMP every five years to plan and provide for water supplies to serve existing and projected demands over a 20-year horizon. The 2020 UWMP prepared by GSWC Norwalk accounts for existing development within the service area as well as projected growth through the year 2045. The UWMP water demand projections assume population, housing, and employment growth anticipated in the service area based on both historical trends and official forecasts from SCAG (GSWC Norwalk 2021). As noted in Section 5-12, *Population and Housing*, the development of the proposed project in conjunction with the list in Table 4-3, *Cumulative Projects List*, in Chapter 4 of this Draft EIR would be within the population growth anticipated by SCAG for the City of Norwalk through 2045 and are therefore accounted for in the 2020 UWMP. Therefore, GSWC Norwalk will be able to reliably provide water to its customers from 2020 through the year 2045.

Additionally, under the provisions of SB 610, GSWC Norwalk is required to prepare a comprehensive water supply assessment for every new development "project" (as defined by Section 10912 of the Water Code) within its service area that meets certain thresholds. The types of projects that are subject to the requirements of SB 610 tend to be larger projects that may or may not have been included in the growth projections of the GSWC 2020 UWMP.⁵ The water supply assessment for such projects would evaluate the quality and reliability

⁵ Per SB 610, Water Supply Assessments are required for the following projects:

- (1) A proposed residential development of more than 500 dwelling units.
- (2) A proposed shopping center or business establishment employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 500,000 square feet of floor space.
- (3) A proposed commercial office building employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 250,000 square feet of floor space.
- (4) A proposed hotel or motel, or both, having more than 500 rooms.

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of existing and projected water supplies, as well as alternative sources of water supply and measures to secure alternative sources if needed.

Compliance with regulatory requirements that promote water conservation, such as GSWC's Water Shortage Contingency Plan, the requirements of CALGreen and the state and City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, and implementation of other water saving strategies will assist in ensuring that adequate water supply is available on a cumulative basis. Therefore, it is anticipated that GSWC Norwalk would be able to supply the demands of the proposed project and future growth through 2045 and beyond. Therefore, cumulative impacts on the water supply would be **less than significant**.

Water Infrastructure

The geographic context for the cumulative impact analysis for water infrastructure is the project vicinity. Development of the proposed project and future new development in the project vicinity would cumulatively increase demands on the existing water conveyance system. However, new development projects would be subject to LACFD and the City's review to ensure that the existing public utility facilities would be adequate to meet the domestic and fire water demands of each project. Furthermore, individual projects would be subject to the City of Norwalk's requirements regarding infrastructure improvements needed to meet respective water demands, fire flow, and pressure requirements. LACFD and the City would conduct ongoing evaluations to ensure facilities are adequate. None of the cumulative projects identified in Chapter 4, *Environmental Setting*, are adjacent to the project site. Therefore, it is unlikely that a cumulative impact related to utility connections would occur. The City's Water Master Plan would assess system expansions and upgrades based on future need and the use of connection fees and agreements allows the City and GSWC to maintain and expand its water collection system as necessary. The current Water Master Plan includes improvement projects recommended to enhance the reliability of the water distribution system, add redundancy to the system, replace aging facilities, and improve fire flows as well as residual system pressures. GSWC's 2022 capital improvement projects also include replacing 13,600 linear feet of old pipelines in the Norwalk service area to ensure continued and reliable service to local water customers (GSWC 2022). Therefore, cumulative impacts on the water infrastructure system would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

-
- (5) A proposed industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or industrial park planned to house more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or having more than 650,000 square feet of floor area.
 - (6) A mixed-use project that includes one or more of the projects specified in this subdivision.
 - (7) A project that would demand an amount of water equivalent to, or greater than, the amount of water required by a 500 dwelling unit project.

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5.17.3 Storm Drainage Systems

5.17.3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to storm drainage systems and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Federal

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program (NPDES)

Under the NPDES program, all facilities that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States are required to obtain an NPDES permit. Requirements for stormwater discharges are also regulated under this program.

State

State Water Resources Control Board General Construction Permit

The SWRCB has adopted a statewide Construction General Permit (Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ) for stormwater discharges associated with construction activity. These regulations prohibit the discharge of stormwater from construction projects that include one acre or more of soil disturbance. Construction activities subject to this permit include clearing, grading, and other disturbance to the ground, such as stockpiling or excavation, that results in soil disturbance of at least one acre of total land area. Individual developers are required to submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to the SWRCB for coverage under the NPDES permit and would be obligated to comply with its requirements.

The NPDES Construction General Permit requires all dischargers to (1) develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that specifies best management practices (BMP) to be used during construction of the project, (2) eliminate or reduce non-storm water discharge to stormwater conveyance systems, and (3) develop and implement a monitoring program of all BMPs specified. The two major objectives of the SWPPP are to (1) help identify the sources of sediment and other pollutants that affect the water quality of stormwater discharges and (2) to describe and ensure the implementation of BMPs to reduce or eliminate sediment and other pollutants in stormwater as well as non-storm water discharges.

Los Angeles RWQCB (MS4) Permit for the Coastal Watershed of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties

On July 23, 2021, the Los Angeles RWQCB adopted a Regional Phase I Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System (MS4) Permit for discharges within the coastal watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura counties (Order No. R4-2021-0105, NPDES No. CAS004004). The municipal discharges of stormwater and non-stormwater by the City are subject to waste discharge requirements as set forth by this MS4 permit.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Hydrology Manual

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) hydrology manual establishes hydrologic design procedures and contains charts, graphs, and tables necessary to conduct a hydrologic study within the

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County of Los Angeles. The manual contains procedures and standards developed and revised by the Water Resources Division based on historic rainfall and runoff data collected within the county. The hydrologic techniques in the manual apply to the design of local storm drains, retention and detention basins, pump stations, and major channel projects. standards set forth in the manual govern all hydrology calculations done under LACDPW's jurisdiction.

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

Goals, objectives, and procedures related to stormwater drainage systems are outlined below.

Utility Infrastructure Element

Placement, Maintenance, and Phasing of Infrastructure

- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure that public infrastructure improvements are compatible with development.
- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure that public infrastructure is upgraded and installed in a timely manner to meet usage requirements and maximize cost efficiency.
- **Citywide Policy:** Encourage infrastructure improvements to be designed to complement the area in which they are located and sited so that they do not adversely impact existing structures.
- **Citywide Policy:** Continue to plan for and coordinate the implementation of infrastructure requirements to meet development demands.
- **Citywide Policy:** Establish mechanisms and fee structures which will enable the City of Norwalk to plan for and finance infrastructure improvements in accordance with new developments, and to eliminate deficiencies in the current system, including overloaded and hard to reach mains.

Storm Drainage

- **Citywide Objective:** To provide adequate storm drainage and flood control infrastructure to efficiently serve existing and future Norwalk residents.
- **Citywide Policy:** Work with Los Angeles County to ensure maintenance and development of drainage facilities to meet present and future needs.
- **Citywide Policy:** Establish mechanisms and fee structures to enable the City to plan for and finance infrastructure improvements in accordance with new development.

City of Norwalk Municipal Code

Chapter 18.04, Stormwater Management and Discharge Control: The purpose of this chapter is to ensure the future health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of the City and the water quality of the receiving waters of the County of Los Angeles and surrounding coastal areas by:

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- Reducing pollutants in stormwater discharges to the maximum extent practicable.
- Regulating illicit connections and illicit discharges and reducing the level of contamination of stormwater and urban runoff in the municipal stormwater system.
- Regulating non-stormwater discharges to the municipal stormwater system.

This chapter also sets forth requirements for the construction and operation of certain commercial development, new development and redevelopment, and other projects that are intended to ensure compliance with the stormwater mitigation measures in the MS4 permit.

Existing Conditions

The project site is in the Lower San Gabriel River watershed. The watershed encompasses approximately 78.5 square miles (50,240 acres) in Los Angeles County and has approximately 150 stream miles. The main reach through the watershed is the San Gabriel River, with Coyote Creek and San Jose Creek as major tributaries. The San Gabriel River in the watershed consists of a concrete-lined channel spanning 140 to 200 feet in width. Coyote Creek and San Jose Creek also have concrete channels at their confluence with the San Gabriel River. The Coyote Creek subwatershed drains approximately 185 square miles to its confluence with the San Gabriel River. The subwatershed is almost entirely developed. The San Jose Creek subwatershed drains approximately 7.29 square miles to its confluence with the San Gabriel River.

Runoff from the project site is collected and conveyed to the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) reinforced concrete drainpipe that runs beneath the City Hall Lawn. The LACFCD drainpipe runs east to west along the northern boundary of the project site. The drainpipe connects to a concrete box culvert that runs beneath Avenida Manuel Salinas. There are no structural treatment control BMPs currently installed on-site.⁶

5.17.3.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to storm drainage systems if the project would:

- U-1 Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.⁷

⁶ A structural treatment control BMP is defined in the MS4 permit as a stationary and permanent BMP that is designed, constructed and operated to prevent or reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater

⁷ Impacts related to the construction or relocation of new or expanded storm water drainage facilities are discussed in Section 5.17.3.3. Impacts to wastewater treatment and water facilities are discussed in Sections 5.1.7.1.3 and 5.1.7.2.3 respectively. Impacts to electric power, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities are discussed in subsequent discussions within this section.

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5.17.3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact Analysis

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.17-5: Existing storm drain facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated storm water flows and would not require nor result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded stormwater drainage systems. [Threshold U-1 (part)]

The proposed project buildout would increase impervious areas on the project site due to the removal of the City Hall Lawn and development of different landscaped and open space areas on the project site. Runoff from the proposed development would be collected through an on-site storm drain system that would convey stormwater to the LACFCD reinforced concrete drainpipe that runs beneath the City Hall Lawn. Per the requirements of the LACDPW, as detailed in the Los Angeles County Hydrology Manual and the Los Angeles County Hydraulic Design Manual, development under the proposed project would be required to have site-specific hydrology and hydraulic studies to determine the capacity of the existing storm drain systems and project impacts on such systems prior to approval by the LACDPW. The proposed project would be required to comply with site-specific “allowable discharge rates” that limit post-project peak-flow discharges compared to existing conditions, thus minimizing the potential for flooding on- or off-site and exceedance of the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. The hydrology and hydraulic studies must be submitted to the County for review and approval prior to the issuance of grading permits.

The project developer would also prepare and submit a standard urban stormwater mitigation plan (SUSMP) per the MS4 permit and Chapter 18.04 of the municipal code, which would include applicable low impact development requirements in the MS4 permit and Low Impact Development Standards Manual. The proposed project would be designed to control pollutants, pollutant loads, and runoff volume to as reasonably feasible by controlling runoff from impervious surfaces through infiltration, evapotranspiration, bioretention, and/or rainfall harvest and use. The final BMPs to be implemented for the proposed project would be determined through the City’s review of the SUSMP, which would occur during the City’s building plan check process. Additionally, the proposed project would incorporate into the project plans a stormwater mitigation plan, including the BMPs necessary to control stormwater pollution from project operations as set forth in the SUSMP. Structural or treatment control BMPs in project plans would meet the design standards in the SUSMP and MS4 permit. The project developer would also provide verification of maintenance provisions for treatment and structural control BMPs.

Therefore, development pursuant to the proposed project would not be anticipated to impact the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage system. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant.

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5.17.3.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative projects in the Lower San Gabriel River watershed could increase impervious areas and thus increase local runoff volumes at those project sites. However, cumulative projects in the region would be required to capture and infiltrate runoff as applicable in accordance with the NPDES MS4 permit (see Table 4-3 in Section 4, *Environmental Setting*). Compliance with the MS4 permit would ensure projects retain a specified volume of stormwater runoff from a design storm event onsite, and the County's LID Standards Manual provides guidance on how projects can meet these on-site retention requirements using stormwater quality control measures. Projects in the region would also be required to limit post-development runoff discharges per the requirements of the LACDPW, as detailed in the Los Angeles County Hydrology Manual and the Los Angeles County Hydraulic Design Manual. These measures minimize the potential for exceedance of the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. No significant cumulative drainage impact would occur, and proposed project drainage impacts would not be cumulatively considerable. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.17.4 Solid Waste

5.17.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to solid waste and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

Federal

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (Title 40, Part 258 of the Code of Federal Regulations), contains regulations for municipal solid waste landfills and requires states to implement their own permitting programs incorporating the federal landfill criteria. The federal regulations address the location, operation, design (liners, leachate collection, run-off control, etc.), groundwater monitoring, and closure of landfills.

State

California Green Building Standards Code

Section 5.408 (Construction Waste Reduction, Disposal, and Recycling) of CALGreen requires that at least 65 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition waste from nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse. CALGreen is updated on a three-year cycle; the 2019 CALGreen took effect on January 1, 2020.

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Assembly Bill 939

Assembly Bill (AB) 939 (California Integrated Solid Waste Management Act of 1989; Public Resources Code Section 40050 et seq.) established an integrated waste-management system that focused on source reduction, recycling, composting, and land disposal of waste. AB 939 required every California city and county to divert 50 percent of its waste from landfills by the year 2000. Compliance with AB 939 is measured in part by comparing solid waste disposal rates for a jurisdiction with target disposal rates; actual rates at or below target rates are consistent with AB 939. AB 939 also requires California counties to show 15 years of disposal capacity for all jurisdictions in the county or show a plan to transform or divert its waste.

Assembly Bill 341

AB 341 (Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011) increased the statewide solid waste diversion goal to 75 percent by 2020. AB 341, which was passed in 2011 and took effect July 1, 2012, mandates recycling for businesses producing four or more cubic yards of solid waste per week or multi-family residential dwellings of five or more units. Under AB 341, businesses and multi-family dwellings of five or more units must separate recyclables from trash and either subscribe to recycling services, self-haul their recyclables, or contract with a permitted private recycler.

Organic Waste Methane Emissions Reduction Act

In September 2016, SB 1383 established methane emissions reduction targets in a statewide effort to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants in various sectors of California's economy. SB 1383 established goals to reduce the landfill disposal of organics by achieving a 50 percent reduction in the 2014 level of statewide disposal of organic waste by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. SB 1383 granted CalRecycle the regulatory authority to achieve the organic waste disposal reduction targets and establishes an additional target that at least 20 percent of currently disposed edible food be recovered for human consumption by 2025.

SB 1383 also requires that no later than July 1, 2020, CalRecycle and the California Air Resources Board analyze the progress that the waste sector, state government, and local governments have made in achieving the targets for reducing organic waste in landfills. Depending on the outcome of the analysis, CalRecycle is authorized to amend the regulations to include incentives or additional requirements to meet the goals.

Assembly Bill 1826

Assembly Bill 1826 currently requires businesses and multi-family complexes that generate two or more cubic yards of solid waste, recycling, and organic waste combined per week to start recycling organic waste. Single-family dwellings are not required to have a food waste diversion program. This requirement was instated by CalRecycle to meet the target set by SB 1383.

Assembly Bill 1327

The California Solid Waste Reuse and the Recycling Access Act of 1991 (AB 1327) is codified in Public Resources Code Sections 42900-42911. As amended, AB 1327 requires each local jurisdiction to adopt an ordinance requiring commercial, industrial, institutional, and residential buildings having five or more living units to provide an adequate storage area for the collection and removal of recyclable materials. The size of

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these storage areas is determined by the appropriate jurisdictions' ordinance. The City's ordinance is included under Chapter 8.48 of the municipal code.

Local

County of Los Angeles Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan

The County Integrated Waste Management Plan comprises the solid waste reduction planning documents produced by the County and its cities. To assess compliance with AB 939, a Disposal Reporting System was established to measure the amount of disposal from each jurisdiction. Comparing current disposal rates to base year solid waste generation determines whether each jurisdiction complies with the diversion mandate. Additionally, the Siting Element is a long-term planning document that describes how the County and the cities in the county plan to manage the disposal of their solid waste for a 15-year planning period. The Siting Element contains goals and policies on a variety of solid waste management issues.

City of Norwalk General Plan

Goals, objectives, and procedures related to solid waste management are outlined below.

Utility Infrastructure Element

Solid Waste Management

- **Citywide Objective:** To provide for the safe and efficient disposal of solid waste.
- **Citywide Policy:** Comply with the provisions of AB 939 to reduce solid waste.
- **Citywide Policy:** Encourage public and private recycling programs.
- **Citywide Policy:** Actively participate in regional provisions for solid waste disposal including material recovery and fuel production.
- **Citywide Policy:** Ensure adequate trash removal, installation and maintenance of trash receptacles on streets and in parks, and regular street sweeping.

City of Norwalk Municipal Code

Chapter 8.48, Solid Waste Handling and Recycling Services: This chapter regulates the collection of solid waste from commercial/industrial and residential premises and encourages recycling of solid waste materials. The chapter includes requirements related to residential and commercial recycling and the preparation of waste management plans for construction, demolition, and renovation projects in the City.

Chapter 15.30, Green Building Standards Code: This chapter adopts the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code.

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Existing Conditions

Solid Waste Collection

An important part of the City’s solid waste management programs is the regular curbside collection of recyclables. This program accepts many products, such as glass and plastic bottles, aluminum and steel cans, newspapers and junk mail. The City also offers a household hazardous and electronic waste collection program, a residential green waste collection program, and bulky item pickup services. The City also provides dedicated containers to single-family homes and multifamily complexes to collect landscaping waste, food scraps, and fiber-base food-soiled paper. Athens Services, a waste collection and recycling company collects solid waste in the City of Norwalk (Norwalk 2022c).

Solid Waste Disposal

In 2019 approximately 80 percent of the solid waste from the City was disposed of at four landfills (CalRecycle 2019a). These facilities are described in Table 5.17-4, *Landfills Serving Norwalk*.

Table 5.17-4 Landfills Serving Norwalk

Landfill	Remaining Capacity (million tons) ¹	Maximum Permitted Capacity (million tons) ¹	Maximum Permitted Throughput (tons per day)	Average Daily Disposal (2020) ² (tons)	Estimated Closing Date
Mid-Valley Sanitary Landfill 2390 N. Alder Avenue Rialto, CA 92377	61.2	101.3	7,500	3,646	4/1/2045
San Timoteo Sanitary Landfill San Timoteo Canyon Road Redlands, CA 92373	12.4	23.7	2,000	939	12/1/2039
Frank R. Bowerman Sanitary Landfill 11002 Bee Canyon Access Road, Irvine, CA 92618	205.0	266.0	11,500	7,344	12/31/2053
Savage Canyon Landfill 13919 East Penn Street Whittier, CA 90602	9.5	19.3	3,350	291	12/31/2055
Total	288.1	410.3	24,350	12,220	-

Sources: CalRecycle 2019b, 2019c, 2019d, 2019e, 2019f.

¹ A Volume-to-Weight conversion rate of 2,000 lbs/cubic yard (1 ton/cubic yard) for “Compacted - MSW Large Landfill with Best Management Practices” is used as per CalRecycle’s 2016 Volume-to-Weight Conversion Factors.

² Average daily disposal is estimated based on 300 operating days per year. Each facility is open six days per week, Monday through Saturday, except certain holidays.

Collectively the four landfills have a remaining disposal capacity of approximately 288.1 million tons and a residual daily throughput of 12,130 tons per day. All the landfills have a disposal capacity beyond the 15-year horizon, as required by AB 939.

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Compliance with AB 939 is measured in part by actual disposal rates compared to target rates for residents and employees, respectively; actual disposal rates at or below target rates are consistent with AB 939. Target disposal rates for Norwalk are 4.0 pounds per day (ppd) per resident and 22.1 ppd per employee. Actual disposal rates in 2020 were 2.8 ppd per resident and 12.6 ppd per employee (CalRecycle 2019g). Thus, solid waste diversion in Norwalk is consistent with AB 939.

5.17.4.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to solid waste if the project would:

- U-4 Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.
- U-5 Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

5.17.4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact Analysis

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.17-6: Project-generated solid waste would not be in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. [Thresholds U-4]

Construction

Construction associated with the proposed development would result in solid wastes associated primarily with grading and grubbing activities, the removal of organic and other materials potentially detrimental to soil compaction, and exported soils needed to balance the project site. There would be no demolition of structures and minimal construction demolition debris generated primarily from pavement demolition. Additionally, construction activities, including that generated by construction employees, of the new dwelling units and commercial uses would result in the generation of construction wastes.

The proposed project would be constructed in accordance with the CalGreen, which requires recycling a minimum of 65 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition debris (by weight or volume). Furthermore, the requirements of the Norwalk Municipal Code Chapter 8.48, Solid Waste Handling and Recycling Services, would be implemented, including the preparation of a waste management plan for construction activities. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not be expected to generate solid waste in excess of state and local standards nor exceed the capacity of local infrastructure, and impacts from construction waste would be **less than significant**.

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Operational

Operation of the proposed project at buildout is estimated to generate 6,035 ppd of solid waste, as shown in Table 5.17-5, *Estimated Solid Waste Generation*. The existing City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot generate minimal solid waste, and for a conservative estimate, the City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot were not included in the Table 5.17-5.

Table 5.17-5 Estimated Solid Waste Generation

Land Use	Buildout	Solid Waste Generation Rate	Solid Waste Generation (ppd)
Multifamily Home	350 DU	8.6 lb/DU/day	3,010
Restaurants	35,000 SF	0.005 lb/SF/day	175
Retail	35,000 SF	0.046 lb/SF/day	1,610
Supermarket	40,000 SF	0.031 lb/SF/day	1,240
Net Increase			6,035

Source: CalRecycle 2019h.
Notes: SF = square feet; ppd = pounds per day; DU = dwelling units; lb = pounds

As detailed in Table 5.17-4, the four landfills serving the City have a residual daily capacity of 12,130 tons per day (or 24.3 million ppd). The proposed project's estimated 6,035 ppd (or 3.02 tons per day) equates to a fraction of one percent of available capacity of the four landfills serving the project site; therefore, the proposed project would be adequately served by these landfills.

The proposed project would abide by the requirements of SB 1383, which established targets to achieve a statewide, 50 percent reduction in organic-waste disposal from 2014 levels by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. Development would also comply with the requirements of AB 1826, which mandates businesses and multi-family complexes that generate two or more cubic yards of solid waste, recycling, and organic waste combined per week to start recycling organic waste.

Solid waste facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated solid waste. The proposed project would not generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. As such, proposed project impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

Impact 5.17-7: Project-generated solid waste would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. [Thresholds U-5]

Project-related construction and operation phases would be implemented in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations governing solid waste disposal. For example, the project would comply with the following federal, state, and local laws and regulations that govern solid waste disposal:

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- The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 and the Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1965, which govern solid waste disposal.
- AB 939 (Integrated Solid Waste Management Act of 1989; Public Resources Code 40050 et seq.), which required diversion of 50 percent of waste from landfills and required each county to provide landfill capacity for a 15-year period.
- AB 1327 (California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991) requires local agencies to adopt ordinances mandating the use of recyclable materials in development projects.

In addition, as shown in Impact 5.17-6 above, the proposed project's solid waste is adequately accommodated within area landfills serving the project site. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.17.4.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The area considered for cumulative impacts is the area serviced by the four landfills listed in Table 5.17-4. Collectively, these landfills have a remaining disposal capacity of approximately 410.3 million tons. All the landfills have a disposal capacity beyond the 15-year horizon, as required by AB 939 to account for future demand and ensure adequate capacity. Additionally, all cumulative projects would divert construction waste per CalGreen requirements, and abide by the requirements of SB 183, AB 1826, and AB 341 as applicable. Thus, there is sufficient landfill capacity in the region for the cumulative increase in solid waste disposal. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be **less than significant**, and project impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.17.5 Other Utilities

5.17.5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

State and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to other utilities and potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

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State

California Energy Commission

The California Energy Commission (CEC) was created in 1974—as the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission—to be the state’s principal energy planning organization and meet the energy challenges of the 1973 oil embargo. The CEC is charged with six basic responsibilities when designing state energy policy:

- Forecast statewide electricity needs.
- License power plants to meet those needs.
- Promote energy conservation and efficiency measures.
- Develop renewable energy resources and alternative energy technologies.
- Promote research, development, and demonstration.
- Plan for and direct the state’s response to energy emergencies.

California Energy Benchmarking and Disclosure (AB 802)

On October 8, 2015, AB 802 directed the CEC to establish a statewide energy benchmarking and disclosure program and enhanced the CEC’s existing authority to collect data from utilities and other entities for the purposes of energy forecasting, planning, and program design. Among the specific provisions, AB 802 requires utilities to maintain records of the energy usage data of all buildings to which they provide service for at least the most recent 12 complete months. AB 802 requires each utility, upon the request and authorization of the owner, owner’s agent, or operator of a covered building, to deliver or provide aggregated energy usage data for a covered building to the owner, owner’s agent, operator, or to the owner’s account in the Energy Star Portfolio Manager, subject to specified requirements. AB 802 also authorized the CEC to specify additional information to be delivered by utilities for certain purposes.

California Building Code: Building Energy Efficiency Standards

Energy conservation standards for new residential and non-residential buildings were adopted by the CEC in June 1977. Title 24 requires the design of building shells and building components to conserve energy, with standards updated periodically to allow for consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards went into effect January 1, 2020.

The 2019 standards move toward cutting energy use in new homes by more than 50 percent and require installation of solar photovoltaic systems for single-family homes and multifamily buildings of three stories or less. The 2019 standards focus on four key areas: 1) smart residential photovoltaic systems; 2) updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to exterior and vice versa); 3) residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements and; 4) nonresidential lighting requirements. Under the 2019 standards, nonresidential buildings are 30 percent more energy efficient compared to the 2016 standards, and single-family homes are 7 percent more energy efficient. When accounting for the electricity generated by the solar photovoltaic system, single-family homes use 53 percent less energy compared to homes built to the 2016 standards.

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California Building Code: CALGreen

CALGreen was adopted as part of the California Building Standards Code and established planning and design standards for sustainable site development, energy efficiency (in excess of the California Energy Code requirements), as well as water conservation and material conservation, both of which contribute to energy conservation. The 2019 CALGreen standards became effective January 1, 2020.

2012 Appliance Efficiency Regulations

The 2012 Appliance Efficiency Regulations (20 CCR Sections 1601 through 1608) include standards for both federally regulated appliances and non-federally regulated appliances. Though these regulations are now often viewed as “business as usual,” they exceed the standards imposed by all other states, and they reduce energy demand as well as GHG emissions.

State Greenhouse Gas Regulations

Current State of California guidance and goals for reductions in GHG emissions from stationary sources are generally embodied in Executive Orders S-03-05 and B-30-15, AB 32 and AB 197, and SB 32. While these regulations are aimed at reducing GHG emissions, they have a direct relationship to energy conservation. A detailed discussion of these regulations is provided in Section 5.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emission*, of the EIR.

Local

City of Norwalk General Plan

Goals, objectives, and procedures related to electricity, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities are outlined below.

Utility Infrastructure Element

Placement, Maintenance, and Phasing of Infrastructure

- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure that public infrastructure improvements are compatible with development.
- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure that public infrastructure is upgraded and installed in a timely manner to meet usage requirements and maximize cost efficiency.
- **Citywide Policy:** Encourage infrastructure improvements to be designed to complement the area in which they are located and sited so that they do not adversely impact existing structures.
- **Citywide Policy:** Continue to plan for and coordinate the implementation of infrastructure requirements to meet development demands.
- **Citywide Policy:** Establish mechanisms and fee structures which will enable the City of Norwalk to plan for and finance infrastructure improvements in accordance with new developments, and to eliminate deficiencies in the current system, including overloaded and hard to reach mains.

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Natural Gas

- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure adequate natural gas service to meet present and future needs of the City.
- **Citywide Objective:** To minimize the risks associated with any gas leakage and exposure.
- **Citywide Policy:** Coordinate with The Gas Company in upgrading or adding gas service lines to serve present and future needs of Norwalk.
- **Citywide Policy:** Encourage energy conservation in both public and private buildings.

Electricity

- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure adequate electricity service to meet present and future needs of Norwalk.
- **Citywide Policy:** Coordinate with Southern California Edison in upgrading and adding electrical service to serve present and future needs of Norwalk.
- **Citywide Policy:** Encourage energy conservation in both public and private buildings.

Telecommunications

- **Citywide Objective:** To ensure new and existing development will have necessary telecommunications facilities to serve the citizens and businesses of Norwalk.
- **Citywide Policy:** Encourage the development and expansion of telecommunications systems (including cable television and, as feasible, fiber optics), for purposes of entertainment, education, culture, communication, and other similar purposes.

Existing Conditions

The project site is within the service area of Southern California Edison (SCE) and would be served by the existing electrical transmission lines. Gas would be provided by Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). All dry utility connections in the project site would be in underground conduits and vaults.

Electricity

SCE's service area spans much of Southern California—from Orange and Riverside counties in the south to Santa Barbara County in the west to Mono County in the north. Total electricity consumption in SCE's service area in gigawatt-hours (GWh) was 103,597 GWh in 2020 (CEC 2022).⁸ Sources of electricity sold by SCE in 2020, the latest year for which data are available, were:

- 30.9 percent renewable, consisting mostly of solar and wind
- 3.3 percent large hydroelectric

⁸ One GWh is equivalent to one million kilowatt-hours.

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- 15.2 percent natural gas
- 8.4 percent nuclear
- 42 percent unspecified sources—that is, not traceable to specific sources (SCE 2022)

Natural Gas

The Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) provides natural gas to the City of Norwalk. SoCalGas' service area spans much of the southern half of California, from Imperial County on the southeast to San Luis Obispo County on the northwest, to part of Fresno County on the north, to Riverside County and most of San Bernardino County on the east. The project site is within the service area of SoCalGas. The total gas consumption in the SoCalGas service area was approximately 7,406 million therms in 2019, with slightly decreasing demand projected up to the 2030 (CEC 2019).

Telecommunications

Communication services are offered regionally by franchised telecommunications providers, such as AT&T and Spectrum.

5.17.5.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to other utilities if the project would:

- U-1 Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.⁹

5.17.5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact Analysis

The following impact analysis addresses the thresholds of significance; the applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

⁹ Impacts related to the construction or relocation of new or expanded electric power, natural gas, and facilities are discussed in Section 5.17.5.3. Impacts to wastewater treatment, water, and storm water drainage facilities are discussed in Sections 5.1.7.1.3, 5.1.7.2.3, and 5.7.3.3 respectively.

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Impact 5.17-8: Existing facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated electricity and gas demands and would not require the relocation or construction of new or expanded electricity, natural gas or telecommunication facilities. [Threshold U-1 (part)]

Electricity

Construction

Construction activities associated with the land uses accommodated under the proposed project would require electricity use to power the construction equipment. The electricity use during construction would vary during different phases of construction; most of the construction equipment during grading would be gas or diesel powered, and later construction phases would require electricity-powered equipment such as nail guns for interior construction and sprayers for architectural coatings. Overall, the use of electricity would be temporary and would fluctuate according to the phase of construction. It is anticipated that most of the electric-powered construction equipment would be hand tools (e.g., power drills, table saws, compressors) and lighting, which would result in minimal electricity usage during the approximately 23 months of construction activities. Electrical energy would be available for use during construction from the existing power lines and connections available in the project site, potentially including temporary power poles. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Operation

Electricity service to the project site would be provided by SCE through connections to existing off-site electrical lines. Implementation of the proposed project would result in a net increase in electricity use of 5,465,794 kilowatt-hours per year, or 5.5 GWh/year (see Section 5.5, *Energy*, Table 5.5-2, *Operational-Related Electricity Consumption*). While the proposed project would increase energy demand at the site compared to existing conditions, it would be required to comply with the latest applicable Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen. The proposed project would also install solar panels on the rooftops that would offset demand from SCE's electrical distribution system.

Total electricity consumption in SCE's service area is forecast to decrease by approximately 13,411 GWh between 2018 and 2030 (CEC 2020). SCE forecasts that it will have sufficient electricity supplies to meet demands in its service area and the proposed project's net increase in electricity demand accounts for less than 1 percent of SCE's total demand. Therefore, project development would not require SCE to obtain new or expanded electricity supplies; impacts would be **less than significant**.

Natural Gas

Project operation would generate an estimated net increase in natural gas demand of 13,720,860 kBTU per year (see Section 5.5, *Energy*, Table 5.5-2, *Operational-Related Electricity Consumption*). The total gas consumption in the SoCalGas service area was approximately 7,406 million therms (or 740,600 billion BTUs) in 2019, with slightly decreasing demand projected up to the 2030 (CEC 2019). The natural gas demand from the proposed project would represent less than 1 percent of the overall demand in SoCalGas' service area.

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Therefore, the proposed would not result in a substantial increase in natural gas demands and SoCalGas would not need to expand their supply and transmission facilities in order to handle the demand generated by the proposed project. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Telecommunications

Infrastructure supporting telecommunications services would be provided and installed onsite. Concealed wireless telecommunications facilities would be installed pursuant to the requirements of the Norwalk Municipal Code. Installation of telecommunication infrastructure would result in physical impacts to the surface and subsurface of the project site. These impacts are part of the project's construction phase and are evaluated throughout this Draft EIR. Furthermore, a number of franchised telecommunications providers are available in the region and no significant expansion or construction of the telecommunications network is anticipated. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant impact.

5.17.5.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Like the proposed project, each cumulative project could increase electricity and natural gas demands. The CEC electricity demand forecasts are based on climate zones; economic and demographic growth forecasts from Moody's Analytics, IHS Global Insight, and the California Department of Finance; forecast electricity rates; effects of reasonably foreseeable energy efficiency and energy conservation efforts; anticipated partial electrification of portions of the transportation sector, including increasing adoption of light-duty plug-in electric vehicles; and demand response measures, such as electricity rates that increase during high-demand times of day; and effects of climate change (CEC 2016). Natural gas demand forecasts are based on economic outlook, California Public Utilities Commission-mandated energy efficiency standards and programs, renewable electricity goals, and conservation savings linked to Advanced Metering Infrastructure. It is anticipated that electricity and natural gas demands by most other projects would be accounted for in the above-referenced demand forecasts.

Like the proposed project, future development would install infrastructure supporting telecommunications services pursuant to the requirements of the Norwalk Municipal Code.

Given the already urbanized character of the City, new conveyance facilities would not significantly alter land use patterns to the extent that construction of new electrical, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities would be warranted. Additionally, other projects would be subject to independent CEQA review, including analysis of impacts to electricity, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities. Implementation of all feasible mitigation measures would be required for any significant impacts identified. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be **less than significant**, and project impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation required.

Significance After Mitigation: Less than significant cumulative impacts.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

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6. Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

At the end of Chapter 1, *Executive Summary*, is a table that summarizes the impacts, mitigation measures, and levels of significance before and after mitigation. Mitigation measures would reduce the level of impact, but the following impacts would remain significant, unavoidable, and adverse after all feasible mitigation measures are applied:

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- **Impact 5.7-1: Implementation of the proposed project would generate a net increase in GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that would have a significant impact on the environment.**

Operation of the proposed project following buildout would generate a net increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. Implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-1 and GHG-2, as well as Mitigation Measures TRA-1, would reduce GHG emissions to the extent feasible. The proposed project includes development standards that promote energy efficiency and water efficiency, such as selecting architectural materials and technologies that reduce energy and emphasizing water-efficient and drought tolerant plants. The proposed project includes the provision of a mixed-use development that places residential and commercial uses on the same project site thus promoting interactive use of onsite facilities and thereby facilitating the reduction of vehicle trips. The proposed project also supports multimodal transportation by providing bicycle parking onsite, pedestrian connections through the site that facilitate connections to area uses, and its proximity to transit and near bus stops along Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard via Norwalk Transit System. However, the proposed project would generate emissions from project-related vehicle trips, that is, mobile-source emissions, followed by energy sector emissions and solid waste sector emissions, that would contribute to the project's annual GHG emissions. Although the proposed project would implement mitigation measures, such as fuel switching and electric vehicle charging, that would reduce GHG emissions, project emissions would continue to exceed the South Coast AQMG Working Group bright-line threshold for annual GHG emissions, and Impact 5.7-1 would remain significant and unavoidable.

6. Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

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7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the alternatives analysis for the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan Project (proposed project), as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA requires that an environmental impact report (EIR) include a discussion of reasonable project alternatives that would “feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[a]).

The discussion includes an explanation of the methodology used to select alternatives to the proposed project, with the intent of identifying potentially feasible alternatives that could avoid or substantially lessen the significant impacts identified for the proposed project while still meeting most of the basic project objectives, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a). This chapter identifies a reasonable range of alternatives that meet these criteria, and these alternatives are evaluated with respect to minimizing adverse environmental effects as compared to the proposed project. It also describes other alternatives and alternative concepts that were considered but eliminated from detailed consideration and the reasons for their elimination. For the alternatives selected for analysis, this chapter evaluates the impacts of the alternatives against baseline environmental conditions and compares the potential impacts of the alternatives with those of the proposed project. Finally, as required under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e), based on this analysis, this chapter then discusses the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines explains the foundation and legal requirements for the alternatives analysis in an EIR. Key provisions are:

- “[T]he discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly.” (Section 15126.6[b])
- “The specific alternative of ‘no project’ shall also be evaluated along with its impact.” (Section 15126.6[e][1])
- “The no project analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced, as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services. If

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

the environmentally superior alternative is the ‘no project’ alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.” (Section 15126.6[e][2])

- “The range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a ‘rule of reason’ that requires the EIR to set forth 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. Of those alternatives, the EIR need examine in detail only the ones the Lead Agency determines could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project.” (Section 15126.6[f])
- “Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives 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 (or the site is already owned by the proponent)” (Section 15126.6[f][1]).
- “Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR.” (Section 15126.6[f][2][A])
- “An EIR need not consider an alternative whose effect cannot be reasonably ascertained and whose implementation is remote and speculative.” (Section 15126.6[f][3])

For each development alternative, this analysis:

- Describes the alternative.
- Analyzes the impact of the alternative as compared to the proposed project.
- Assesses whether the alternative would meet most of the basic project objectives.
- Identifies the impacts of the project that would be avoided or lessened by the alternative.
- Evaluates the comparative merits of the alternative and the project.

According to Section 15126.6(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, “[i]f an alternative would cause...significant effects in addition those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.”

7.2 FACTORS CONSIDERED WHEN DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVES

This section describes the basis for determining the range of CEQA alternatives and identifies the specific alternatives that are analyzed in this Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). The primary factors considered when determining feasible alternatives to the proposed project are the identified project objectives and those impacts that have been identified for the proposed project. Therefore, these two considerations are summarized below.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.2.1 Project Objectives

As described in Section 3.2, the following objectives have been established for the proposed project and will aid decision makers in their review of the project, the project alternatives, and associated environmental impacts.

- Implement the City's Economic Development Opportunities Plan by revitalizing the project site with a vibrant, community-focused, mixed-use development that contributes to the City's economic base.
- Provide for the comprehensive planning of the project site through the preparation of a specific plan.
- Utilize a public/private partnership between the City of Norwalk and a developer to redevelop the site consistent with the specific plan established for the project site.
- Allow for the construction of new mixed-use buildings on the City Hall Lawn and existing surface parking lot, while preserving and respecting the existing City Hall building.
- Provide activated and engaging publicly accessible plaza and landscaped spaces for community gatherings, socializing and programming that strengthen the north-south connection between the existing Entertainment District (Specific Plan Area 1) to the south and the retail and housing to the north, and encourage pedestrian and multi-modal access and use of the project site and surrounding uses.
- Diversify and expand the City's housing stock with multiple-family residential units, including affordable units.
- Provide retail and commercial uses in a central location that creates a sense of place, supports and enhances the existing commercial and institutional uses in the City's Civic Center and Entertainment District, and serves as an attractive destination for residents, employees and visitors in the City.
- Encourage and support current and future transit use and other alternative forms of transportation while providing sufficient parking to meet the evolving needs of the City's existing and future entertainment/civic uses.

7.2.2 Summary of Significant Effects of the Proposed Project

The following impacts have been identified for the proposed project, as discussed in Chapter 5, *Environmental Analysis*, of this DEIR.

7.2.2.1 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

- Impact 5.8-1: GHG Emissions
- GHG Cumulative Impacts

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.2.2.2 SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS THAT CAN BE MITIGATED TO LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT

- Impact 5.2-4: Air Quality (Construction Air Quality)
- Impact 5.3-1: Biological Resources (Nesting Birds)
- Impact 5.4-2: Cultural Resources (Archaeological Resources)
- Impact 5.6-6: Geology and Soils (Paleontological Resources)
- Impact 5.11-1: Noise (Construction Noise)
- Impact 5.11-3: Noise (Construction groundborne vibration and groundborne noise)
- Impact 5.15-2: Transportation (VMT)
- Impact 5.16-2: Tribal Cultural Resources

7.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED

The following is a discussion of the land use alternatives considered for inclusion in this section and the reasons why they were not selected for detailed analysis in this EIR.

7.3.1 Alternative Site

CEQA requires that the discussion of alternatives focus on alternatives to the project or its location that are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project. The key question and first step in the analysis is whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location. Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126[5][B][1]). Irrespective of the proposed location of the project, given the scale of up to 350 residential units and up to 110,000 square feet of commercial uses, and the cumulative nature of GHG impacts, the project would continue to exceed the GHG threshold. Therefore, an alternative site location would not avoid or substantially lessen the significant and unavoidable impacts of the project.

Additionally, no other feasible alternative sites were identified. The Norwalk Economic Development Opportunities Plan (EDO Plan) was referenced to identify alternative sites for the proposed project. The EDO Plan identifies nine other strategic areas (not including the proposed project site). Of these nine other strategic area sites, only one has property owned by the City that would be roughly proportional in size to the proposed project's site (i.e., strategic area 4, Tank Farm). However, the EDO Plan identifies that the Tank Farm would be unsuitable for residential uses due to previous environmental conditions. Therefore, in addition to this site not avoiding or substantially reducing significant GHG impacts, it was ultimately determined that this strategic area site was not feasible.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Other strategic areas include parcels that are largely privately owned and would require extensive coordination with the private property owners of these areas to acquire a site similar in size with the proposed project site that could accommodate the proposed project. Similarly, two strategic areas are owned by State agencies (#3, California Youth Authority, and #8, 105 Freeway/Studebaker) and these strategic area sites would require negotiations and land transfers to the City before the sites would be viable as an alternative site for the proposed project. Since the acquisition of these sites is speculative, and in addition to these sites not avoiding or substantially reducing significant GHG impacts, these strategic areas were dismissed as possible alternative sites.

Finally, the project applicant does not have ownership or control of any other suitable sites in the City, or the foreseeable ability to acquire an alternative site within a reasonable timeframe. Therefore, the flexibility to develop a similar project on the same or similar scale at another location that would achieve most of the basic project objectives is not feasible.

Therefore, alternative sites were rejected from further consideration.

7.3.2 Alternative Consistent with Existing General Plan Land Use and Zoning Designations

The project site has an existing General Plan land use designation of Institutional and has a corresponding zoning designation of Institutional. The Institutional zone allows for City Hall, corporate yard, courthouse, fire station, fueling station, hospital, police or sheriff station, public library, other similar uses, uses that provide economic development opportunities promoting employment, education, and business training resources or services to the public (as determined by the City), and wireless telecommunications facilities. The proposed project, which includes the development of a mixed-use project with residential uses, could be allowed with the existing General Plan land use and zoning designations (if so determined by the City). Some development standards would be different since the customized development regulations of a specific plan would not apply, but the same density and intensity of development could be permitted under the existing general plan designation and zoning. Thus, development consistent with the existing land use and zoning designation could be similar to the proposed project, with some differences. Because the same density and intensity of development could be permitted under the existing General Plan land use designation and zoning, development of a project consistent with underlying land use and zoning designations would not reduce the identified GHG impact. Because the existing land use designation and zoning would also permit other uses (e.g., fire station, hospital) that would result in a fundamentally different project, that may or may not reduce the project's GHG impacts, such an alternative would not meet any of the objectives identified by the project to revitalize the project site with a vibrant community-focused mixed-use development that contributes to the City's economic base. Therefore, this alternative was rejected from further consideration.

7.4 ALTERNATIVES SELECTED FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

The following three alternatives have been determined to represent a reasonable range of alternatives which have the potential to feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the proposed project which may avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the proposed project.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

- Alternative 1: No Project Alternative
- Alternative 2: All Residential Alternative
- Alternative 3: Reduced Commercial Alternative

Table 7.1, *Project Alternatives: Buildout Statistical Summary*, provides an overview of the three alternatives compared to the proposed project. These alternatives are analyzed in detail in the following sections.

Table 7-1 Project Alternatives: Buildout Statistical Summary

	Proposed Project	No Project Alternative	All Residential Alternative	Reduced Commercial Alternative
Residential Units	350	0	425	405
Population	1,264	0	1,534	1,462
Commercial SF	110,000	0	0	10,000
Employment	441	0	0	27
Daily Vehicle Trips (without TDM mitigation)	8,699	0	1,833 (-79%) ^a	2,161 (-75%) ^a
Daily Vehicle Trips (with TDM mitigation)	6,959	0	1,466 (-83%) ^a	1,729 (-80%) ^a

Notes:
Percent change from the proposed project Daily Vehicle Trips (without TDM Mitigation)

7.5 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

7.5.1 Description

The CEQA Guidelines require the analysis of a No Project Alternative. Under CEQA, the No Project Alternative must consider the effects of not approving the proposed project. The No Project Alternative describes the environmental conditions that exist at the time that the environmental analysis commences, as well as what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the proposed project was not approved (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2)).

Under the No Project Alternative, no specific plan would be established to provide customized development standards and other regulations to govern development of a mixed-use residential and commercial project on the project site and no public private partnership between the City and the applicant would occur. No development would occur under the No Project Alternative, and the existing uses on the project site would continue according to current conditions. Under the No Project Alternative, it is assumed that the reasonably foreseeable future at the project site would continue its current uses of the existing City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot and maintain its current conditions. No mixed-use development would occur.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.5.2 Relationship to Project Objectives

The No Project Alternative would not provide any development within the project site and represents a continuation of the existing conditions. This alternative would not meet any of the project objectives and would not provide any of the benefits associated with the proposed project.

7.5.3 Comparative Analysis of Environmental Effects

7.5.3.1 AESTHETICS

Under the No Project Alternative, no structural or any other visual changes to the existing project site would occur. There would be no changes to the physical environment as it relates to aesthetic resources, including light and glare, and no impacts would occur. Impacts under this alternative would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.5.3.2 AIR QUALITY

No construction would occur under the No Project Alternative; therefore, no construction-related air quality impacts would occur. Construction-related impacts would be less than the less-than-significant with mitigation impacts of the proposed project. Mitigation Measure AQ-1 would not be needed. This alternative would not add new vehicle trips nor emissions, and current uses of the project site would remain unchanged. The operation-related air quality impacts under this alternative would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project. The No Project Alternative would have no impact with respect to conflict with the applicable Southern California Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants, generation of substantial pollutant concentrations, or generation of other emissions that would adversely affect a substantial number of people, and impacts would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project with respect to these topics.

7.5.3.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

No construction would occur under the No Project Alternative. The project site, including the City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot, would continue to operate as it currently does. The No Project Alternative would have no impacts to biological resources, including impacts to sensitive species or habitat, State or federally protected wetlands, wildlife movement, local plans and policies, and impacts to nesting birds. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would not be needed. Impacts to biological resources would be less than the proposed project's less-than-significant impacts and less-than-significant impacts with mitigation (nesting birds) for biological resources.

7.5.3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The No Project Alternative would not require ground-disturbing activities or any other construction, and would have no direct or indirect impacts to City Hall (an eligible historical resource). Thus, compared to the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would have less impacts than the proposed project's less-than-significant impacts regarding historic resource impacts to City Hall. Additionally, the No Project Alternative would have no impacts to archaeological resources or human remains, and impacts of this alternative would be less than

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

the proposed project's impacts of less-than-significant with mitigation for these topics. Therefore, Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2 would not be needed.

7.5.3.5 ENERGY

Under the No Project Alternative, site improvements, including construction of new buildings, would not occur. Therefore, there would be no impact to construction-related energy consumption, and construction-related impacts to energy would be less than the proposed project's less-than-significant impact. Under this Alternative, the project site would continue to operate in its existing condition as a City Hall Lawn, City Hall, parking structure and surface parking lot and there would be no new site improvements. Therefore, there would be no new energy demand for electricity and fuel consumption (which would be significantly less than the proposed project) and there would be no operation-related impacts to energy. The No Project Alternative would have no impact with respect to conflicting with or obstruction of a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Thus, impacts to energy from the No Project Alternative would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.5.3.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

No new construction activities, including grading, would occur under the No Project Alternative. Because the No Project Alternative would not cause ground-disturbing activities or any other construction, it would have no impact pertaining to soil erosion and loss of topsoil, landslide, lateral spreading, and paleontological resources, and impacts would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project. Mitigation Measures GEO-1 through GEO-3 related to paleontological resources would not be needed. Since under this Alternative no structures would be developed on the City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot and no new levels would be added to the parking structure, this Alternative would have no impacts to ground shaking and active faults and impacts would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project. Overall, the No Project Alternative would have no impacts to geology and soils, and impacts under this Alternative would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.5.3.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Under the No Project Alternative, no construction activities or changes of current uses would occur on the project site. Therefore, no construction-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would occur. Under this Alternative, the project site would continue to operate with its current uses as a City Hall, City Hall Lawn, parking structure, and surface parking lot. Therefore, this Alternative would have no new operational GHG emissions. Mitigation Measures GHG-1 and GHG-2 would not be needed. As with the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would not conflict with any applicable plans or policies. Overall, the No Project Alternative would avoid the significant and unavoidable GHG emissions impacts of the proposed project, and impacts under this Alternative would be less than those of the proposed project.

7.5.3.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Because no development would occur under the No Project Alternative, there would be no construction impacts related to hazards or hazardous materials, and impacts would be less than the less-than-significant

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

impacts of the proposed project. This Alternative would not change the uses or operation of the project site and therefore would not introduce new hazardous materials, such as small quantities of those used for cleaning and maintenance purposes (e.g., paints, household cleaners, fertilizers, and pesticides). Therefore, this Alternative would have no impact from hazardous materials during construction and operation and impacts would be less than the less-than-significant impact of the proposed project.

Similar to the proposed project, this Alternative would not expose people or structures to significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, similar to the proposed project. This Alternative would not impair the implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan since this Alternative results in no changes to existing conditions, which would result in no impact, which would be less than the proposed project's less-than-significant impact with respect to this topic.

7.5.3.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This Alternative would continue to operate the project site consistent with existing conditions. Under the No Project Alternative, water quality conditions, groundwater supplies, drainage patterns, and surface water runoff would remain the same as existing conditions, because no construction or new development would occur. This Alternative would not introduce new sources of water pollutants from the construction phase, and no impact would occur during construction, which would be less than the proposed project's less-than-significant impact during construction. This Alternative would maintain the project site's existing impervious surfaces and the runoff from the project site would continue to drain into the existing storm drain inlet on the south side of Imperial Highway. Therefore, this Alternative would have no operational impacts with respect to these topics, which would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

As with the proposed project this Alternative would not result in the release of pollutants due to inundation from flooding, tsunamis, or seiches and would not conflict with or obstruct a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan; however, because this Alternative would make no changes to the proposed project site or its operation it would have no impact with respect to these topics, and impacts would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project. Overall, because this Alternative would not involve any changes to the proposed project site, it would have no impact with respect to hydrology and water quality, which would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.5.3.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

No development or change of use or operation would occur under the No Project Alternative, and existing improvements and uses onsite would remain. This Alternative would not physically divide an established community. The project site would continue to operate as with existing uses and would not operate as mixed-use development. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would not conflict with any applicable plans. Overall, because no changes would occur with respect to land use and planning, this Alternative would have no impact, and the No Project Alternative impacts would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.5.3.11 NOISE

Because there would be no construction under the No Project Alternative, no construction noise or vibration impacts would occur, and Mitigation Measures NOI-1 and NOI-2 would not be needed. Because no construction noise or vibration impact would occur under this Alternative, impacts would be less than the less-than-significant (after mitigation) construction impacts to off-site sensitive receptors and vibration associated with the proposed project.

Under this Alternative, the project site would continue to operate with its current uses, and operational noise would not increase because no residential or commercial uses would occur. Thus, there would be no operational noise impacts under the No Project Alternative, and impacts would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project. Overall, the No Project Alternative would result in fewer noise impacts than the proposed project.

7.5.3.12 POPULATION AND HOUSING

The No Project Alternative would not introduce any housing, commercial space, nor residents; therefore, this Alternative would not induce population growth directly or indirectly. There would be no population growth impacts, which would be less than the proposed project's less-than-significant impact. The proposed project site does not contain any dwelling units, and as such this Alternative would not displace any existing people or housing and would have no impact with respect to housing displacement, similar to the proposed project.

7.5.3.13 PUBLIC SERVICES

Under the No Project Alternative, the project site would remain in its existing condition and current uses onsite would remain unchanged. There would be no increase in residents or employees with this Alternative because no development or change of use would occur. Therefore, there would be no increase in demand for fire, police, school, library, or park services, and this Alternative would have no impact with respect to public services, which would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.5.3.14 RECREATION

Under the No Project Alternative, the project site would remain in its existing condition and maintain its current uses. The City Hall Lawn, though not a designated recreational site, would continue to operate as a passive open space (walking/jogging, informal small gatherings, etc.) and host events and programs. Relocation of certain events such as large seasonal celebrations to other areas of the city would still occur as this is an ongoing effort undertaken by the City independent of the proposed project.

This Alternative would not add residential or commercial uses on the project site. Therefore, there would be no associated increase in demand and use of recreational facilities surrounding the project site. Therefore, this Alternative would have no impact to recreation, which would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.5.3.15 TRANSPORTATION

The No Project Alternative would not construct new parking lots, driveways, nor remove the City Hall Lawn and replace it with Mixed-Use development. There would be no construction under this Alternative, and therefore there would be no impacts to construction-related traffic and Mitigation Measure TRA-2 would not be needed. Because this Alternative would not add additional residents, employees, and customers, there would be no new vehicle miles traveled (VMT) under this Alternative and there would be no impact related to traffic, which would be less than the less-than-significant after mitigation VMT impacts of the proposed project. Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would not be needed. Since no development would occur under this Alternative, it would result in no impact related to hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses and with respect to emergency access, which would be less than the proposed project's less-than-significant impacts.

7.5.3.16 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Under the No Project Alternative, there would be no ground-disturbing activities that could impact any tribal cultural resources that may be buried in site soils. Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-3 would not be needed. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have no impact on tribal cultural resources, which would be less than the less-than-significant after mitigation impacts of the proposed project.

7.5.3.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Under the No Project Alternative, the project site would remain in its current condition and no changes to existing utilities infrastructure (such as new connections to utilities in the public right of way) would occur. Since no development on the project site would occur under this Alternative, this Alternative would have no impact on service system demand, which would be less than the proposed project's less-than-significant impacts. Therefore, this Alternative's impacts to water, wastewater, solid waste, storm water, electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications would be less than the proposed project's less-than-significant impacts.

7.6 ALTERNATIVE 2: ALL RESIDENTIAL

7.6.1 Description

Under the All Residential Alternative, the specific plan defining uses and redevelopment of the project site would include up to 425 dwelling units and associated open space uses. This alternative would result in 75 more dwelling units than the proposed project (or a 21.4 percent increase). No commercial or retail uses would be provided. Unlike the proposed project, the ground-floor level of this alternative would be entirely podium parking and would not provide activated and visually distinct pedestrian-oriented commercial spaces. While the open space areas between the buildings would be publicly accessible, improvements in these areas are more likely to be passive uses (seating, walking paths, turf areas), would not be activated by onsite commercial uses such as retail and dining uses, and are unlikely to include ongoing programming similar to the proposed project, given the surrounding residential-only use that would be developed on the project site. Under this alternative, the same general development standards applicable to the proposed project would apply to the new buildings (including a maximum height of up to seven stories, setbacks, etc.), and the building layout could be similar to that shown in the proposed project's conceptual plan (potentially two buildings separated by open space areas).

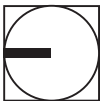
7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

See Figure 7-1, *Full Residential Alternative Ground Floor Plan*, and Figure 7-2, *Full Residential Alternative Conceptual Volumetric*. This alternative would provide 730 parking stalls which would provide sufficient parking within the new development using the same parking standards identified for the proposed project (no use of the existing parking structure). This alternative would continue to allow for the addition of two levels of the existing parking structure, which is permitted under existing zoning. It is assumed that similar types, durations, and intensity of ground disturbance/construction activity to that of the proposed project would occur under the All Residential Alternative.

7.6.2 Relationship to Project Objectives

The All Residential Alternative would meet five of the eight objectives of the proposed project, but would not provide all of the benefits associated with the proposed project and thus would meet several of these five objectives to a lesser degree in comparison to the proposed project. Since this Alternative would not include the commercial component, this Alternative would not revitalize the project site with a vibrant community-focused mixed-use development that contributes to the City's economic base. This Alternative would not allow for the construction of new mixed-use buildings on the City Hall Lawn and existing surface parking lot. This Alternative would not provide retail and commercial uses in a central location that creates a sense of place, supports and enhances the existing commercial and institutional uses in the City's Civic Center and Entertainment District. While this Alternative would provide publicly accessible open spaces between buildings, it would not activate such areas or provide for regular programming to the same extent as the proposed project, because there would be no synergy with adjacent commercial uses, including retail and food and beverage uses, and the site would be less focused on publicly accessible programming given the surrounding residential uses in this area of the project site. Given the residential only use of this Alternative, it would not achieve a connection to the existing entertainment district, including the existing movie theater and retail uses to the south of the project site to the same extent as the proposed project, and would provide fewer amenities to employees and visitors to City Hall and other surrounding civic uses as compared to the proposed project.

Figure 7-1 - Full Residential Alternative Ground Floor Plan
7. Alternatives



7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

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Figure 7-2 - Full Residential Alternative Conceptual Volumetrics
7. Alternatives



7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

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7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.6.3 Comparative Analysis of Environmental Effects

7.6.3.1 AESTHETICS

The All Residential Alternative would result in approximately 75 more dwelling units than the proposed project (a 21.4 percent increase), but would not include a commercial component. Unlike the proposed project, the ground-floor level of this Alternative would be entirely podium parking and would not provide for activated and visually distinct pedestrian-oriented commercial spaces. Like the proposed project, this Alternative would have a similar development footprint with open space areas between buildings, and would result in similar heights, setbacks, and building form, as most specific plan development standards and design guidelines that would govern building development for the proposed project would still apply. However, the open space areas between buildings would not include the same types of features and improvements and would generally be less activated, with more passive and limited improvements appropriate to adjacent exclusively residential uses. This Alternative is anticipated to generate similar light and glare as the proposed project since this Alternative would introduce new light sources and development similar to the proposed project. Overall, the aesthetic impacts of the All Residential Alternative would be similar to the less-than-significant aesthetic impacts of the proposed project.

7.6.3.2 AIR QUALITY

The All Residential Alternative would result in a similar building footprint and grading volume as the proposed project. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would require Mitigation Measure AQ-1. Therefore, construction-related impacts would be similar to the proposed project's less-than-significant impact with mitigation. This Alternative would generate new vehicle trips and transportation and operational emissions, but the trips and thus emissions would be reduced compared to the proposed project (see Table 7-1, above). Because this Alternative would have reduced vehicle trips and emissions, the operation-related air quality impacts under this Alternative would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

As with the proposed project, this Alternative would result in a less than significant impact related to conflicting/obstructing the implementation of SCAQMD's AQMP, exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollution, and odors. Overall, this Alternative would result in similar less than significant impacts as the proposed project.

7.6.3.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The All Residential Alternative would result in a similar building footprint and grading volume as the proposed project. As such, this Alternative would result in similar impacts as the proposed project for both construction and operation for all biological resources thresholds. As with the proposed project, this Alternative could require the removal of trees onsite and implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would be required to reduce impacts to sensitive species or habitat to a less than significant level. This Alternative would result in similar less than significant impacts (after mitigation) as the proposed project.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.6.3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The All Residential Alternative would result in a similar building footprint and grading volume as the proposed project. Therefore, under this Alternative, any ground-disturbing activities would be similar to the proposed project and potential construction-related impacts to unknown subsurface archaeological resources, and human remains would be similar to the impacts of the proposed project. This Alternative's potential construction-related and operation-related impacts to City Hall (an eligible historical resource) would be similar to the proposed project. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would also require Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2. As with the proposed project, the All Residential Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation pertaining to cultural resources thresholds, other than the cultural resources threshold related to human remains which would be less than significant.

7.6.3.5 ENERGY

Under the All Residential Alternative, the number of residential units would increase to 425 dwelling units from the proposed project's 350 units but would not include the commercial component. Construction of this alternative would include buildings of roughly the same size as the proposed project. Therefore, this Alternative would result in a similar amount of construction-related energy consumption as the proposed project.

During operation, this Alternative would reduce the number of vehicles and vehicle trips associated with the no commercial component (see Table 7-1 above) and would therefore result in a reduction in transportation energy compared to the proposed project. Operation of this Alternative would further reduce electricity and natural gas consumption compared to the proposed project, since the net increase in electricity and natural gas would be less than the proposed project's electricity and natural gas consumption with no commercial component. Therefore, energy demand associated with this Alternative would be less than the proposed project, and potential operation-related impacts to energy would be less than the proposed project. This Alternative's impacts pertaining to energy would be less than the proposed project's less than significant impact level.

7.6.3.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

As with the proposed project, the All Residential Alternative would connect to the water and wastewater infrastructure in the public rights-of-way and would not require septic tanks. Thus, this Alternative would have no impact with respect to septic tanks, similar to that of the proposed project.

The All Residential Alternative would result in a similar building footprint and grading volume as the proposed project. As such, this Alternative would result in similar impacts related to all other geology and soils thresholds including ground rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, soil stability, and expansive soils. Since this Alternative requires earthwork, similar to the proposed project, construction of this Alternative has the potential to unearth any unknown paleontological resources and would require the implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1 through GEO-3. Overall, the All Residential Alternative would result in similar impacts compared to the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project for all geology and soil impacts other than septic tanks.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.6.3.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The All Residential Alternative would contribute to global climate change through direct emissions of GHG from onsite area sources and vehicle trips generated. This Alternative would result in similar construction as with the proposed project given that the overall project massing would be similar. Therefore, construction-related GHG emissions would occur, and this Alternative's GHG emissions would be similar to that of the proposed project.

As shown in Section 5.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, most of the proposed project's GHG emissions are generated from vehicle trips, which are largely associated with the commercial component. During long-term operation of this Alternative, vehicle trips and thus energy consumption would be reduced compared to the proposed project as shown in Table 7-1. . Therefore, on-site operational GHG emissions would be less than the proposed project; however, Mitigation Measures GHG-1 and GHG-2 would still be required. The reduction of vehicle trips (up to 83 percent reduction with TDM measures as shown in Table 7-1) under this Alternative would reduce GHG emissions to below the 3,000 metric tons brightline threshold. Therefore, this Alternative would avoid the significant and unavoidable GHG impact of the proposed project. As with the proposed project, the All Residential Alternative would not conflict with any applicable plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions (such as the South California Association of Governments' [SCAG] Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy [RTP/SCS]). Overall, because the All Residential Alternative would avoid the proposed project's significant and unavoidable impact regarding GHG emissions, this Alternative's impacts would be less than those of the proposed project.

7.6.3.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazardous materials used and encountered during construction under of the All Residential Alternative would be similar to the proposed project, since this Alternative would result in the construction of buildings of similar size and siting. During operation, this Alternative would be similar to the proposed project and introduce small quantities of hazardous materials for cleaning and maintenance purposes, such as paints, household cleaners, fertilizers, and pesticides. As a result, impacts of the All Residential Alternative related to hazards and hazardous materials would be less-than-significant and similar to the proposed project.

7.6.3.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Since the All Residential Alternative would develop a similar structure and footprint as the proposed project, excavation, grading and other earthwork activities would be similar to the proposed project, and hydrology and water quality impacts during construction would be similar to the proposed project. This Alternative would increase impervious surfaces from the existing condition similar to the proposed project and would result in similar impacts to that of the proposed project. As with the proposed project this Alternative would not result in the release of pollutants due to project inundation from flooding, tsunami, or seiches and would not conflict with or obstruct a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. Therefore, the impacts for hydrology and water quality of the All Residential Alternative would be similar to the impacts of the proposed project and less than significant overall.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.6.3.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

The All Residential Alternative would require the same or similar discretionary entitlements as the proposed project, which may include zone map and zone text amendments to a designation of “Specific Plan,” General Plan map and text amendment Specific Plan ground lease(s), reciprocal easement agreements, additional easements, and/or any other agreement or actions the City may require. As with the proposed project, development of this alternative would occur in accordance with the provisions of its respective Specific Plan, which would serve as the regulatory zoning for the proposed project. As with the proposed project, it is expected that this Alternative would be consistent with applicable State and local regulations, including the General Plan, Municipal Code, and SCAG’s RTP/SCS. This Alternative would locate buildings onsite in a similar configuration as the proposed project; as such, this would not divide an established community and similar impacts would occur as with the proposed project. This Alternative would result in a similar impact as the proposed project related to land use and planning and impact levels would remain less-than-significant.

7.6.3.11 NOISE

The All Residential Alternative would result in similar construction as the proposed project and would generate similar levels of construction noise and vibration. For this reason, mitigation measures NOI-1 and NOI-2 would still be required for this Alternative to reduce construction noise impacts to off-site sensitive receptors and the vibration to the City Hall building. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would result in less-than-significant construction impacts with mitigation. Under this Alternative, the operational noise would decrease compared to the proposed project because commercial uses would not occur, there would be less regular programming of open space uses, and fewer persons are anticipated to be onsite on a typical day. Thus, the operational noise impacts under the All Residential Alternative would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project. Overall, the All Residential Alternative would result in reduced operational noise impacts compared to the proposed project and similar levels of construction noise impacts as the proposed project.

Since this Alternative would occur on the same project site as the proposed project, it is also not within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport. As with the proposed project, no impact would occur.

7.6.3.12 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Population and housing characteristics on the project site would be similar to the related characteristics of the proposed project under the All Residential Alternative, but does increase—the direct population growth as compared to the proposed project by adding 75 dwelling units (approximately 270 residents)¹, but would decrease the potential indirect population growth associated with employees as compared to the proposed project, since there would be no commercial component. This Alternative’s population growth would still be within SCAG’s growth projections for the City of Norwalk to 2045; however, this Alternative would further contribute to the exceedance of housing units compared to SCAG’s growth projects for the City of Norwalk,

¹ Based on residents/dwelling unit rate of 3.61 used in Chapter 5-12, *Population and Housing*, this alternative would generate approximately 1,534 residents. Compared to the proposed project (1,264 residents), this alternative results in 270 more residents.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

but would be within the housing unit growth projections for Los Angeles County. Cumulatively, this Alternative combined with residential cumulative projects in the City of Norwalk would further contribute to exceedance of housing units beyond SCAG's 2045 projections, but it would continue to be within the County's projected housing unit growth, similar to the proposed project. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would not result in a cumulative impact.

There are no dwelling units nor persons that currently reside onsite; as with the proposed project, no impact would occur related to displacing existing people or housing. Impacts would be similar to the impacts of the proposed project.

7.6.3.13 PUBLIC SERVICES

The All Residential Alternative would include 425 residential units and no commercial uses. While this Alternative would include an increase in residents (approximately 270 residents) compared to the proposed project, it would not generate new employees and would not attract daily visitors/shoppers associated with commercial uses. Therefore, impacts related to fire and police would be similar to the proposed project. Since this Alternative would result in 270 more residents than the proposed project, this Alternative is anticipated to result in a greater demand related to library, school, and park services compared to the proposed project, but this increase is not anticipated to result in a change in the need for new or expanded public facilities compared to the proposed project. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would be required to pay property taxes which could be used in part to pay for provision of public services. However, this Alternative would not generate Measure P or other sales tax revenue. Therefore, overall, there would be a similar demand for fire, police, school, library, and park services compared to the proposed project, and impact levels would be similar to the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.6.3.14 RECREATION

The All Residential Alternative would include 425 residential units and would result in an increase of 270 residents as compared to the proposed project. Since this Alternative would result in more residents than the proposed project, this Alternative is anticipated to result in a slightly greater demand of recreational facilities which could increase the physical deterioration and accelerate the need for new facilities compared to the proposed project, but given the total population increase it is not anticipated to result in or accelerate substantial physical deterioration. In addition, as with the proposed project, this Alternative would include open space areas between new buildings, which would offer some passive on-site recreation opportunities to residents. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would be required to pay property taxes a portion of which may be used to pay for provision of recreational facilities, but it would not generate Measure P or other sales tax revenue. This Alternative would result in a less than significant impact. Overall, impacts to recreation would be slightly increased compared to the proposed project, but this Alternative would continue to result in a less than significant level of impact pertaining to recreation.

7.6.3.15 TRANSPORTATION

Under the All Residential Alternative, construction-related traffic and public right-of-way improvements which may require lane closures would be similar to that of the proposed project. Mitigation Measure TRA-2 would

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still be required to reduce construction-related transportation impacts to a less than significant level. The less-than-significant after mitigation construction impacts of the proposed project would be similar under the All Residential Alternative. Because this Alternative would not include commercial uses, fewer daily vehicle trips would be generated under this Alternative when compared to the proposed project (see Table 7-1 above). Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would still be required to reduce the residential VMT per capita impact. This Alternative's residential VMT per capita impacts would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the VMT impacts for the proposed project, and would have no retail VMT impact. Overall, the VMT-related impact under this alternative would be less than the proposed project.

As with the proposed project, this Alternative would result in less than significant impacts related to hazards associated with geometric design features, incompatible uses, and inadequate emergency access since this Alternative would result in the same general circulation onsite on adjacent roadways.

7.6.3.16 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Under the All Residential Alternative, there would be similar ground-disturbing activities to that of the proposed project that could impact any tribal cultural resources that may be buried in soils onsite. Therefore, the All Residential Alternative would be similar to the proposed project's impacts, and Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-3 would still be required. Therefore, impacts related to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the impacts of the proposed project.

7.6.3.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

The construction of the All Residential Alternative would also require the extension of utilities and service systems onsite and would connect to utilities in the public right of way. This Alternative would result in similar demand of electricity, and natural gas and would generate a similar level of solid waste, and stormwater. This Alternative may result in a slight increase of water and wastewater consumption; however, impact levels would continue to be less than significant. Therefore, this Alternative's impacts to utilities and service systems would be similar to the less-than-significant impact levels of the proposed project.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.7 ALTERNATIVE 3: REDUCED COMMERCIAL

7.7.1 Description

Under the Reduced Commercial Alternative, the specific plan defining uses and redevelopment of the project site would allow for up to 405 dwelling units, 10,000 square feet of commercial space, and associated open space uses. This would result in approximately 55 more dwelling units than the proposed project (a 15.7 percent increase) and a reduction of 100,000 square feet of commercial uses (a 91 percent decrease compared to the proposed project). See Figure 7-3, *Reduced Commercial Alternative Ground Flood Plan*, and Figure 7-4, *Reduced Commercial Alternative Conceptual Volumetric*. Under this Alternative, the same general development standards applicable to the new buildings under the proposed project would apply (including a maximum height of up to seven stories, setbacks, etc.), and the layout of the proposed uses could be similar to that shown in the proposed project's conceptual plan (potentially two buildings separated by open space areas). The 10,000 square feet of commercial uses would provide some opportunities for activating and programming the open space areas, but far fewer compared to the proposed project, and open space areas under this Alternative are likely to be more similar to the All Residential Project Alternative than to the proposed project, with less activation and connection to surrounding commercial and civic uses. . This Alternative would provide 680 parking stalls within the new development, which would provide sufficient parking using the same parking standards identified for the proposed project (no use of the existing parking structure). This Alternative would allow for the addition of two levels of the existing parking structure, which would be permitted under existing zoning. It is assumed that similar types, durations, and intensities of ground disturbance/construction activity to that of the proposed project would occur under the Reduced Commercial Alternative.

7.7.2 Relationship to Project Objectives

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would meet objectives of the proposed project but, many objectives would be achieved to a far lesser degree than the proposed project since only 10,000 square feet of commercial (a 91 percent reduction from the proposed project) would be provided onsite. For example, the objective focused on providing “retail and commercial uses in a central location that creates a sense of place, supports and enhances the existing commercial and institutional uses in the City’s Civic Center and Entertainment District, and serves as an attractive destination for residents, employees and visitors in the City” would be achieved to a minimal extent, and the overall objective of creating a sense of place for commercial uses is likely not feasible with this Alternative. This is because this Alternative would primarily be a residential project with only 10,000 square feet of retail. Therefore, it would not support the Civic Center and Entertainment District or serve as an attractive destination for residents, employees and visitors in the City. Given the small number of commercial uses, the Reduced Commercial Alternative would also not achieve the activated open space areas adjacent to commercial uses that would create synergies, engage the public and support ongoing public programming within the open space areas similar to the proposed project. This Alternative also would not achieve the objective of creating connections to the existing entertainment and retail uses to the south to the same extent as the proposed project because this Alternative would provide less of a public draw given its primarily residential nature.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would not realize all the benefits associated with the proposed project. Since this Alternative would include a reduced commercial component, this Alternative would only marginally meet the goals of the City's Economic Development Opportunities Plan.

7.7.3 Comparative Analysis of Environmental Effects

7.7.3.1 AESTHETICS

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would result in approximately 55 more dwelling units than the proposed project (a 15.7 percent increase) and a reduction of 100,000 square feet of commercial uses (a 91 percent decrease) as compared to the proposed project. This Alternative would have similar aesthetic impacts as the proposed project because it would result in a similar development area and open space areas, would result in similar heights, setbacks, and building form. Additionally, development standards and design guidelines for the new buildings would generally apply. This Alternative is anticipated to generate similar light and glare as the proposed project since this Alternative would introduce new light sources and development similar to the proposed project. Overall, the Reduced Commercial Alternative would result in less-than-significant aesthetic impacts, a level similar to those of the proposed project.

7.7.3.2 AIR QUALITY

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would result in a similar building footprint and grading as the proposed project. Therefore, because construction parameters would be similar to the proposed project, construction-related air quality impacts would be similar to the proposed project's impact level of less-than-significant with mitigation. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would also require Mitigation Measure AQ-1. This Alternative would add new vehicle trips and transportation and operational emissions, but the trips and emissions would be slightly reduced compared to the proposed project since this Alternative includes a smaller commercial component (see Table 7-1 above). As such, the operation-related air quality impacts under this Alternative would be less than the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

As with the proposed project, this Alternative would result in a less than significant impact related to conflicting/obstructing the implementation of SCAQMD's AQMP, exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollution, and odors. This Alternative would result in similar less than significant impacts as the proposed project.

7.7.3.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would result in a similar building footprint and grading volume as the proposed project. As such, this Alternative would result in similar impacts as the proposed project for both construction and operation for all biological resources thresholds. As with the proposed project, this Alternative could require the removal of trees onsite and implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would be required to reduce impacts to sensitive species or habitat to a less than significant level. This Alternative would result in similar less than significant impacts (after mitigation) as the proposed project.

Figure 7-3 - Reduced Commercial Alternative Ground Floor Plan
7. Alternatives



7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

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Figure 7-4 - Full Commercial Alternative Conceptual Volumetrics
7. Alternatives



7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

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7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.7.3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would result in a similar building footprint and grading volume as the proposed project. Therefore, under this Alternative, any ground-disturbing activities would be similar to the proposed project and potential construction-related impacts to subsurface unknown archaeological resources and human remains would be similar to the impacts of the proposed project. This Alternative's potential construction-related and operation-related impacts to City Hall (an eligible historical resource) would be similar to the proposed project. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would also require Mitigation Measure CUL-1 and CUL-2. As with the proposed project, the Reduced Commercial Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation to cultural resources thresholds, other than the cultural resources threshold related to human remains which would be less than significant.

7.7.3.5 ENERGY

Under the Reduced Commercial Alternative, the number of residential units would increase to 405 dwelling units from the proposed project's 350 units and would decrease commercial space to 10,000 square feet from the proposed Project's 110,000 square feet. Construction of this Alternative would construct buildings of roughly the same size as the proposed project. Therefore, this Alternative would result in a similar amount of construction-related energy consumption as the proposed project.

During operation, this Alternative would reduce the number of vehicles and vehicle trips associated with the project site and would therefore result in a reduction in transportation energy compared to the proposed project (see Table 7-1 above). Operation of this Alternative would further reduce electricity and natural gas consumption compared to the proposed project, since the net increase in electricity and natural gas would be less than the proposed project's electricity and natural gas consumption with a reduced commercial component. Therefore, energy demand associated with this Alternative would be less than the proposed project and potential operation-related impacts to energy would be less than the proposed project. This Alternative would result in less than the proposed project's less than significant impact to energy.

7.7.3.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

As with the proposed project, the Reduced Commercial Alternative would connect to the water and wastewater infrastructure in the public rights-of-way and would not require septic tanks. Thus, this Alternative would have no impact with respect to septic tanks, similar to that of the proposed project.

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would result in a similar building footprint and grading as the proposed project. As such, this Alternative would result in similar impacts related to all other geology and soils thresholds including ground rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, soil stability, and expansive soils. Since this Alternative requires earthwork, similar to the proposed project, construction of this Alternative has the potential to unearth any unknown paleontological resources and would require the implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1 through GEO-3. Overall, the Reduced Commercial Alternative would have similar impacts as compared to the less than significant impacts of the proposed project for all geology and soil impacts other than septic tanks.

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7.7.3.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would contribute to global climate change through direct emissions of GHG from onsite area sources and vehicle trips generated. This Alternative would result in a similar construction scope and scale as the proposed project. Therefore, construction-related GHG emissions would occur, and this alternative's GHG emissions would be similar to that of the proposed project.

As shown in Section 5.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, most of the proposed project's GHG emissions are generated from vehicle trips, which are largely associated with the commercial component. During long-term operation of this Alternative, vehicle trips and energy consumption would be reduced compared to the proposed project given that the commercial component of the Reduced Commercial Alternative is 91 percent less than that of the proposed project (see Table 7-1 above). On-site operational GHG emissions would be less than the proposed project, however, Mitigation Measures GHG-1 and GHG-2 would still be required. The reduction of vehicle trips (approximately 80 percent reduction with TDM measures) under this Alternative would reduce GHG emissions to below the 3,000 metric tons brightline threshold (see Table 7-1 above). Therefore, this Alternative would avoid the significant and unavoidable GHG impact of the proposed project. As with the proposed project, the Reduced Commercial Alternative would not conflict with any applicable plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions (such as SCAG's RTP/SCS). Overall, because the Reduced Commercial Alternative would avoid the proposed project's significant and unavoidable impact regarding GHG emissions, this Alternatives impacts would be less than those of the proposed project.

7.7.3.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazardous materials used and encountered during construction under the Reduced Commercial Alternative would be similar to the proposed project, since this Alternative would result in the construction of buildings of similar size and siting. During operation, this Alternative would be similar to the proposed project and introduce small quantities of hazardous materials for cleaning and maintenance purposes, such as paints, household cleaners, fertilizers, and pesticides. As a result, impacts of the Reduced Commercial Alternative related to hazards and hazardous materials would be less-than-significant and similar to the proposed project.

7.7.3.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Since the Reduced Commercial Alternative would be developed within a similar structure and footprint as the proposed project, excavation, grading and other earthwork activities would be similar to those of the proposed project. Therefore, hydrology and water quality impacts during construction would be similar to the proposed project. This Alternative would increase impervious surfaces from the existing condition similar to the proposed project and would result in similar impacts to that of the proposed project. As with the proposed project this Alternative would not result in the release of pollutants due to project inundation from flooding, tsunami, or seiches and would not conflict with or obstruct a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. Therefore, the impacts to hydrology and water quality of the Reduced Commercial Alternative would be similar to the impacts of the proposed project and less than significant.

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7.7.3.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would require the same or similar discretionary requests as the proposed project, which may include zone map and zone text amendment to “Specific Plan,” General Plan map and text amendment to “Specific Plan,” and ground lease(s), reciprocal easement agreements, additional easements, and any other agreement or actions of the City. As with the proposed project, development of this Alternative would continue to occur in accordance with the provisions of its respective Specific Plan, which would serve as the regulatory zoning. It is expected that this Alternative would be consistent with applicable State and local regulations, including the General Plan, Municipal Code, and SCAG’s RTP/SCS, similar to the proposed project, this Alternative would lack the mixed-use component that can further VMT reduction and other objectives of the RTP/SCS. This Alternative would locate buildings onsite in a similar configuration as the proposed project; and as such, this would not divide an established community and similar impacts would occur as for the proposed project. This Alternative would result in a similar impact as the proposed project related to land use and planning and would remain less-than-significant.

7.7.3.11 NOISE

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would result in a similar scale of construction as the proposed project and would generate similar construction noise and vibration. For this reason, mitigation measures NOI-1 and NOI-2 would still be required for this Alternative to reduce construction noise impacts to off-site sensitive receptors and the vibration to the City Hall building. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would result in less-than-significant construction impacts with mitigation. Under this Alternative, the operational noise would decrease in comparison with the proposed project because this Alternative would increase the residential uses but decrease the commercial uses substantially compared to the proposed project, and because there would be less regular programming and public use of the open space areas, and fewer persons are anticipated to be onsite during a typical day compared to the proposed project. Thus, the operational noise impacts under the Reduced Commercial Alternative would be less than the less than significant impacts of the proposed project. Overall, the Reduced Commercial Alternative would result in reduced operational noise impacts compared to the proposed project and similar construction noise impacts compared to the proposed project.

7.7.3.12 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Population and housing characteristics on the project site would be similar under the Reduced Commercial Alternative, as this Alternative increases the direct population growth by adding 55 dwelling units (approximately 198 residents)² as compared to the proposed project, but would decrease the potential indirect population growth associated with employees due to the reduced commercial square footage³ as compared to the proposed project. This Alternative’s population growth would still be within SCAG’s growth projections for the City of Norwalk to 2045; however, this Alternative would further contribute to the exceedance of

² Based on residents/dwelling unit rate of 3.61 used in Chapter 5-12, *Population and Housing*, this alternative would generate approximately 1,462 residents. Compared to the proposed project (1,264 residents), this alternative results in 198 more residents.

³ The Reduced Commercial Alternative would generate approximately 27 employees Based on community retail generation rate of 383 sf/employee used in Chapter 5-12, *Population and Housing*, this alternative would generate approximately 27 employees. Compared to the proposed project (441 employees), this alternative results in 414 less employees than the proposed project.

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housing units compared to SCAG's growth projections for the City of Norwalk as compared to the proposed project, but would be within the housing unit growth projections for Los Angeles County. Cumulatively, this Alternative combined with the residential cumulative projects in the City of Norwalk would further contribute to exceedance of projected housing unit growth beyond SCAG's 2045 projections for the City of Norwalk, but would remain within the County's projected housing unit growth, similar to the proposed project. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would not result in a cumulative impact.

There are no dwelling units nor persons that currently reside onsite; as with the proposed project, no impact would occur related to displacing existing people or housing. Impacts under this Alternative would be similar to the impacts of the proposed project.

7.7.3.13 PUBLIC SERVICES

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would include 405 residential units and 10,000 square feet of commercial uses. This Alternative would include a slight increase in residents (approximately 198 additional residents) and a decrease in employees (approximately 414 fewer employees) compared to the proposed project. Also, due to the smaller commercial size and reduced regular programming within the open space, it would attract a smaller number of daily visitors/customers associated with the commercial uses. Impacts related to fire and police would be similar to the proposed project. Since this Alternative would result in more residents than the proposed project, this Alternative is anticipated to result in a slightly greater demand related to library, school, and park services compared to the proposed project, but this slight increase is not anticipated to result in a change in the need for new or expanded public facilities compared to the proposed project. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would be required to pay property taxes which in part pay for provision of public services. However, this Alternative would not generate sales tax revenue to the same extent as the proposed project due to the substantially reduced commercial component. Therefore, overall, there would be a similar demand for fire, police, school, library, and park services compared to the proposed project, and impact levels would be similar to the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.7.3.14 RECREATION

The Reduced Commercial Alternative would include 405 residential units and 10,000 square feet of commercial uses. This Alternative would result in an increase of residents as compared to the proposed project. Since this Alternative would generate more residents than the proposed project, this Alternative is anticipated to result in a slightly greater demand for recreational facilities which could slightly increase the physical deterioration and accelerate the need for new facilities compared to the proposed project. However, given the total population increase it is not anticipated to result in or accelerate substantial physical deterioration. In addition, as with the proposed project, this Alternative would include open space areas between new buildings, which would offer some passive on-site recreation opportunities to residents and may include some programming. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would be required to pay property taxes which may in part pay for provision of recreational facilities, but any Measure P and other sales tax revenue would be substantially reduced compared to the proposed project due to the substantial decrease in commercial uses. This Alternative would result in a less than significant impact. Overall, there would be a slight increase in the demand and use of

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recreational facilities surrounding the project site compared to the proposed project, but, as with the proposed project, impacts to recreation would be less-than-significant.

7.7.3.15 TRANSPORTATION

Under the Reduced Commercial Alternative, construction-related traffic and public right-of-way improvements which may require lane closures would be similar to that of the proposed project. Mitigation Measure TRA-2 would still be required to reduce construction-related transportation impacts to a less than significant level. The less-than-significant after mitigation impacts to construction-related transportation of the proposed project would be similar under the Reduced Commercial Alternative. During operation, this Alternative would generate fewer daily vehicle trips compared to the proposed project (see Table 7-1 above). However, Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would still be required to reduce the residential VMT per capita impact to a less than significant level. This Alternative's 10,000 sf of total commercial uses would be less than 50,000 sf, and therefore, would be considered local-serving. Thus, the retail VMT impact would be considered less than significant. This Alternative's impacts related to residential VMT would be less than significant with mitigation measures. This Alternative's impact related to VMT would be similar to the proposed project.

As with the proposed project, this Alternative would result in less than significant impacts related to hazards associated with geometric design features, incompatible uses, and inadequate emergency access since this Alternative would result in the same general circulation onsite on adjacent roadways.

7.7.3.16 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Under the Reduced Commercial Alternative, there would be similar ground-disturbing activities to that of the proposed project that could impact any tribal cultural resources that may be buried in soils onsite. Therefore, the Reduced Commercial Alternative would have impacts similar to that of the proposed project, and Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-3 would still be required to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, impacts related to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant with mitigation and similar to the impacts of the proposed project.

7.7.3.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

The construction of the Reduced Commercial Alternative would also require the extension of utilities and service systems onsite and would connect to utilities in the public right of way. This Alternative would result in similar demand of electricity, and natural gas and would generate a similar level of solid waste, and stormwater. This Alternative may result in a slight increase of water and wastewater consumption; however, impact levels would continue to be less than significant. Therefore, this Alternative's impacts to utilities and service systems would be similar to the less-than-significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.8 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

An EIR must identify an "environmentally superior" alternative, and where the No Project Alternative is identified as environmentally superior, the EIR must identify an environmentally superior alternative from the others evaluated. Each alternative's environmental impacts are compared to the proposed project and

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determined to result in either reduced impacts compared to the project, the same or similar impacts as the project, or a more severe impact than the project. The No Project Alternative was identified as “environmentally superior” to the proposed project.

The No Project Alternative is environmentally superior to the proposed project because it eliminates the significant unavoidable adverse impacts associated with greenhouse gas emissions and avoids the need to mitigate impacts for air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, transportation, and tribal cultural resources. Since the environmentally superior Alternative is a No Project Alternative, a development alternative was selected, as required by CEQA. One Alternative has been identified as “environmentally superior” to the proposed project:

The Reduced Commercial Alternative is identified as the environmentally superior Alternative. This Alternative would eliminate the significant and unavoidable impacts associated with greenhouse gas emissions. Impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, population and housing, public services (fire and police), tribal cultural resources, transportation, and utilities and service systems would remain the same as or be slightly reduced compared to the proposed project, as demonstrated above. This Alternative would be anticipated to result in a slight increase in demand for libraries, parks, recreation facilities, and schools since this Alternative would generate more residents than the proposed project, but impacts to public services and recreation are anticipated to be less than significant. However, this Alternative does not meet all the goals and objectives of the proposed project and does not meet other goals and objectives to the same extent as the proposed project, as demonstrated above.

As demonstrated above and in Table 7-2, *Ability of Alternatives to Meet Project Objectives*, under the Reduced Commercial Alternative most of the Specific Plan’s objectives would be achieved. However, this Alternative would only minimally implement the City’s EDO Plan (Objective 1) due to the substantial reduction in commercial uses, resulting in a project that is primarily residential. Similarly, this Alternative would only partially meet Objective 7 which is focused on providing “retail and commercial uses in a central location that creates a sense of place, supports and enhances the existing commercial and institutional uses in the City’s Civic Center and Entertainment District, and serves as an attractive destination for residents, employees and visitors in the City.” This is because this Alternative would primarily be a residential project with only 10,000 square feet of retail. Therefore, it would not support the Civic Center and Entertainment District or provide an attractive destination for visitors. This Alternative would be expected to meet the other project objectives (see Table 7-2 below).

While the Reduced Commercial Alternative would eliminate the significant and unavoidable impacts associated with greenhouse gas emissions; it does not outweigh the benefit the proposed project provides at full buildout. As discussed in the City’s EDO Plan, the project site is a prime location for commercial uses that capitalizes on traffic counts and daytime populations and support the surrounding entertainment district and civic uses. This Alternative would result in less revenue from sales taxes compared to the proposed project and would not create the sense of place or activate the publicly accessible open space areas as would the proposed project. As such, the Reduced Commercial Alternative would reduce GHG impacts, but would preclude the full realization of the goals and objectives of the proposed project.

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Table 7-2 Ability of Development Alternatives to Meet Project Objectives

Project Objective	Full Residential Alternative	Reduced Commercial Alternative
1. Implement the City's Economic Development Opportunities Plan by revitalizing the project site with a vibrant, community-focused, mixed-use development that contributes to the City's economic base.	Not Met	Minimally Met
2. Provide for the comprehensive planning of the project site through the preparation of a specific plan.	Met	Met
3. Utilize a public/private partnership between the City of Norwalk and a developer to redevelop the site consistent with the specific plan established for the project site.	Met	Met
4. Allow for the construction of new mixed-use buildings on the City Hall Lawn and existing surface parking lot, while preserving and respecting the existing City Hall building.	Not Met	Met, to a substantially lesser extent
5. Provide activated and engaging publicly accessible plaza and landscaped spaces for community gatherings, socializing and programming that strengthen the north-south connection between the existing Entertainment District (Specific Plan Area 1) to the south and the retail and housing to the north, and encourage pedestrian and multi-modal access and use of the project site and surrounding uses.	Partially Met	Met, to a substantially lesser extent
6. Diversify and expand the City's housing stock with multiple-family residential units, including affordable units.	Met	Met
7. Provide retail and commercial uses in a central location that creates a sense of place, supports and enhances the existing commercial and institutional uses in the City's Civic Center and Entertainment District, and serves as an attractive destination for residents, employees and visitors in the City.	Not Met	Minimally Met
8. Encourage and support current and future transit use and other alternative forms of transportation while providing sufficient parking to meet the evolving needs of the City's existing and future entertainment/civic uses.	Met	Met

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8. Impacts Found Not to Be Significant

California Public Resources Code Section 21003 (f) states: "...it is the policy of the state that...[a]ll persons and public agencies involved in the environmental review process be responsible for carrying out the process in the most efficient, expeditious manner in order to conserve the available financial, governmental, physical, and social resources with the objective that those resources may be better applied toward the mitigation of actual significant effects on the environment." This policy is reflected in the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA Guidelines) Section 15126.2(a), which states that "[a]n EIR [environmental impact report] shall identify and focus on the significant environmental impacts of the proposed project" and Section 15143, which states that "[t]he EIR shall focus on the significant effects on the environment." Guidelines Section 15128 requires that an EIR contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail in the Draft EIR (Chapter 5).

As required by Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR shall contain a brief discussion stating the reasons why various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and are therefore not discussed in detail in the EIR. In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines, this section discusses the environmental issue areas where impacts were found to not be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail in the Draft EIR. This chapter includes the analysis for the following environmental topics where the project would have no impact:

- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Wildfire

The following 17 topics are analyzed in Chapter 5 of this EIR.

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

8. Impacts Found Not to Be Significant

8.1 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

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

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

No Impact. The project site is in an urbanized area in the City of Norwalk. The project site is developed with city hall, the City Hall Lawn, an accessory building associated with the County Superior Court property, surface parking, and a parking structure. As further discussed in chapter 3, *Project Description*, the project site is surrounded by commercial, civic, and residential uses. The project site and surrounding area do not contain agricultural uses. The Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program maps California's agricultural resources and determines the suitability of land throughout the state for agriculture purposes. The Department of Conservation produces these maps on a statewide level and by county. The map for Los Angeles County identifies the project site as "Urban and Built-Up Land" (DOC 2022) and thus confirms that the project site does not include any mapped Farmland.

The project site is currently zoned Institutional with a public facilities overlay area. It is not zoned or used for agriculture. Therefore, development on the project site would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to a nonagricultural use, and no impact would occur.

- b) **Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?**

No Impact. The City of Norwalk does not contain any areas zoned for agricultural uses (Norwalk 2020). The project site is currently zoned Institutional and is in a public facilities overlay area. No portion of the project site is subject to a Williamson Act contract (DOC 2017). Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with an existing zone for agricultural use or conflict with a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur.

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

No Impact. The City of Norwalk is urbanized and there are no forest lands or timberland in the city limits. The project site is currently zoned Institutional and within a public facilities overlay area and is not zoned or used for forest land or timberland (Norwalk 2020). The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause the rezoning of, forest land or timberland. Therefore, no impact would occur.

8. Impacts Found Not to Be Significant

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

No Impact. The project site is within an urbanized area of the City. The project site is developed and does not contain forest land. Development of the proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use, and no impact would occur.

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

No Impact. The proposed project includes the development of a mixed-use project with commercial and residential uses in an urban area. The project site is located in an urbanized area and is surrounded by commercial, residential, and civic uses. No Farmland or forest land occur in or around the project site. The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program characterizes the project site as “Urban and Built-Up Land” (DOC 2022). The development of the proposed project would not result in the conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural uses nor the conversion of forest land to non-forest uses. No impact would occur.

8.2 MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact. The California Geological Survey Mineral Resources Project provides information about California’s nonfuel mineral resources. The Mineral Resources Project classifies lands throughout the state that contain regionally significant mineral resources as mandated by Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975. The California Geological Survey classifies mineral resources area as one of the four Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs), Scientific Resource Zones, or Identified Resource Areas. The project site is in an MRZ-1 zone, which is an area where no significant mineral deposits are present or little likelihood exists for their presence (CGS 1981). Based on the project site’s location, development of the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources. No impact would occur.

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

No Impact. The project site is designated MRZ-1, indicating that no significant mineral deposits are present or little likelihood exists for their presence (CSG 1981). The project site is developed, and no mineral extraction operations currently occur on the project site or within its vicinity. There are no locally important mineral resources recovery sites designated in the Norwalk General Plan, or any other relevant land use plan in the City, and the proposed project would not impact the availability of a locally important mineral resource. No impacts would occur.

8. Impacts Found Not to Be Significant

8.3 WILDFIRE

Wildland fire protection in California is the responsibility of either the local government, state government, or the federal government. State Responsibility Areas (SRA) are the areas in the state where the State of California has the primary financial responsibility for the prevention and suppression of wildland fires. The SRA covers more than 31 million acres, to which the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) provides a basic level of wildland fire prevention and protection services.

Local responsibility areas (LRA) include incorporated cities, cultivated agricultural lands, and portions of the desert. LRA fire protection is typically provided by city fire departments, fire protection districts, counties, and by CAL FIRE under contract to local government. CAL FIRE uses an extension of the SRA Fire Hazard Severity Zone model as the basis for evaluating fire hazard in LRAs. The local responsibility area hazard rating reflects flame and ember intrusion from adjacent wildlands and from flammable vegetation in the urban area. Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) are identified by Moderate, High and Very High in an SRA, and Very High in an LRA.

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact. According to CAL FIRE's Fire and Resources Assessment Program (FRAP) Map, the project site is in the City of Norwalk and therefore in an LRA. The project site and the surrounding area are urbanized and do not contain wildland area that is subject to wildfire. The project site and surrounding area are not in a Very High FHSZ. The nearest SRA Very High FHSZ is 4.5 miles northeast of the project site and the nearest LRA Very High FHSZ is approximately 5.4 miles east of the project site (CAL FIRE 2022). Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially impair any emergency response or evacuation plans, and no impact would occur.

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

No Impact. The project site is not in a Very High FHSZ mapped by CAL FIRE (CAL FIRE 2022). Since the project site is not in or near an SRA or lands classified as Very High FHSZ, no impact would occur.

c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

No Impact. The project site is not in a Very High FHSZ mapped by CAL FIRE (CAL FIRE 2022). Since the project site is not in or near an SRA or lands classified as Very High FHSZ, no impact would occur.

8. Impacts Found Not to Be Significant

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

No Impact. The project site is not in a Very High FHSZ mapped by CAL FIRE (CAL FIRE 2022). The project site does not include and is not adjacent to slopes or hillsides that could become unstable. Since the project site is not in or near an SRA or lands classified as Very High FHSZ, no impact would occur.

8.4 REFERENCES

California Department of Conservation (DOC). 2022, January 27 (accessed). California Important Farmland Finder. <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/ciff/>.

———. 2017. State of California Williamson Act Contract Land.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). 2011, September. Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, Los Angeles County. <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/7280/losangelescounty.pdf>.

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California Geological Survey (CGS). 1981. Mineral Land Classification Map, Whitter Quadrangle.

Norwalk, City of. 2020, April. Zoning Map. <https://www.norwalk.org/home/showpublisheddocument/23979/637236043923570000>.

8. Impacts Found Not to Be Significant

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9. Significant Irreversible Changes Due to the Proposed Project

Section 15126.2(d) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describe any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed project should it be implemented. Specifically, the CEQA Guidelines states:

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highways improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

Generally, a project would result in significant irreversible environmental changes if:

- The primary and secondary impacts would generally commit future generations to similar uses;
- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources;
- The project would involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project; or
- The proposed irretrievable commitments of nonrenewable resources are not justified (e.g., the project involves the wasteful use of energy).

In the case of the proposed project, its implementation would involve development to support up to 350 multifamily residential units and 110,000 square feet of commercial uses on a portion of the 13.2-acre project site, through implementation of the Norwalk Entertainment District – Civic Center Specific Plan. Significant irreversible changes that would be caused by the proposed project if it is implemented would be:

- Implementation of the proposed project would include construction activities that would entail the commitment of nonrenewable and/or slowly renewable energy resources; and resources such as lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, steel, copper, lead, other metals, water, and fossil fuels. Operation of the proposed project would require the use of natural gas and electricity, petroleum-based fuels, other fossil fuels, and water. The commitment of resources required for the construction and operation of the proposed project would limit the availability of such resources for future generations or for other uses during the life of the project.

9. Significant Irreversible Changes Due to the Proposed Project

- Operation of the proposed project would create additional demands for electricity and natural gas compared to existing conditions and would result in increased transportation energy use. An increased commitment of social services and public maintenance services would also be required (e.g., police, fire, schools, libraries, and sewer and water services). The energy and social service commitments would be long-term obligations in view of the low likelihood of returning the land to its original condition once it has been developed.
- Population and employment growth related to project implementation would increase vehicle trips over the long term. Emissions associated with such vehicle trips would continue to contribute to the SoCAB nonattainment designations for ozone (O₃) and particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) under the California and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS) and particulate matter (PM₁₀) under the California AAQS.
- The proposed project would convert the City Hall Lawn, an area that is currently City-managed public space, to a developed condition that would also include open space that is publicly accessible but privately managed and operated.

Given the low likelihood that the land would revert to lower intensity uses or to its current form, the proposed project would generally commit future generations to these environmental changes. However, these environmental changes would be necessary to achieve the objectives established for the project, including without limitation implementing the City's Economic Development Opportunities Plan and enhancing the existing Civic Center and Entertainment District by providing retail and commercial uses on the site, providing activated and engaging publicly accessible outdoor spaces for gathering and socializing, and providing additional housing opportunities.

10. Growth-Inducing Impacts

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Sections 15126(d) and 15126.2(e) of the CEQA Guidelines, this section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) is provided to examine how the proposed project could foster economic or population growth through the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly. The analysis considers whether the proposed project would remove obstacles to population growth (such as infrastructure expansions) or encourage/facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment. Not all aspects of growth inducement are negative; instead, negative impacts associated with growth inducement occur only where the growth related to the project would cause adverse environmental impacts.

Growth-inducing impacts fall into two categories: direct or indirect. Direct growth-inducing impacts are generally associated with providing urban services to an undeveloped area. Indirect, or secondary, growth-inducing impacts consist of growth-induced in the region by additional demand for housing, goods, and services associated with a population increase caused by or attracted to a new project. This analysis provides an overall discussion of project impacts and considers utility infrastructure and circulation to determine whether the project would result in direct or indirect growth inducement.

10.2 GROWTH INDUCEMENT ANALYSIS

The proposed project includes the establishment, implementation, and buildout of the Norwalk Entertainment District–Civic Center Specific Plan. The buildout of the proposed project would develop a mixed-use project to include residential, commercial, publicly accessible open space, and parking components.

As discussed in Section 5.12, *Population and Housing*, of this DEIR, the proposed project would develop up to 350 dwelling units, resulting in approximately 1,264 new residents. The population in Norwalk is estimated to increase by 4,227, from 102,773 in 2020 to 107,000 in 2045 (Census 2020a; SCAG 2020). SCAG forecasts the number of housing units is anticipated to decrease by 541 during that same period (from 28,455 housing units to 27,914 housing units). However, the City is updating its Housing Element as part of the 6th Cycle Update for 2021–2029 (awaiting review and approval from the California State Housing and Community Development Department). It assumes a total of 5,034 units to be provided in the City. The City’s Housing Element update has been prepared considering this project, which has been a targeted site for economic opportunity and growth in the City’s Economic Development Opportunities Plan (Kosmont 2018). Additionally, Los Angeles County population is projected to increase by 1,659,201 from 10,014,009 in 2020 to 11,673,600 in 2045 (Census 2020a; SCAG 2020). The number of housing units in the County is anticipated to increase by 734,805 between 2020 and 2045 (see Table 5.12-7, *Proposed Project’s Population and Housing Contribution*).

10. Growth-Inducing Impacts of the Proposed Project

While the proposed project would contribute to SCAG's projections for households in Norwalk beyond the 2045 housing forecast, the proposed project's housing units are well within the projected growth for Los Angeles County and the RHNA, and the proposed project's population contribution is within the projected growth for both Norwalk and Los Angeles County. Therefore, the proposed project would not induce unplanned substantial population growth in the area directly through the development of new housing opportunities.

The development of the proposed project could also indirectly contribute to the population by introducing new jobs. The proposed project includes 110,000 square feet of new commercial space with restaurant, retail, and supermarket uses to generate approximately 441 employees. Additionally, implementation of the proposed project would result in temporary construction jobs for the duration of construction, estimated to last 23 months. Furthermore, it is anticipated that general construction labor would be available from the local and regional labor pool. Overall, it would not result in a long-term increase in employment or induce unplanned substantial population growth. Employment projections for the City of Norwalk indicate that the number of jobs will grow by 2,400 from 2016 to 2045. In Los Angeles County, the number of jobs is expected to grow by 547,000 in the same period (see Table 5.12-6 *Employment Projections, City of Norwalk and Los Angeles County 2016-2045*). The jobs generated by the proposed project would contribute to this projected growth. Still, it is not anticipated that the addition of these new employees would directly result in additional population growth in the area as the number of jobs projected to be generated by the proposed project is within the employment forecast for the City of Norwalk. Therefore, the proposed project would not induce unplanned substantial population growth in the area directly through the development of new employment opportunities. Expansion of the existing parking garage would serve residents and guests of the residential development and visitors to the entertainment district. Additional parking would not promote unplanned growth in the area and would not induce impacts from population growth.

The project site is in an urban area with an established infrastructure system. It would require local installation of all on-site utilities and connections to existing water and sewer mains. However, no major supporting infrastructure, such as roads, water or sewer mains, wastewater treatment facilities, or landfills, would require expansion to meet the project's needs. Therefore, any improvements associated with the project would directly serve the proposed uses and would not remove obstacles to growth through the construction or extension of major infrastructure that does not presently exist.

The City has only limited, isolated opportunities for growth and redevelopment. The proposed project would be consistent with the City's long-term growth projections, such as the city's Economic Development Opportunities Plan, which identifies the project site as a strategic area for redevelopment (Kosmont 2018). It would not lead to other, off-site induced growth. The proposed project does not involve uses that could directly or indirectly result in growth-inducing impacts or other environmental effects not otherwise disclosed in this DEIR. The proposed Specific Plan and project entitlements are site-specific and do not affect the development standards of any other property. The development of the proposed project would not indirectly cause significant growth, nor is it anticipated that the addition of these new residents and employees would indirectly trigger additional population growth in the area. Overall, the proposed project's growth-inducing impacts would not be considered substantial.

10. Growth-Inducing Impacts of the Proposed Project

10.3 REFERENCES

Kosmont Companies. 2018, October 2 (adopted). City of Norwalk Economic Development Opportunities Plan.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). 2020, September 3 (adopted). Demographics and Growth Forecast. SCAG Technical Report. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocial_demographics-and-growth-forecast.pdf?1606001579.

10. Growth-Inducing Impacts of the Proposed Project

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