# DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

For

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Loma Linda Health Care Clinic

Submitted to:
United States Department of Veterans Affairs

Prepared by:
Albert A. Webb Associates
3788 McCray Street
Riverside, CA 92506
Contact: Sonya Hooker, Director of Planning and Environmental Services
(951) 686-1070

October 16, 2012

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... ES-1

1.0 INTRODUCTION ..... 1
1.1 Project Background ..... 1
1.2 Purpose and Need ..... 1
2.0 ALTERNATIVES ..... 6
2.1 Development of Alternatives ..... 6
2.2 Alternatives Retained For Detailed Analysis ..... 7
3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE ALTERNATIVES ..... 8
3.1 Aesthetics ..... 8
3.2 Air Quality ..... 9
3.3 Cultural Resources ..... 12
3.4 Geology and Soils ..... 15
3.5 Hydrology and Water Quality ..... 17
3.6 Wildlife and Habitat ..... 18
3.7 Noise ..... 21
3.8 Land Use ..... 22
3.9 Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Zone Management ..... 22
3.10 Socioeconomics ..... 23
3.11 Community Services ..... 24
3.12 Solid and Hazardous Materials ..... 24
3.13 Transportation and Parking ..... 25
3.14 Utilities ..... 28
3.15 Environmental Justice ..... 29
3.16 Cumulative Impacts ..... 29
3.17 Potential for Generating Substantial Controversy ..... 30
4.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ..... 31
5.0 MITIGATION ..... 32
6.0 CONCLUSIONS ..... 36
7.0 LIST OF PREPARERS ..... 37
8.0 REFERENCES CITED ..... 38
9.0 LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS ..... 40

TABLES

1 – Attainment Designation for San Bernardino County ..... 10
2 – Annual Construction Emissions ..... 12
3 – Annual Operational Emissions ..... 12
4 – Total Annual Project-Related GHG Emissions ..... 13
1A – LOS for Signalized Intersections ..... 80
2A – LOS for Unsignalized Intersections ..... 81
3A – LOS-Existing Conditions Plus Project Conditions With and Without Improvements ..... 82

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 – Regional Map ..... 2
Figure 2 – Aerial Photograph Map ..... 3
Figure 3 – USGS Topographic Map ..... 4
Figure 4 – Proposed Action ..... 5

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Analysis
Appendix B – Biological Resources
Appendix C – Cultural Resources
Appendix D – Preliminary Geotechnical Soil Investigation
Appendix E – Environmental Site Assessment - Phase I
Appendix F – Traffic Impact Analysis

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) proposes to construct and operate a build-to-suit lease of an outpatient health care clinic consisting of approximately 271,000 square feet on approximately 36 acres in the city of Loma Linda. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the VA prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action.

, The VA proposes to replace an existing interim clinic by constructing a new expanded facility which will expand services and thereby:

- Alleviate the existing Veterans Affairs Medical Center's (VAMC) space shortage;
- Meet the extensive outpatient demand;
- Reduce the number of duplicate stops by housing a variety of fundamental outpatient services, thereby reducing the number of contracted out services allowing VAMC to meet its strategic objectives;
- Accommodate the growing needs for increased medical services of the enrolled Veteran population in the area by increasing access to care;
- Expand service offerings; and
- Reduce wait times.

The proposed new expanded facility will respond to the growing workload within the market by delivering services with greater efficiency and relieve the current site of overcrowded workspaces. The VA prepared this EA to analyze the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action. The analysis performed in this EA concludes that there would be no significant adverse impacts, either individually or cumulatively, to the human environment, provided mitigation measures and commitments consisting of best management practices and regulatory compliance measures described in the EA are fully implemented.

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs proposes the construction and operation of a build-to-suit lease of an outpatient health care clinic in the city of Loma Linda. This facility would house outpatient services including dialysis, nephrology, oncology, prosthetics, as well as elements of primary care, dental health, mental health, women's health, and various other services. A Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared to analyze the Proposed Action.

## 1.1 Project Background

Since 1977, the Veterans Affairs (VA) Loma Linda Healthcare System has been serving the health care needs of more than 60,000 veterans living in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. In addition to the main facility in Loma Linda, community clinics are offered in the cities of Corona, Murrieta, Palm Desert, Rancho Cucamonga, Victorville, Loma Linda, and a rural health clinic in Blythe.

The Proposed Action would provide the construction and operation of a build-to-suit lease of an outpatient health care clinic consisting of approximately 271,000 square feet on approximately 36 acres in the city of Loma Linda, California as reflected in **Figure 1, Regional Map**. The proposed Loma Linda Health Care Clinic (hereinafter referred to as "HCC") site is located south of Redlands Boulevard, west of Camelot Lane, east of Mountain View Avenue, and north of Mission Road as reflected in **Figure 2, Aerial Exhibit**. The proposed HCC site consists of assessor parcel numbers 0292-111-04, -05, and portions of 0292-111-036, -040, 0292-461-01, and -03 and traverses Section 30 of Township 1S, Range 3W of the San Bernardino Base and Meridian of the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) Redlands 7.5 minute quadrangle map, as reflected in **Figure 3, USGS Topographic Map**.

The proposed HCC would be in close proximity to the existing Loma Linda Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) located at 11201 Benton Street, Loma Linda, CA, approximately 1.75 miles southwest of the proposed Project site. The Proposed Action would allow the Loma Linda medical staff to deliver services with greater efficiency and respond to the growing workload within the market. The proposed action would also provide the necessary space to house a variety of fundamental outpatient services including dialysis, nephrology, oncology, prosthetics, as well as elements of primary care, dental health, mental health, women's health, and various other services, allowing the VAMC to meet its strategic objectives and reduce the number of contracted out services. In addition to meeting the extensive outpatient demand, it would simultaneously relieve the current site of overcrowded workspaces and decrease wait time for veterans and their families.

The proposed action (**Figure 4, Proposed Action**) would include construction of a three story building, approximately 61 feet in height, containing three loading docks used for receipt of medical supplies. Vehicular access to the parking area and site would be provided from Redlands Boulevard. The proposed HCC would have general hours of operation from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Currently, the Veterans Affairs Clinic Redlands Boulevard (VACRB), located at 25828 Redlands Boulevard, Loma Linda, CA on the northeast corner of Mountain View Avenue and Redlands Boulevard, is just over one-quarter mile west of the proposed HCC site. This is an approximately 15,905-square-foot interim clinic that would be closed upon completion of the proposed HCC. The proposed HCC would replace and expand upon the services currently provided by the VACRB. Additionally, the proposed facility is anticipated to provide 500 jobs; 30 of which would be transferred from the existing VACRB and 420 from the VAMC.

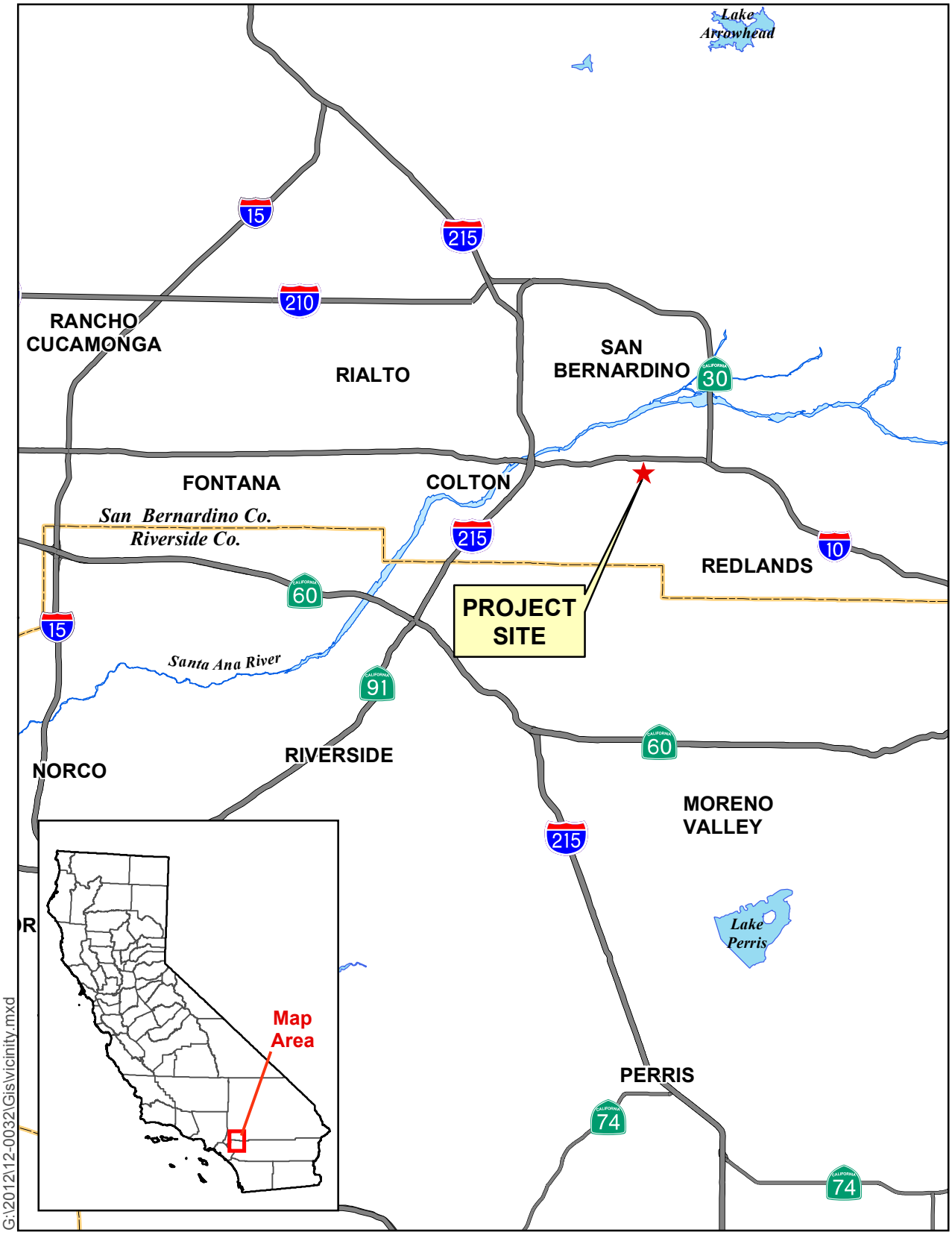



**Figure 1 - Regional Map**

0 2 4 6 Miles

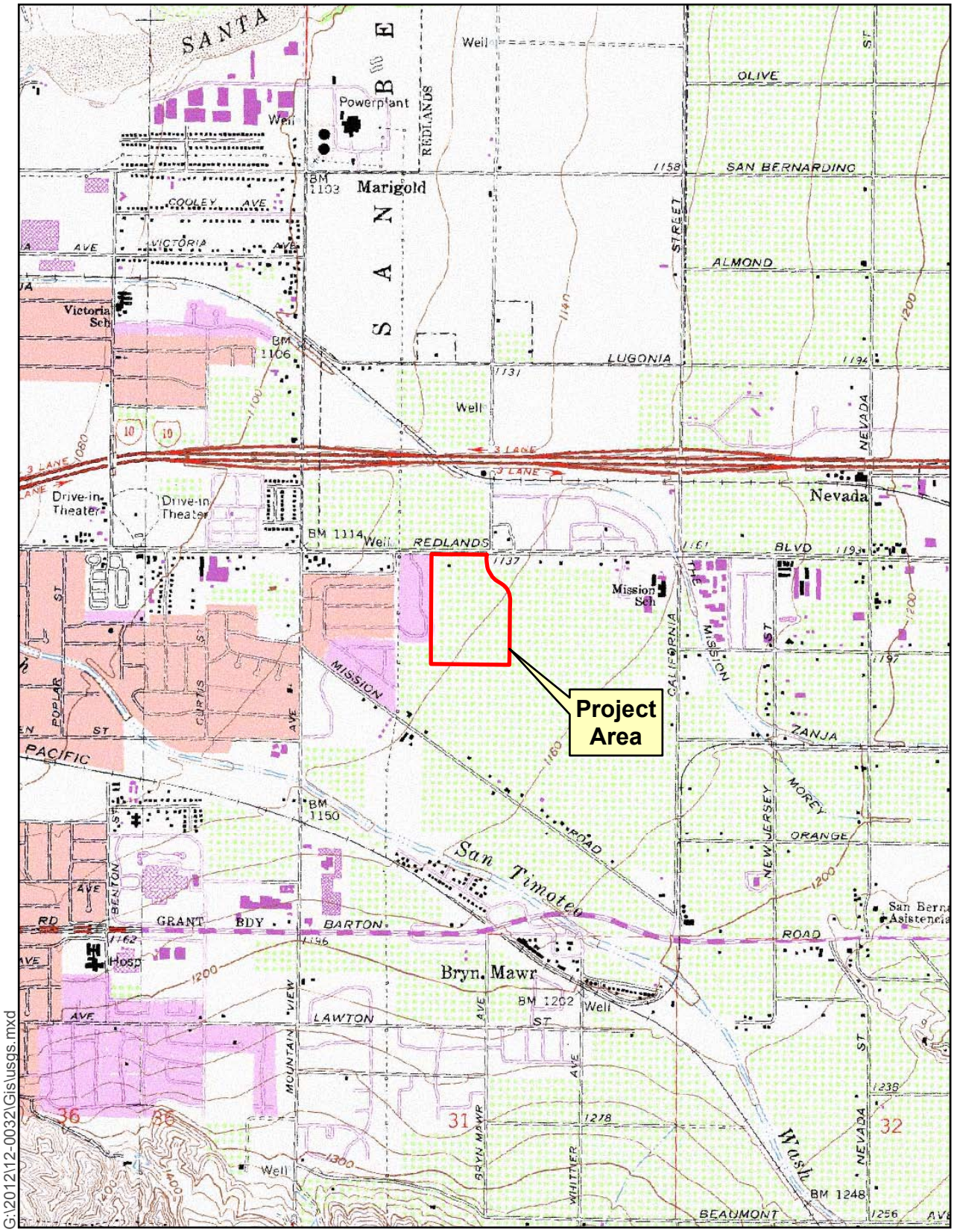
Albert A. WEBB Associates

Source: County of San Bernardino, 2012
(imagery date April 2010);

**Figure 2. Aerial**

0 500 1,000 1,500 Feet

Albert A. WEBB Associates

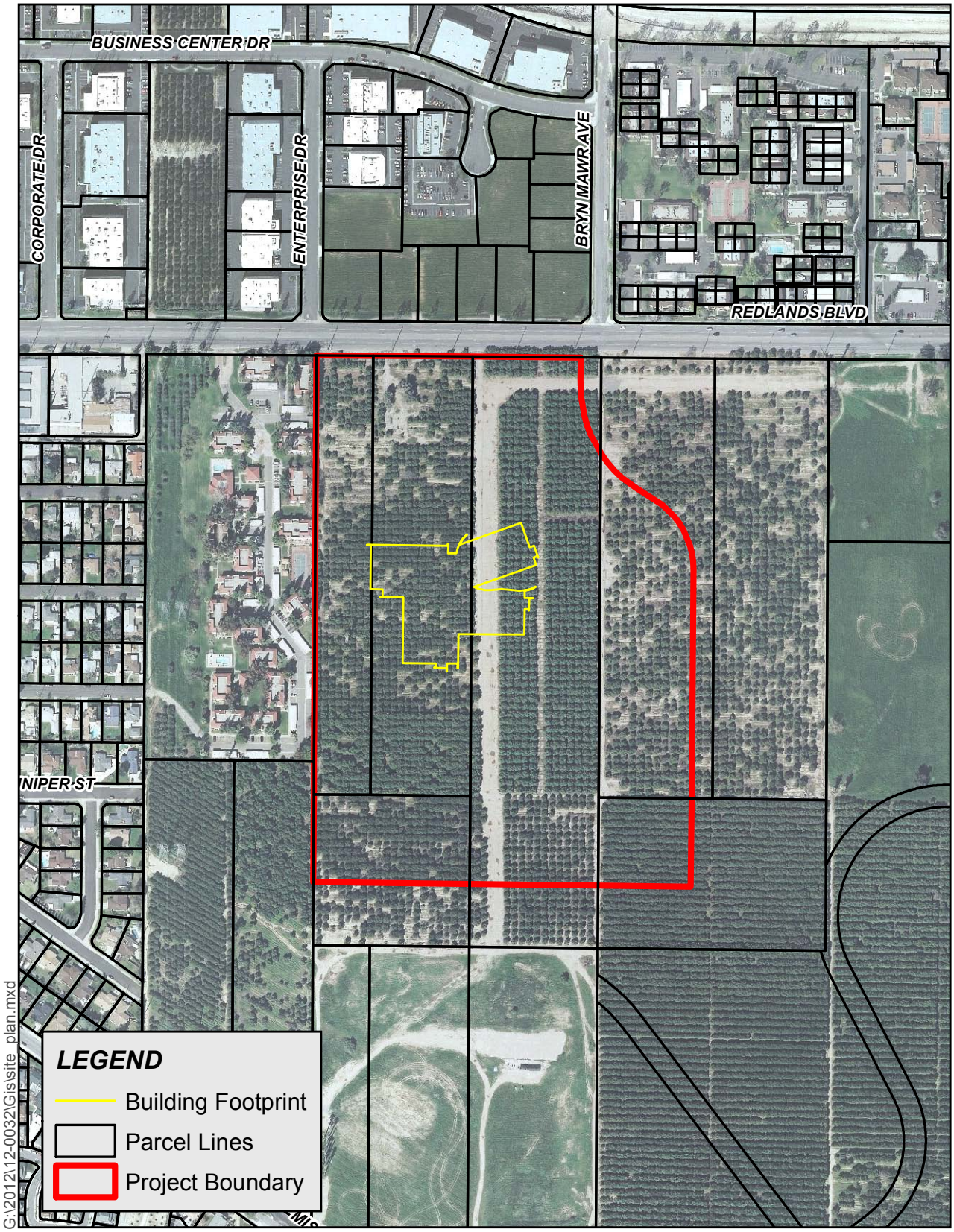



Sources: ESRI / USGS 7.5min Quad
DRG: REDLANDS

**Figure 3 - USGS Topographic Map**

0 1,000 2,000 3,000
Feet

Albert A. WEBB Associates




Source: Leo A. Daly, April 11, 2012
(imagery date April 2010);

**Figure 4 Proposed Action**

0 250 500 750 Feet

Albert A. WEBB Associates

## 1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to alleviate the existing VAMC space shortage, meet the extensive outpatient demand and reduce the number of unduplicated stops by housing a variety of fundamental outpatient services, thereby reducing the number of contracted out services allowing VAMC to meet its strategic objectives. In addition, the Proposed Action would accommodate the growing needs for increased medical services of the enrolled veteran population in the area by increasing access to care, expanding the service offerings and reducing wait times. It would also respond to the growing workload within the market by delivering services with greater efficiency and relieving the current site of overcrowded workspaces.

The 20-year lease of this outpatient clinic would directly benefit veterans of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California. The Proposed Action would accommodate all or a percentage of the following services: primary care, geriatrics, recreational therapy, cardiology, dialysis, immunology, nephrology, oncology, pulmonary/respiratory care, rehabilitation medicine, dental, laboratory and pathology, mental health clinic, and various others. Additionally, the Proposed Action would accommodate an increase in outpatient workload, which is projected to be 16 percent in ambulatory care stops and 95 percent in mental health stops. Based on recent projections for the VAMC, the HCC would close the primary care gap by 11 percent, the medical/surgical gap by 75 percent and the mental health gap by 100 percent.

The VAMC provides critical health care services to veterans, enabling them to maintain and improve their quality of life. As the demand for services is increasing rapidly, additional space is needed to ensure the VA is able to continue to meet veterans' needs.

# 2.0 ALTERNATIVES

## 2.1 Development of Alternatives

The VA considered multiple alternatives in providing a facility to house the various fundamental outpatient services.

**Alternatives Considered**

1. **New Lease (Preferred Alternative)**
   This alternative consists of a developer purchasing the land, constructing an approximately 271,000 net usable square foot clinic, and then leasing it back to the VA for a period of 20 years. It would house a variety of fundamental outpatient services including dialysis, nephrology, oncology, prosthetics, as well as elements of primary care, dental health, mental health, women's health and various other services.

2. **New Construction**
   This alternative would involve construction of a 271,000 net usable square-foot building within the Loma Linda, California area. The new building would house new specialty care clinics, clinical research, primary care, administrative space, and building services equipment. Flexibility to expand and contract services and/or change location depending on workload demand would be difficult under this alternative.

3. **Status Quo**
   Long-term planning to provide continued quality care to veterans would continue to depend on short range non-recurring maintenance projects to cover deficiencies. Maintenance and repair costs would significantly increase due to using facility spaces for purposes other than that for which they were designed. Maintaining status quo would not meet the future needs of the Veteran population, affiliations and the community at large. All clinical services would be adversely impacted by this option, limiting the quality of care provided to veterans.

4. **Contract Out**
   This alternative would allow the VA to help veterans get easier access to care by contracting out to other providers. However, this payer environment places all VA beneficiaries at risk for securing non-VA medical care within the Loma Linda region, where capacity is limited. Relying on contract services is costly and does not ensure Veterans' health care needs are fully met. The contract out option is the least preferred alternative.

5. **No Action**
   The proposed action would not be implemented.

## 2.2 Alternatives Retained For Detailed Analysis

**Proposed Action Alternative**

Alternative 1 – New Lease, was selected as the preferred alternative and will be analyzed in this EA as the Proposed Action alternative. This alternative will ensure that the VAMC can meet the growing needs of the enrolled Veteran population. More specifically, the HCC will assist the VAMC in closing the volume gap of 279,164 unduplicated stops in primary care, specialty care, and mental health.

**No Action Alternative**

Under this alternative, the Proposed Action would not be implemented. The No Action Alternative will be analyzed in the EA to provide a baseline from which to compare the Proposed Action alternative. The impacts of the Proposed Action will be contrasted with the current and future condition in the absence of the proposed HCC.

# 3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE ALTERNATIVES

In this section, the project alternatives are evaluated for their potential to "significantly" impact the aesthetic, physical, biological, cultural, and human environment. According to the NEPA Regulations adopted by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1500-1508), the term "significantly" is based on the criteria of context and intensity (40 CFR 1508.27). Impacts can be either beneficial or detrimental. However, NEPA is primarily concerned with detrimental or adverse impacts. For each environmental resource evaluated, the criteria for significant impacts are presented for both construction and operational phases of the Proposed Action or the No Action Alternative.

## 3.1 Aesthetics

*Existing Conditions*:

The project site is located in the desert region of San Bernardino County. The topography is relatively flat throughout the area, and there are landforms in the area that would draw viewers' attention. The San Bernardino Mountains form a dramatic visual backdrop to the more developed areas unless blocked from view by buildings or landscaping. The proposed site was a former orange grove but is currently vacant and void of orange trees in an area surrounded by a mix of urban development.

**Proposed Action**:

*During Construction*

Visual impacts would result from construction activities, including the presence of equipment, materials, and workers at the site, and along Redlands Boulevard. Vehicles such as automobiles, pickup trucks, and dump trucks would be visible. Heavy equipment such as backhoes, graders, and excavators and workers would be visible during site clearing, grading, construction, and site cleanup. Construction equipment and activities would be seen by various viewers in proximity to the project site, including adjacent and nearby residents, pedestrians, and motorists on Interstate-10 (I-10) and nearby streets. However, with implementation of the actions described under mitigation measure AES-1, short-term construction activities would have minimal effect on aesthetics and visual quality.

*Operation*

The Proposed Action would result in construction of a three story building and parking area which will change the visual character of the site. However, the site will be landscaped, contain pedestrian paths and would provide view corridors from the parking area to the San Bernardino Mountains.

*Mitigation*

**AES-1:** The Contractors shall keep construction-related activity clean and inconspicuous by storing building materials and equipment generally away from public view and shall remove construction debris promptly at regular intervals. Materials and construction storage areas shall be selected to minimize views from public roads, from I-10, and especially from nearby residences.

**No Action:**

The No Action Alternative would not involve any construction activity and therefore, would not result in temporary visual/aesthetic impacts to existing views to and from adjacent areas.

### 3.2 Air Quality

*Existing Conditions*:

Air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) information presented was obtained from an Air Quality/ Greenhouse Gas Analysis Technical Memorandum prepared for the Proposed Action by Albert A. Webb Associates (WEBB(a)). The analysis provides site-specific information, potential impacts and recommendations for the air quality and GHG aspects of the Proposed Action (see Appendix A). The following discussion provides a summary of the findings of the analysis.

Federal Clean Air Act Conformity Analysis - Section 176(c) of the Federal Clean Air Act prohibits federal participation in any project that is in conflict with the State Implementation Plan (SIP). Participation includes funding, permitting or other non-direct involvement. Based on the General Conformity requirements (40 CFR Section 93.153), if the total direct and indirect emissions of the criteria pollutant or precursor in a nonattainment or maintenance area from the proposed Project are below the federal conformity "de minimus" emissions thresholds, the proposed Project would be exempt from performing a comprehensive Air Quality Conformity Analysis, and would be considered to be in conformity with the SIP.

The California Air Resources Control Board (CARB) makes State area designations for ten criteria pollutants: ozone, suspended particulate matter (PM-10), fine suspended particulate matter (PM-2.5), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide ($NO_2$), sulfur dioxide ($SO_2$), sulfates, lead, hydrogen sulfide, and visibility reducing particles. In contrast to the state area designations, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) makes area designations for five criteria pollutants: ozone (8-hour standard), PM-10, carbon monoxide (CO), ($NO_2$), and ($SO_2$). **Table 1 – Attainment Designations for San Bernardino County**, provides the state and federal attainment status of each pollutant for San Bernardino County.

**Table 1 – Attainment Designations for San Bernardino County**

| Pollutant | State Designation[1] | Federal Designation[2] |
|---|---|---|
| Carbon monoxide | Attainment | Maintenance - Serious |
| Nitrogen dioxide | Nonattainment | Maintenance |
| Ozone | Nonattainment - Extreme | Nonattainment - Extreme |
| PM-10 | Nonattainment | Nonattainment - Serious |
| PM-2.5 | Nonattainment | Nonattainment |
| Sulfur dioxide | Attainment | Attainment |

Source: Albert A. Webb Associates Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Analysis dated May 19, 2012

[1] California Air Resources Board at http://www.arb.ca.gov/desig/adm/adm.htm, May 1, 2012.

[2] U.S EPA Green Book at http://www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/greenbk/index.html, May 1, 2012.

The atmospheric temperature on earth is regulated by the "greenhouse effect," where naturally occurring gases, such as carbon dioxide ($CO_2$), absorb infrared radiation emitted by the earth's surface and radiate it back to the surface, thus trapping heat within the atmosphere. Recent increases in greenhouse gases have led to an increase in global temperatures referred to as climate change. In the Fall of 2006, the California Governor signed Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the "Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006," committing the State of California to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

On October 5, 2009, President Obama signed Executive Order 13514 Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance. Executive Order 13514 requires federal agencies to

set a 2020 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target, meet a number of energy, water, and waste reduction targets, and to develop and carry out an integrated Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan that outlines how the agency will meet the targets. The VA is currently working on the completion of this plan and will comply with the Executive Order.

Under Executive Order 13423, new construction by the VA is required to comply with the *Guiding Principles for Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings set forth in the Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU)[1] that was signed in 2006. The VA has developed a Green Buildings Action Plan (Plan)[2] which it uses as a tool to implement Executive Order 13423 and the MOU. The Proposed Action will incorporate applicable performance measures of the Plan, such as the use of water efficient landscape and irrigation strategies.

On February 18, 2010 the CEQ issued draft NEPA Guidance on Consideration of the Effects of Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Emissions for public comment.[3] The draft guidelines provided that Federal agencies should quantify and describe expected direct greenhouse gas emissions where the emissions may be "meaningful." The draft guidance suggests that for projects reasonably anticipated to cause direct emissions (on-site stationary source) of 25,000 tons or more per year that a quantitative and qualitative assessment may be meaningful to decision makers and the public.

**Proposed Action**:
*Construction and Operation*
In accordance with Section 176(c) of the Federal Clean Air Act, **Table 2 – Annual Construction Emissions** and **Table 3 – Annual Operational Emissions**, provide the current General Conformity "de minimus" emissions thresholds in tons per year (tpy) for the South Coast Air Basin and the estimated short-term and long-term emissions from the proposed Project.

[1] http://www.wbdg.org/pdfs/sustainable_mou.pdf, accessed May 23, 2012.
[2] http://www.cfm.va.gov/TIL/sustain/GreenBuildMouImplement.pdf, accessed May 18, 2012.
[3] Council on Environmental Quality, *Memorandum, Draft NEPA Guidance on Consideration of the Effects of Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, February 18, 2010. (Available at http://ceq.hss.doe.gov/nepa/regs/Consideration_of_Effects_of_GHG_Draft_NEPA_Guidance_FINAL_02182010.pdf, accessed May 18, 2012.)

**Table 2 – Annual Construction Emissions**

| Year | Annual Emissions (tpy) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | VOC | $NO_X$ | CO | $SO_2$ | PM-10 | PM-2.5 |
| **Federal De Minimus Thresholds** | **10** | **10** | **100** | **100** | **70** | **100** |
| 2013 | 0.81 | 5.79 | 4.69 | 0.01 | 0.76 | 0.35 |
| 2014 | 1.25 | 8.58 | 7.97 | 0.02 | 1.23 | 0.47 |
| 2015 | 5.06 | 5.45 | 5.20 | 0.01 | 0.81 | 0.34 |
| **Exceeds Threshold?** | **No** | **No** | **No** | **No** | **No** | **No** |

Source: Albert A. Webb Associates Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Analysis dated May 19, 2012
Note: Federal Conformity thresholds per 40 CFR 93.153. Modeling output contained in Appendix A.

**Table 2** reflects that Project-related construction emissions are below the federal "de minimus" thresholds for all pollutants during each year of construction. Similarly, **Table 3** shows the long-term operational emissions from the Project will not exceed any of the federal "de minimus" thresholds for any pollutant.

**Table 3 – Annual Operational Emissions**

| Source | Annual Emissions (tpy) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | VOC | $NO_X$ | CO | $SO_2$ | PM-10 | PM-2.5 |
| **Federal De Minimus Thresholds** | **10** | **10** | **100** | **100** | **70** | **100** |
| Area | 3.68 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Energy | 0.01 | 0.05 | 0.04 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Mobile | 0.27 | 0.77 | 2.56 | 0.00 | 0.52 | 0.05 |
| **Total** | **3.96** | **0.82** | **2.60** | **0.00** | **0.52** | **0.05** |
| **Exceeds Threshold?** | **No** | **No** | **No** | **No** | **No** | **No** |

Source: Albert A. Webb Associates Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Analysis dated May 19, 2012
Note: Federal Conformtiy thresholds per 40 CFR 93.153. Modeling output contained in Appendix A.

Thus, the Proposed Action is below the federal conformity "de minimus" emissions thresholds and exempt from performing a comprehensive Air Quality Conformity Analysis, and is considered to be in conformity with the SIP.

As reflected in **Table 4 – Total Annual Project-Related GHG Emissions**, the total GHG emissions generated from the Project is approximately 2,844.13 $MTCO_2E$ per year which includes construction-related emissions amortized over a typical project life of 30 years and all the following design features:

- Installing Energy-Star rated appliances such as dishwashers and refrigerators will reduce energy consumption and associated emissions, as described previously;
- Building the Project in this location will reduce vehicle miles traveled based on the following attributes previously described above: project setting (suburban center); improved destination accessibility, and improvements to the on-site pedestrian network;
- Planting trees as part of the Project will sequester $CO_2$ while they are actively growing.[4] Approximately 316 trees from miscellaneous species are estimated to be planted based on the assumption of one tree per parking lot stall;
- Outdoor water use from the Project will also be reduced as a result of Project compliance with the water efficient landscape ordinance enforced by the City of Loma Linda in Chapter 13.32 of the City Municipal Code[5] which requires a 20 percent reduction. Indoor water usage was reduced by 20 percent to account for the mandatory reduction outlined in the California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen code, p. 17, 30[6]).

**Table 4 – Total Annual Project-Related GHG Emissions**

| Source | Metric Tons per year (MT/yr) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total $CO_2$ | Total $CH_4$ | Total $N_2O$ | Total $CO_2E$[1] |
| Amortized Construction[1] | -- | -- | -- | 113.96 |
| Annualized $CO_2$ Sequestered by Trees | -7.46 | -- | -- | -7.46 |
| Energy | 889.17 | 0.04 | 0.02 | 894.73 |
| Mobile | 431.02 | 0.02 | 0.00 | 431.36 |
| Solid Waste | 594.11 | 35.11 | 0.00 | 1,331.45 |
| Water-Related Energy | 55.91 | 0.83 | 0.02 | 80.09 |
| **Total** | **1,962.75** | **36.00** | **0.04** | **2,844.13** |

Source: Albert A. Webb Associates Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Analysis dated May 19, 2012
Note: [1] Amortized total from WEBB(a), Table 6 – Project Construction Equipment GHG Emissions, p. 8.

The table above indicates that the majority of GHG emissions are from solid waste, followed by energy consumption. In accordance with the draft NEPA Guidance on Consideration of Effects of Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions, **Table 4** reflects that the Proposed Action would not create direct emissions of more than 25,000 tons per year. Therefore, no further quantitative calculation of greenhouse gas emissions is required.

[4] CalEEMod assumes an active growing period of 20 years.
[5] http://qcode.us/codes/lomalinda/
[6] California Building Standards Commissions, *2010 California Green Buildings Standards Code*, June 2010. (Available at http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/bsc/CALGreen/MasterCALGreenNon-ResGuide2010_2012Suppl-3rdEd_1-12.pdf, accessed May 19, 2012.)

**No Action:**
The No Action Alternative would not involve any activity and therefore, would not result in any air or greenhouse gas impacts.

**3.3 Cultural Resources**
*Existing Conditions:*
The existing Project site consists of approximately 36 acres of former agricultural land located on the south side of Redlands Boulevard between the intersections of Enterprise Drive and Bryn Mawr Avenue, in a portion of the Rancho San Bernardino land grant lying within T1S R3W, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian. As it has been well documented since the 1810s, the area is known to be the former home to a large number of prominent pioneer settlers in the San Bernardino area. Thus, the district as a whole may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore, meets the definition of an "historic property." The area of potential effect (APE) lies entirely within the boundaries of the Historic Mission Overlay District, which was formally established and delineated by the City of Loma Linda through a local ordinance and was designated as a Pending Site in the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS).

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, mandates that federal projects or federally funded or approved projects, shall give due consideration to historic properties which are defined by The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as, "any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places maintained by the Secretary of the Interior" (36 CFR 800.16(l)). Section 101(b)(4) of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) establishes a federal policy to conserve the historic, cultural and natural aspects of our national heritage. Federal agencies consider the consequences of their undertakings on historic and cultural resources under 40 CFR Part 1502.16(g). Additionally, the VA must also consult with all Indian tribal governments that attach religious or cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by the proposed action.

**Proposed Action**:
A Cultural Resources Study was prepared for the Project by CRM TECH (CRM(a)) and is found in Appendix C. The purpose of the Cultural Resources Study was to identify and evaluate any historic properties that may exist within or adjacent to the APE and assess the Proposed Action's potential effects on such properties, if any.

All features in the APE that relate to the district's period of significance (1810s–1950s) or otherwise enhance its historical characters, most notably the Victorian farmhouse and the associated citrus groves, have been removed. The farmhouse, circa 1895, was formerly located at 26013 Redlands Boulevard and previously recorded within the APE in 1987 and 2003. The APE in its current condition, no longer contributes to the significance or integrity of the district at large. Consequently, the Proposed Action would not have an effect on "historic property." No other potential "historic properties" are known to be present within or immediately adjacent to the APE.

The Historic Mission Overlay District as a whole, appears to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and thus, meets the definition of an "historic property." However, since all of the features on the proposed site related to the district's period of significance (1810s–1950s) or otherwise enhance its historical character, have been removed, the site in its current condition, no longer contributes to the significance or integrity of the district at large.

However, the location of the Project site appears to be sensitive for subsurface archaeological remains dating to as early as the mission period in California history and possibly to the late prehistoric period. In the event that archeological material is discovered during any earth-moving operations, implementation of mitigation measures **CULT-1** and **CULT-3** would reduce impacts to less than significant.

On March 21, 2012, a written request was submitted to the State of California's Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for a records search in the Commission's sacred lands file. This search identified no Native American cultural resources within the APE. Additionally, a total of 11 Native American representatives in the region were contacted to solicit local Native American input regarding any potential cultural resources concerns over the Proposed Action. Only two representatives responded.

The Gabrielino Tongva Nation Tribe responded indicating they had no comments or concerns regarding the Proposed Action. The Soboba Cultural Resource Department indicated that the APE is considered highly sensitive to the people of Soboba and because of its location in a shared area used by both Luiseño and Cahuilla tribes, close to known village sites, Native American monitoring during any ground-disturbing activities and government-to-government consultation with the lead agency, is requested. Impacts to Native Americans would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure **CULT-2**.

A Paleontological Resources Assessment was also prepared by CRM TECH (CRM(b)). According to the Paleontological Resources Assessment, the Proposed Action's potential to impact paleontological resources is low within the Holocene-age surface soils, but high within the subsurface deposits of older Quaternary alluvial sediments at depths in excess of 15 feet below the current ground surface. In the event ground disturbances below 15 feet are required, implementation of mitigation measure **PALEO-1** would ensure impacts to paleontological resources are less than significant.

*Mitigation Measures*

**CULT-1:** Archaeological monitoring shall be required during all earth-moving activities and shall be conducted by a qualified archaeologist. Should cultural materials more than 50 years old be discovered, they shall be field recorded and evaluated. Should substantial cultural deposits be encountered, all ground-disturbing activities shall cease in the area of the discovery and site records or site record updates (as appropriate) incorporating the artifacts encountered during monitoring, shall be prepared and submitted to the Archaeological Information Center as a permanent record of the discovery. A report that documents the methods and results of the monitoring program, including an itemized inventory of recovered artifacts and a detailed artifact analysis, shall be prepared upon completion of the fieldwork. This report shall include an interpretation of the cultural activities represented by the archaeological remains and a discussion of the significance of all recovered cultural material. Collected artifacts shall be cleaned, identified, catalogued, analyzed, and prepared for curation at an appropriate repository with permanent retrievable storage that would allow for additional research in the future.

**CULT 2:** On-site monitoring shall be coordinated with local Native American groups who request to participate, including requests for government to government consultation.

**CULT-3:** Should human remains be encountered, construction activities in the immediate vicinity shall be halted temporarily and the San Bernardino County Sheriff-Coroner's Department shall be notified immediately pursuant to state law.

**PALEO-1:** Ground disturbances beyond a depth of 15 feet below the current ground surface shall require development and implementation of a paleontological resource impact mitigation program by a qualified paleontologist. The mitigation program shall be developed in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act as well as the proposed guidelines of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. The mitigation program shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Ground-disturbing activities in sediments identified as likely to contain paleontological resources, such as undisturbed older alluvium at depth, shall be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor. The monitor shall be prepared to quickly salvage fossils, if they are unearthed, to avoid construction delays, but must have the power to temporarily halt or divert construction equipment to allow for removal of abundant or large specimens.
- Samples of sediments shall be collected and washed to recover small invertebrate and vertebrate fossils. Recovered specimens shall be identified and curated at a repository with permanent retrievable storage that would allow for further research in the future.
- A report of findings, including, when appropriate, an itemized inventory of recovered specimens and a discussion of their significance, shall be prepared upon completion of the steps outlined above. The report and inventory, when submitted to the appropriate lead agency, would signify completion of the program to mitigate impacts on paleontological resources.

**No Action:**
The No Action Alternative would not involve any activity and therefore, would not result in any cultural or paleontological impacts.

**3.4 Geology and Soils**
*Existing Conditions:*
Geotechnical information presented was obtained from a Geotechnical Investigation prepared for the Proposed Action by CHJ Consultants (CHJ(a)). The geotechnical report provides site-specific subsurface information, potential seismic hazards, and provides conclusions and recommendations for the geotechnical aspects of the project (see Appendix D). The following discussion provides a summary of the findings of the geotechnical report.

The proposed site is relatively flat sloping to the northwest at approximately 1 percent. The proposed site was used as a citrus grove. However, citrus trees were actively being removed during site visit with some trees remaining on the northwestern portion of the site. The surficial soils exhibited minor mounds and depressions associated with recent tree removals. No permanent structures are located on the subject site. However, evidence of at least two wind machines was noted, although the power source of these machines was not apparent. Subsurface utility lines and an on-site effluent disposal system associated with a pre-existing residential structure are anticipated to exist. Several concrete standpipes and other remnants of a standpipe/furrow-type irrigation system were present throughout the site as well as on adjacent properties to the south and east. It is also anticipated that buried root stocks and irrigation lines, as well as disturbed soils related to the citrus groves, remain. Aerial imagery dated 2007 reflects an improved dirt track traversing the northeast portion of the site westward, then southward through the western half of the site. This dirt track was used to relocate a historic structure from its original location east of the project site to a location near Mission Road southwest of the project site (CHJ(a), p.3).

The site is mantled locally by disturbed native materials to depths of up to 3 feet bgs. Fill material consisting of dark brown silty sand was encountered to a depth of 4 feet bgs. The disturbed native soil

mantle is underlain by native alluvium to the maximum depth explored of 75 feet bgs. The native materials primarily consist of thickly-layered silty sand and sand units with localized silt layers. (CHJ(a), p. 6).

Soils were tested for corrosivity and determined that soils are “mildly” and “severely” corrosive to ferrous metals at as-received and saturated conditions, respectively. Nitrate contents indicate a concern with respect to corrosion of buried copper. Soluble chloride content of the soil was at levels high enough to indicate a concern with respect to corrosion of reinforcing steel. (CHJ(a), p. 29).

The proposed site is not subject to landslides and conditions are not conducive to lateral spreading (CHJ(a), pp. 16–19). The silty soil materials exhibited a low potential for expansion and collapse is not anticipated (CHJ(a), pp. 19, 28). Groundwater was not encountered during site investigation to the maximum depth explored of 75 feet bgs (CHJ(a), p. 6).

**Proposed Action**:
*Construction and Operation*
During construction and operation, the proposed site may be exposed to moderate to strong ground shaking during an earthquake and structures may be at risk of failure during such an event. However, the Proposed Action would implement all applicable requirements of the current edition of the California Building Standards Code (CBC) applicable, which provides criteria for the seismic design of buildings to protect public safety and minimize property damage.

Subsidence due to fluid withdrawal (groundwater pumping) has been documented in the San Bernardino Valley region. However, it has not been documented within the area of the proposed site. Further, subsidence generally occurs as a regional-scale phenomenon in which case, it would not be expected to produce building-scale effects in the area of the site. (CHJ(a), p. 17).

There is a potential for liquefaction to occur at depths ranging from approximately 59 to 63 feet below ground surface (bgs) and seismic settlement may potentially occur ranging from 2.3 to 4.0 inches and maximum seismic differential settlement of approximately 1.75 inches. However, surface manifestation effects of liquefaction on the proposed structure are considered to be negligible. While seismic and differential settlement are anticipated, adherence to the CBC and implementation of seismic design consideration recommendations from the Geotechnical Investigation (Appendix D) and mitigation measure **GEO-1** identified below, would supply adequate strength against seismic settlement.

Construction of the Proposed Action could result in soil erosion and/or the loss of topsoil. However, the Municipal Stormwater Permit (MS4) for San Bernardino County was adopted by the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board January 29, 2010 (R8-2010-036, NPDES CAS618036) and as required by the Clean Water Act, the Proposed Action would adhere to and comply with the MS4 National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Permit and implement an effective SWPPP during construction. As the proposed site is relatively flat, it is not subject to significant erosion by water through surface drainage during construction. Once construction is complete, the site would be paved and landscaped and incorporate drainage features and BMPs identified in a WQMP to minimize runoff and erosion.

The Geotechnical Investigation concludes that from a geotechnical standpoint, the Proposed Action is feasible and can be developed, provided the geotechnical recommendations specified in the document

are implemented during planning, grading, and construction. The primary geotechnical issues of concern for the design of the HCC facility are:

- Adequate foundation support
- Removal of existing utility lines from areas to be graded
- Lateral Loading and Seismic Lateral Earth Pressure.
- Corrosion control measures

Additionally, the proposed HCC would be designed to conform to the 2010 California Building Code and the latest editions of applicable standards. Implementation of **GEO-2** would ensure geotechnical recommendations are executed. And implementation of **GEO-3** would ensure impacts are less than significant should the proposed site require fill materials. Implementation of mitigation measures **GEO-1** through **GEO-3** would ensure the potential for adverse impacts are less than significant.

*Mitigation Measure*
**GEO-1:** Construction shall address the recommendations made in the Project geotechnical report for the Proposed Action to ensure seismic stability and reliability. The geotechnical recommendations shall be incorporated in the final project plans and specifications implemented during construction. The Department of Veterans Affairs shall retain a qualified geotechnical engineer to review all project plans and specifications for conformance with geotechnical conditions and conformance and consistency of exposed subsurface conditions with the findings of the geotechnical report.

**GEO-2:** All applicable geotechnical recommendations provided by the Geotechnical Investigation prepared by CHJ Consultants dated May 2, 2012, shall be implemented.

**GEO-3:** Should import of fill materials be required, an updated geotechnical report shall be conducted by a registered Geologist to determine condition of fill material and provide any further recommendations to ensure fill material is sufficient to satisfy compacted fill thickness requirements.

**No Action:**
The No Action Alternative would not involve any activity and, therefore, would not result in any geotechnical impacts.

### 3.5 Hydrology and Water Quality
*Existing Conditions:*
The proposed site is located within the Santa Ana River Watershed and is located primarily in the Bunker Hill Hydrologic Subarea of the Santa Ana Drainage Province (CHJ(b), p.13). The site is more specifically situated and served by the southern portion of the Bunker Hill Groundwater Basin, an approximately 200-square mile aquifer. This basin is artificially recharged by surface stream diversions made for groundwater replenishment. The water that replenishes the Bunker Hill Basin comes from annual rainfall and snow pack from the San Bernardino Mountain range. There are no watercourses located within the Project area. The depth to groundwater in State Well No. 01S/03W-19L001, located within approximately 0.5 miles north of the proposed site, was 196 feet below ground surface (bgs) in November 2011. The groundwater gradient in the subject site area is toward the west-northwest following the topography and trend of the Santa Ana River. (CHJ(b), p. 13).

Pollutants in the existing condition storm water runoff may contain residual pesticides and/or herbicides from past agricultural use (CHJ(b), p. 17). Currently, the site does not contain any best management practices (BMPs) which would potentially decrease the amount of pollutants in storm water runoff. Conveying flows over the current site conditions, does little to minimize pollutants flowing into the existing storm drain system.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the primary federal agency responsible for management of water quality in the United States. The Clean Water Act (CWA) is the federal law that governs water quality control activities initiated by the EPA and others. Section 303 of the CWA requires the adoption of water quality standards for all surface water in the United States. Under Section 303(d), individual states are requirement to develop lists of water bodies that do not meet water quality objectives after required levels of treatment by point source discharges.

The requirement to implement a program for development planning is based on federal and state statutes including Section 402 (p) of the Clean Water Act. The Clean Water Act amendments of 1987 established a framework for regulating storm water discharges from municipal, industrial, and construction activities under the NPDES program.

**Proposed Action:**

*Construction*

Erosion and associated sediment resulting during construction may cause short term impacts. However, projects that disturb over one acre are required to be in compliance with the NPDES stormwater permit. The purpose of the NPDES is to contain and control sediment on a short-term basis during construction by preventing soil from leaving the site and entering storm drain facilities to impact downstream sources. Implementation of mitigation measure **HYD-1**, identified below, would further ensure impacts remain less than significant.

*Operation*

Operation of the proposed Project increases impervious area and includes irrigation which could also lead to sedimentation and water contamination. The General Construction permit requires recipients to reduce or eliminate non-storm water discharges into stormwater systems and to develop and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevision Plan (SWPPP) to identify pollutant sources that may affect the quality of discharges of stormwater associated with construction activities and to identify, construct and implement stormwater pollution control measures to reduce pollutants in stormwater discharges from the construction site during and after construction.

A Municipal Stormwater Permit (MS4) for San Bernardino County was adopted by the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board January 29, 2010 (R8-2010-036, NPDES CAS618036). The City of Loma Linda is a co-permittee under this municipal storm water permit and the proposed Project would discharge to the municipal storm water system. The MS4 permit includes provisions related to new development which are directed at minimizing discharge of polluted runoff through design approaches that reduce impervious surface areas and provide for infiltration, filtration, and treatment of runoff. Under the current MS4 permit, preparation of a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) would be required. Additionally, the proposed action would require the construction of a storm drain in Bryn Mawr Road crossing Redlands Boulevard to connect to the existing County storm drain channel just south of the freeway. Construction of this storm drain would comply with all federal, state and local

regulations. Implementation of mitigation measure **HYD-1**, identified below, would further ensure impacts remain less than significant.

*Mitigation Measure*
**HYD-1:** Implementing project developer shall prepare, submit, and implement a site-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for construction activities, and a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) for post-construction activities such as operation and maintenance.

**No Action:**
Under the No Action Alternative, the site would not be developed so no hydrological impacts would occur.

### 3.6 Wildlife and Habitat

*Existing Conditions:*
Biological information presented was obtained from a Biological Resources Assessment prepared for the Proposed Action by AMEC Environment & Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC). The biological assessment provides site-specific information, potential impacts recommendations for the biological aspects of the Proposed Action (see Appendix B). The following discussion provides a summary of the findings of the biological assessment.

The proposed site is undeveloped, vacant and is located on a highly disturbed former orange grove. Vegetation is sparse where present and consists primarily of invasive and weedy, herbaceous species. The orange trees from the former grove have nearly all been cut, mulched and removed from the site. One area along the western boundary still has cut orange trees that are in the process of being mulched and hauled away. Several live orange trees near the northern site boundary in a single row had not yet been cut down. Site disturbances observed include the current and past clearing of agricultural vegetation (orange trees), the compacted agricultural access roads that once encircled and bisected the orange groves, the remnant agricultural irrigation systems (i.e., concrete columns and pipes), and some relatively minor illegal dumping of trash and debris.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service are the designated federal agencies accountable for administering the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The ESA defines species as “endangered” or “threatened” and provides regulatory protection at the federal level.

- Section 9 of the ESA prohibits the “take” of listed (i.e., endangered or threatened) species. The ESA definition of take is “to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in such conduct.” Recognizing that take cannot always be avoided, Section 10(a) includes provisions for take that is incidental to, but not the purpose of, otherwise lawful activities. Specifically, Section 10(a)(1)(A) permits (authorized take permits) are issued for scientific purposes. Section 10(a)(1)(B) permits (incidental take permits) are issued for the incidental take of listed species that do not jeopardize the species.
- Section 7 (a)(2) requires federal agencies to evaluate the proposed project with respect to listed or proposed listed, species and their respective critical habitat (if applicable). Federal agencies must employ programs for the conservation of listed species and are prohibited from authorizing, funding, or carrying out any action that would jeopardize a listed species or destroy or modify its “critical habitat.”

As defined by the ESA, "individuals, organizations, states, local governments, and other non-federal entities are affected by the designation of critical habitat only if their actions occur on federal lands, require a federal permit, license, or other authorization, or involve federal funding.

Additionally, special-status plant or animal species may be considered sensitive due to declining populations, vulnerability to habitat change or loss, or because of restricted distributions. Certain special-status species have been listed as Threatened or Endangered by the USFWS and are thus protected by the federal Endangered Species Acts. Other species have been designated as having special-status by the USFWS, but have not been formally listed as Threatened or Endangered.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) involves treaties signed by the U.S., Great Britain, Mexico, Japan, and the republics of the former Soviet Union which make it unlawful to pursue, capture, kill, and/or possess, or attempt to engage in any such conduct to any migratory bird, nest, egg or parts thereof listed in this document. As with the ESA, the MBTA also allows the Secretary of the Interior to grant permits for the incidental take of these protected migratory bird species.

Portions of the proposed project may fall under the jurisdiction of a federal agency (i.e., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers). The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) establishes certain criteria that must be adhered to for any project that is "financed, assisted, conducted or approved by a federal agency. The federal lead agency is required to "determine whether the proposed action will significantly affect the quality of the human environment."

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), regulates the discharge of dredged and fill material into "waters of the United States." The USACE has created a series of nationwide permits that authorize certain activities within waters of the U.S. provided that the proposed activity does not exceed the impact threshold for each of the permits, takes steps to avoid impacts to wetlands where practicable, minimize potential impacts to wetlands, and provide compensation for any remaining, unavoidable impacts through activities to restore or create wetlands. For projects that exceed the threshold for nationwide permits, individual permits under Section 404 can be issued.

**Proposed Action**:
*Construction and Operation*
No hydrophytic (or riparian) vegetation communities, areas containing hydric soils, wetland hydrology or areas exhibiting a definable bed and bank and at least an intermittent flow were observed anywhere on the proposed Project site. Thus, the proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption or other means. (AMEC(a), p. 7).

No special-status plant species or special-status vegetation communities were identified on the proposed site. No special status wildlife species were observed during the field assessment and most are not expected to occur. There is a very low to low potential for several special-status species to occur on-site despite the high levels of site disturbance. However, none of the species are listed as endangered or threatened by either the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and impacts are anticipated to be less than significant. Two special-status birds (burrowing owl and California horned lark are designated as a "Species of Special Concern" by the CDFG and

afforded protection by CDFG Section 3505.5 and the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-1** would ensure impacts to these species would be less than significant. (AMEC(a), pp. 8–17).

There is a low potential for the California horned lark and burrowing owl to nest onsite as the proposed Project site provides suitable nesting habitat for the horned lark and some of the on-site abandoned irrigation pipes provide suitable habitat and shelter habitat for the burrowing owl. (AMEC(a) pp. 12-13). The proposed site also provides suitable nesting habitat for at least three other common bird species that are protected under the CDFG and the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Like the California horned lark, killdeer (*Latin*) nest on open, barren and highly disturbed ground. The American kestrel, which was observed on-site, and barn owl (*Tyto alba*), are known to nest in mature palm trees, which are also present on-site. In order to comply with the CDFG and MBTA, mitigation measures **BIO-1** and **BIO-2** would ensure that nesting birds would not be impacted as a result of tree removal. (AMEC(a), pp. 18–19).

Because the Habitat Assessment prepared for this site identified suitable habitat to be present for the Western Burrowing Owl, a Focused Survey for Burrowing Owl was conducted (AMEC(b)). Although considered to be suitable for burrowing owls use, the Project site has been subjected to high levels of historic and ongoing disturbances. The site was formerly an active citrus grove. At the time of the initial habitat assessment, most of the onsite orange trees had been cut down, mulched and hauled away. One area, along the western site boundary, retained orange trees that were being actively cut, mulched and hauled away. By the time of the burrow search phase of the burrowing owl survey, all of the remnant trees had been removed from the site. Other site disturbances were ongoing throughout the duration of the burrowing owl survey (May – July 2012). The site disturbances primarily included grading, operation of heavy equipment and haul trucks, and the spreading of a gray-colored, silty/powder-like substance (likely herbicide) on the surface of the recently graded areas. These activities were also conducted on the undeveloped adjacent areas, containing many of the ground squirrel burrows, to the south of the site.

No burrowing owls or evidence thereof (i.e., whitewash, pellets, feathers, tracks, prey remains, egg shell fragments, nest adornment materials, etc.) were observed onsite or on adjacent properties surveyed during the focused survey. (AMEC(b), p. 4).

The results of the breeding season focused survey indicate the burrowing owl does not currently occupy the site or the immediately adjacent areas. However, it should be noted that adverse conditions such as the site disturbance (i.e., grading, operation of heavy equipment, etc.) that was ongoing throughout the surveys can prevent the detection or preclude the presence of burrowing owls in any given year. For these reasons, and because the site continues to provide suitable shelter and nesting habitat (i.e., California ground squirrel burrows and man-made structures that could serve as burrow surrogates) for burrowing owls, potential for the species to occur on or adjacent to the site at anytime in the future remains present, despite the negative survey results. Implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-2** would ensure impacts to burrowing owls remains less than significant. (AMEC(b), pp. 4-5).

*Mitigation Measures*

**BIO-1:** In order to comply with the MBTA, potential impacts to nesting habitat (i.e., site grading or removal of trees) shall be limited to the times when birds are less likely to be nesting (i.e., the non-breeding season, approximately September to February). The period from approximately February 1 to

August 31 covers the breeding season for most birds that may occur in the Project area. If construction work cannot be done in the non-breeding season, a qualified biologist shall check the trees for active nests utilized by birds covered under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act prior to any tree removal activities. If active nests used by the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act listed birds are present, these trees shall not be removed until young have fledged (as determined by a qualified biologist).

**BIO-2:** In order to comply with the MBTA, a pre-construction survey for resident burrowing owls shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 30 days prior to commencement of grading and construction activities. If ground disturbing activities are delayed or suspended for more than 14 days after the pre-construction survey, the site shall be resurveyed for owls. The pre-construction survey and any relocation activity shall be conducted in accordance with the current California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) Guidelines (CDFG Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, 3/17/2012).

**No Action:**
Under the No Action Alternative, no site disturbance would take place so changes to biological resources would not occur.

**3.7 Noise**
*Existing Conditions:*
Noise, or unwanted sound, was originally managed at the Federal level by the Noise Control Act (NCA) of 1972, which was administered by the EPA. Under this Act, Congress tasked the EPA with determining the extent and effects of different qualities and quantities of noise and to define acceptable levels of noise toward public health and safety. Since 1982, the responsibility of noise abatement and control has been delegated to State and local governments, but the noise levels and exposure recommendations developed by EPA under the Noise Control Act are still relevant.

Noise can be measured in the form of a decibel (dB), which is a unit describing the amplitude of sound. The predominant rating scales for human communities in the State of California are the Equivalent-Continuous Sound Level (Leq) and the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) based on the A-weighted decibel (dBA). Leq is the total sound energy of time-varying noise over a sample period. CNEL is the time-varying noise over a 24-hour period, with a weighting factor of 5 dBA applied to the hourly Leq for noises occurring from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. (defined as relaxation hours). For events occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., defined as sleeping hours, 10 dBA is applied. The purpose of these standards and guidelines is to provide a framework, setting standards for human exposure to noise.

The proposed site is currently vacant and bordered by sensitive multi-family residential uses on the western boundary, vacant land on the eastern and southern boundary, and a major four-lane arterial to the north (Redlands Boulevard). The surrounding area is comprised of a developing urban area with mixed uses consisting of commercial, office and residential surrounding the location.

**Proposed Action:**
*Construction*
The proposed action would require site preparation (i.e., grading, excavation), and construction. These activities require the use of heavy equipment such as graders, backhoes and cranes. This equipment would generate noise that would be heard both on and off site. The residential area immediately adjacent to the western most boundary of the proposed site, and the businesses located to the north and northwest of the proposed site are most susceptible to potential construction noise impacts.

Although the construction noise levels may exceed the 55dBA standard for residential properties, causing a periodic increase in ambient noise levels, per Loma Linda Municipal Code Title 9, Chapter 20, Section .070.C, all construction activities are exempt from the noise standards as long as construction activities are limited to daytime hours from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Construction activities are not permitted on weekends or national holidays. In addition, construction equipment shall be property maintained with standard noise muffling apparatus specifically for such equipment.

*Operation*
Potential noise impacts associated with the operations of the proposed action would be a result of project generated vehicular traffic on the proposed Project vicinity roadways and automobile parking lot areas associated with the proposed Project. However, a parking lot is not considered to be a serene environment and the traffic noise from the adjacent streets as well as Interstate-10 located approximately one-quarter mile to the north would provide a masking effect over the short-term, single-event noise occurrences common to parking lots.

**No Action:**
Under the No Action Alternative, no changes to noise levels would occur.

**3.8 Land Use**
*Existing Conditions:*
The proposed site is currently vacant. It is bordered by multi-family residential uses on the western boundary, vacant land on the eastern and southern boundary, and a major four-lane arterial to the north (Redlands Boulevard), with vacant land located directly across Redlands Boulevard.

The surrounding area is comprised of a developing urban area with mixed uses consisting of commercial, office and residential surrounding the location. North of the proposed site consist of commercial, office, business park, an orange grove, multi- and single-family residences, and I-10 located approximately one-quarter of a mile away. A storage facility and single-family residences lie west of the Project. Vacant land, orange groves, a recreational vehicle park and as school lie east of the Project site. Orange groves and vacant land buffer single-family residential uses lying to the south. The proposed site is located approximately one-quarter mile east of the existing interim VACRB andapproximately1.75 miles from the VAMC.

**Proposed Action:**
The Proposed Action is not subject to local land use regulation. Irrespective, construction and operation of the proposed action would be consistent with the existing and surrounding land uses.

**No Action:**
Under the No Action Alternative, the site would remain vacant.

### 3.9 Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Zone Management

*Existing Conditions:*

Floodplains generally refer to 100-year floodplains established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and are shown on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) or Flood Hazard Boundary Maps (FHBMs) for all communities that are members of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The 100-year floodplain designates the area inundated during a storm having a 1.0 percent chance of occurring in any given year. Executive Order (EO) 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires Federal agencies to minimize occupancy of and modification to the floodplain.

According to the FIRMs issued by FEMA, Map Numbers 06071C8703H (August 28, 2008) and 06071C8711H (August 28, 2008), the proposed site is located within Zone X which is determined to be outside of the 500 year floodplain. The proposed site is not located in a floodplain, wetland, or coastal zone management.

**Proposed Action:**

Under the Proposed Action, no adverse impacts are anticipated.

**No Action:**

Under the No Action Alternative, no adverse impacts would occur.

### 3.10 Socioeconomics

*Existing Conditions:*

The Veterans Affairs Clinic Redlands Boulevard (VACRB) is an approximately 15,905-square-foot interim clinic located at 25828 Redlands Boulevard, Loma Linda CA on the northeast corner of Mountain View Avenue and Redlands Boulevard, just over one-quarter mile west of the proposed site that currently employs 30 people. The VAMC), is located approximately 1.75 miles southwest of the proposed site.

**Proposed Action:**

*Construction*

The Proposed Action would create temporary short-term construction jobs.

*Operation*

The Proposed Action would replace and expand upon the services currently provided by the VACRB and transfer those 30 employees from this interim facility to the new facility. In addition, 420 employees from the VAMC would be transferred to this new facility. Operation of the Proposed Action would result in 500 jobs thereby creating 50 new full-time positions which would not cause a substantial increase in resident population.

**No Action:**

Under the No Action Alternative, the site would remain vacant and not provide short-term or long-term jobs.

### 3.11 Community Services

*Existing Conditions:*

Fire protection services are provided by the City of Loma Linda, Fire and Rescue Division of the Department of Public Safety. The City maintains a joint response/automatic aid agreement with fire

departments in neighboring cities including Colton, Redlands and San Bernardino to ensure adequate fire protection services in an emergency.

Police protection is provided by and contracted through the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. The City has recently provided a workstation at City Hall, which provides deputies and a sheriff's service specialist with an area for completing reports, conducting interviews, and crime prevention activities. The City shares the cost of law enforcement personnel and equipment with the City of Grand Terrace. Loma Linda University maintains its own security force with the City providing services on an as-needed basis.

**Proposed Action:**
The proposed facility would replace the current Veterans Affairs Clinic Redlands Boulevard (VACRB) located at 25828 Redlands Boulevard, Loma Linda, CA, on the northeast corner of Mountain View Avenue and Redlands Boulevard, is just over one-quarter mile west of the Project site so it would still be located within the five minute response time of the Fire Department. The Proposed Action will employ 50 new people which would not contribute to a significant increase in population resulting in a substantial increase in demand upon police protection or other community facilities such as libraries or schools.

**No Action:**
Failure to implement the Proposed Action will continue the burden on the existing interim clinic and patients it serves and fail to meet the strategic goals of the VA.

### 3.12 Solid and Hazardous Materials

*Existing Conditions:*
In 1992, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) received authorization from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to implement the Resources Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA), Subtitle C requirements and the associated regulations. Receiving authorization from the EPA means that DTSC is the primary authority enforcing the RCRA hazardous waste requirements in California. RCRA Subtitle C establishes standards for the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste in the United States.

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was conducted by CHJ, (CHJ(b)) and is included as Appendix E. This report concluded the site shows no obvious evidence of handling or use of hazardous materials. A concrete irrigation cistern was located on the southeastern portion of the site. Two empty smudge pots were also located in the northwest corner of the proposed site. A few piles of debris including tires, wood, furniture and miscellaneous household items, trash and debris were noted in the northeastern portion of the site. While no evidence of a septic system was noted, the former residence located on the site was likely to have one. (CHJ(b), pp. 5–6).

No underground storage tank permits were identified on site or within one-quarter mile of the Project site. However, four permitted facilities with active and inactive handler/generator permits were identified within one- quarter northwest of the site (CHJ(b), p. 8). One small quantity generator of hazardous waste was identified one-quarter mile east of the site on Redlands Boulevard. (CHJ(b), p. 10). The site has the potential for the existence of contaminated groundwater (CHJ(b), p. 14) and remnants of at least two wind machines on-site represent a recognized environmental condition due to the potential presence of associated underground tanks (CHJ(b), p. 18).

The City contracts with Waste Management to provide solid waste collection services. Solid waste not diverted to recycling, compost or hazardous waste facilities is transported to the San Timoteo Sanitary Landfill located in the city of Redlands.

**Proposed Action:**
During construction and operation, solid and hazardous waste would be generated. Mitigation required by regulation would prevent adverse impacts caused by uncontrolled release of solids and hazardous substances.

*Solid Waste*
During construction (short-term) and operation (long-term), bulk solid waste, excess building material, fill, etc., shall be disposed of in a manner consistent with State of California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (CIWMA) and shall be removed from the proposed site. Additionally, every California city and county is required by CIWMA to divert 50 percent of its waste from landfills by the year 2000. The City has not yet adopted the 50 percent diversion mandate. In an effort to do so, City of Loma Linda Municipal Code Title 15 requires that at least 60 percent of the estimated tonnage of construction and demolition material be diverted from disposal. Additionally, a waste management plan is required as part of the building permit process.

*Hazardous & Universal Waste*
Management of hazardous and universal waste will be in accordance with the California Health and Safety Code (CHSC) and Title 22, California Code of Regulations (CCR).

To alleviate the impacts should groundwater development be proposed as part of the Proposed Action, mitigation measure **HAZ-1** shall be implemented. To deal with the possibility of underground storage tanks, mitigation measure **HAZ-2** shall be implemented to reduce impacts to less than significant.

The San Timoteo Sanitary Landfill is permitted to receive up to 1,000 tons per day and has an estimated closure date of May 2016. However, adequate room is available for further expansion. The proposed Project would generate an estimated 527 tons of construction waste and 750 tons of waste per year during operation. This equates to approximately 0.06 percent of the landfills yearly intake during construction and 0.21 percent during operation.

*Mitigation*
**HAZ-1:** Should groundwater development be proposed, additional environmental investigations and research specific to groundwater quality at the site and in the vicinity shall be conducted.

**HAZ-2:** During grading, specific attention shall be directed to those areas identified as containing wind machine remnants, to verify the presence or absence of underground tanks. Should underground storage tanks be identified, proper removal procedures shall be followed in accordance with the San Bernardino Hazardous Materials Division (Section 5.2.1).

**No Action:**
Under the No Action Alternative, the site would remain vacant and unused.

### 3.13 Transportation and Parking

*Existing Conditions:*

The proposed site is located along Redlands Boulevard, a major four-lane arterial, from where site access will be taken. Omnitrans bus route 8 currently serves the proposed site with a transfer station located at Redlands Boulevard and Mt. View Avenue. Additionally, according to the City of Loma Linda General Plan, Figure 6.6 – Master Plans of Bikeways, a Class II bike lane is designated along Mt. View Avenue.

**Proposed Action:**

*Construction and Operation*

Under the Proposed Action, there is potential for temporary short-term construction impacts and long-term operational impacts to transportation to occur. A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) was prepared by Albert A. Webb Associates (WEBB(b)), and is included as Appendix F. The TIA assumes the Proposed Action would be built in a single phase with full development anticipated by 2016.

The Proposed Action is anticipated to generate approximately 3,875 daily trip-ends, including 450 trip-ends during the AM peak hour and 615 trip-ends during the PM peak hour.

The Transportation Research Board Highway Capacity Manual 2000 (HCM2000) was used to analyze level of service (LOS) for 21 intersections that would be affected by the Proposed Action. The HCM2000 evaluates the LOS of intersections based upon the control delay per vehicle. The City of Loma Linda General Plan Section 6.10.1 identifies that intersections operating at LOS D, E or F are failing. Currently, nine of the 21 intersections studied are failing under this methodology.

Construction traffic would result in short-term increases in traffic volumes. This traffic would consist mainly of trucks delivering building materials and equipment, and hauling away excavated soil. The maximum construction traffic volumes expected for the Project is assumed to be eight truck trips per day.

The Proposed Action would create 500 jobs. However, 30 of those would be transferred from the VACRB and 420 would be transferred from the VAMC thereby not creating a significant increase in staff. Further, traffic generated by the Proposed Action is being redistributed from the VACRB and the VAMC as services provided by these facilities will be relocated to the proposed HCC. Consequently, there would not be a significant increase in commute traffic levels and the long-term operational effects of the Proposed Action on traffic would be negligible. Further, Omnitrans provides bus transportation to the area. The recommended site improvements contained in the TIA, ensure all of the study area intersections would either operate at an acceptable levels of service or no worse than the current condition. With implementation of mitigation measures **TRANS-1** through **TRANS-10**, impacts would be minimal.

**TRANS-1:** Construct full width improvements on all internal roadways.

**TRANS-2:** Restripe eastbound approach at the intersection of Anderson Street/I-10 EB Ramps from one eastbound left turn lane and one shared left, through and right turn lane in the existing condition to include the following geometrics:

Eastbound: One exclusive left turn lane. One shared through and right turn lane. No additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

**TRANS-3:** Provide protected-permissive phase to the eastbound and westbound left-turns at the intersection of Anderson Street (NS)/Redlands Boulevard (EW).

**TRANS-4:** Construct an exclusive northbound right turn lane at the intersection of Mountain View Avenue/ I-10 EB ramps to include the following geometrics (existing condition includes one through lane and a shared through and right turn lane):

Northbound: Two through lanes and an exclusive right turn lane. Additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure. Per the Loma Linda General Plan, improvements to this intersection are being reviewed and anticipated that the improvements will be constructed in the future.

**TRANS-5:** Restripe eastbound and westbound approaches at the intersection of Mountain View Avenue/ Redlands Boulevard from one left turn lane, one through lane and a shared through and right turn lane to include the following geometrics:

Eastbound: One left turn lane. Two through lanes and one right turn lane. No additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

Westbound: One left turn lane. Two through lanes and one right turn lane. No additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

Also, provide protected-permissive phase to the northbound and southbound left turns.

**TRANS-6:** Restripe eastbound and westbound approaches at the intersection of Mountain View Avenue/ Barton Road from two left turn lanes, two through lanes and one exclusive right turn lane in the eastbound direction and one left turn lane, two through lane and an exclusive right turn lane in the westbound direction to include the following geometrics:

Eastbound: Two left turn lanes. Two through lanes and a shared through and right turn lane. No additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

Westbound: One left turn lane. Two through lanes and a shared through and right turn lane. No additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

Also, provide protected-permissive phase to the northbound and southbound left turns.

**TRANS-7:** Construct an exclusive westbound left turn lane at the intersection of California Street/I-10 WB ramps to include the following geometrics (existing condition includes one shared left and through lane and one right turn lane):

Westbound: One left turn lane. One shared left and through lane. One right turn lane. Additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

**TRANS-8:** Install a traffic signal at the intersection of Bryn Mawr Avenue – Project Driveway / Redlands Boulevard to include the following geometrics:

Northbound: One shared left-through-right turn lane.
Southbound: One shared left-through-right turn lane.
Eastbound: One left turn lane. One through lane. One shared through and right turn lane.
Westbound: One left turn lane. One through lane. One shared through and right turn lane.

**TRANS-9:** Construct an exclusive northbound left turn lane at the intersection of California Street/ Redlands Boulevard to include the following geometrics (existing condition includes one shared left, through and right turn lane):

Northbound: One left turn lane. One shared through and right turn lane. Additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

Also, provide protected phasing for the northbound and southbound left turns. Provide overlap phasing for the westbound right turn movement. Loma Linda General Plan has identified the necessity to realign the two streets and eliminate the current offset configuration.

**TRANS-10:** Sight distance at the Project entrance roadway should be reviewed with respect to standard City of Loma Linda sight distance standards at the time of preparation of final grading, landscape and street improvement plans.

**No Action:**
Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to transportation and parking are anticipated as conditions would not change.

**3.14 Utilities**
*Existing Conditions:*
The proposed site is currently served by the City of Loma Linda's Public Works, Water Division and receives its water from the Bunker Hill Groundwater Basin. Sewer facilities are provided by City of Loma Linda's Public Works, Utilities Division. Wastewater treatment services are provided under provisions outlined in a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with the City of San Bernardino and provided by the San Bernardino Municipal Water Department wastewater facility and the Rapid Infiltration/Extraction tertiary treatment facility.

Trash collection service is contracted to Waste Management. Electric services is provides by Southern California Edison. Natural gas is provided by Southern California Gas Company and telecommunications are provided by Verizon. Above ground power transmission lines are located on the northern boundary of the Project site along Redlands Boulevard.

**Proposed Action:**
The Proposed Action is currently served by the existing sewer facilities in Redlands Boulevard and existing water facilities in Mission Road and Redlands Boulevard. No new facilities would need to be constructed. Wastewater is treated by both the San Bernardino Municipal Water Department wastewater facility and the Rapid Infiltration/Extraction facility located in Colton both having capacity to serve the city at ultimate buildout conditions. The Proposed Action is not anticipated to use excessive amounts of water or have a demand greater than that available to serve development from existing entitlements and resources and it would use less water than the previous agricultural use. The City's current water resources are sufficient to meet build out demand. While the Proposed Action is not subject to local land use regulation, it does comply with the City's general plan so no environmental effects are anticipated.

The Proposed Action would require the construction of a storm drain in Bryn Mawr Road crossing Redlands Boulevard to connect to the existing County storm drain channel just south of the freeway. However, construction of this storm drain would comply with all federal, state and local regulations and is not anticipated to cause a significant environmental effect.

Existing utility infrastructure for other utilities may require some expansion to accommodate the proposed HCC. However, no adverse impacts are anticipated from these expansions.

**No Action:**

Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to utilities are anticipated as conditions would not change.

### 3.15 Environmental Justice

*Existing Conditions:*

Executive Order 12898 (EO 12898) requires federal agencies to make achieving environmental justice part of their mission. Agencies are required to identify and correct programs, policies, and activities that have disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low income populations. EO 12898 also tasks federal agencies with ensuring that public notifications regarding environmental issues are concise, understandable, and readily accessible.

**Proposed Action**:

Under the Proposed Action, no disproportionately high or adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations are anticipated. All veterans would benefit from the full range of services that would be provided at the new medical center.

**No Action:**

Under the No Action Alternative, no disproportionately high or adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations are anticipated. Veterans requiring medical services would still continue to travel to other locations in the area to receive services.

### 3.16 Cumulative Impacts

**Existing:**

According to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, cumulative impacts are the impacts on the environment which result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions (CEQ 1508).

Related future actions considered for cumulative impact analysis include other health care projects in the area. There are two recent, current or future actions. The first is construction of a 37,873-square-foot, 66-bed memory care facility which includes demolition of an existing residence and accessory structures. The second is the expansion of an existing 83-bed skilled nursing facility which includes construction of a 46-unit (53-bed) assisted living facility with a secured memory care unit for up to 28 residents.

**Proposed Action:**

Direct impacts from construction and demolition are typically constrained to the limits of construction and are temporary in nature. If other construction occurs within the same schedule as the Proposed Action, temporary traffic impacts may need to be considered. Standard mitigation in compliance with all appropriate, required, and applicable regulations and laws would ensure impacts to air quality, noise, hazardous/solid waste, etc., are not cumulative. No long term negative impacts from operation of the facility are anticipated and therefore would not accumulate with other proposed or recently completed actions.

**No Action:**
Under the No Action Alternative, no direct cumulative impacts would occur. A long-term failure to construct the new facility would continue the issues of inefficiency and increased wait times for veterans and their families.

### 3.17 Potential for Generating Substantial Controversy

**Existing:**
The Proposed Action seeks to remedy existing deficiencies in VA services that compromises the VA's ability to deliver high quality medical services in a more efficient and responsive manner. No opposition to the Proposed Action has been identified.

**Proposed Action:**
Under the Proposed Action, construction and operation of the proposed HCC would benefit veterans by providing more medical service options and would benefit the surrounding communities economically by generating employment. This facility would replace the interim facility which does not provide as many services located approximately one-quarter mile to the west. Therefore, relocation of services would not create an impact.

**No Action:**
Under the No Action Alternative, the reduced services currently provided by the interim facility would continue to present hardships for veterans who must travel to other locations or wait for extended periods of time to receive care.

# 4.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is the lead federal agency for conducting the NEPA compliance process for the Proposed Action. It is the responsibility of the lead agency to ensure that NEPA documents are responsive to the needs of the community while complying with all NEPA provisions.

A Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EA will be published by the VA in a local newspaper of general circulation initiating the 30-day public review and comment period. The VA will consider all comments received in the preparation of the final EA.

# 5.0 MITIGATION

The following mitigation measures would be required for implementation of the Proposed Action:

**AES-1:** The Contractors shall keep construction-related activity clean and inconspicuous by storing building materials and equipment generally away from public view and shall remove construction debris promptly at regular intervals. Materials and construction storage areas shall be selected to minimize views from public roads, from I-10, and especially from nearby residences.

**BIO-1:** In order to comply with the MBTA, potential impacts to nesting habitat (i.e., site grading or removal of trees) shall be limited to the times when birds are less likely to be nesting (i.e., the non-breeding season, approximately September to February). The period from approximately February 1 to August 31 covers the breeding season for most birds that may occur in the Project area. If construction work cannot be done in the non-breeding season, a qualified biologist shall check the trees for active nests utilized by birds covered under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act prior to any tree removal activities. If active nests used by the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act listed birds are present, these trees shall not be removed until young have fledged (as determined by a qualified biologist).

**BIO-2:** In order to comply with the MBTA, a pre-construction survey for resident burrowing owls shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 30 days prior to commencement of grading and construction activities. If ground disturbing activities are delayed or suspended for more than 14 days after the pre-construction survey, the site shall be resurveyed for owls. The pre-construction survey and any relocation activity shall be conducted in accordance with the current California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) Guidelines (CDFG Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, 3/17/2012).

**CULT-1:** Archaeological monitoring shall be required during all earth-moving activities and shall be conducted by a qualified archaeologist. Should cultural materials more than 50 years old be discovered, they shall be field-recorded and evaluated. Should substantial cultural deposits be encountered, all ground disturbing activities shall cease in the area of the discovery and site records or site record updates (as appropriate) incorporating the artifacts encountered during monitoring, shall be prepared and submitted to the Archaeological Information Center as a permanent record of the discovery. A report that documents the methods and results of the monitoring program, including an itemized inventory of recovered artifacts and a detailed artifact analysis, shall be prepared upon completion of the fieldwork. This report shall include an interpretation of the cultural activities represented by the archaeological remains and a discussion of the significance of all recovered cultural material. Collected artifacts shall be cleaned, identified, catalogued, analyzed, and prepared for curation at an appropriate repository with permanent retrievable storage that would allow for additional research in the future.

**CULT-2:** On-site monitoring shall be coordinated with local Native American groups who request to participate, including requests for government to government consultation.

**CULT-3:** Should human remains be encountered, construction activities in the immediate vicinity shall be halted temporarily and the San Bernardino County Sheriff-Coroner's Department shall be notified immediately pursuant to state law.

**GEO-1:** Construction shall address the recommendations made in the Project geotechnical report for the Proposed Action to ensure seismic stability and reliability. The geotechnical recommendations shall be incorporated in the final Project plans and specifications implemented during construction. The VA shall

retain a qualified geotechnical engineer to review all Project plans and specifications for conformance with geotechnical conditions and conformance and consistency of exposed subsurface conditions with the findings of the geotechnical report.

**GEO-2:** All applicable geotechnical recommendations provided by the Geotechnical Investigation prepared by CHJ Consultants dated May 2, 2012, shall be implemented.

**GEO-3:** Should import of fill materials be required, an updated geotechnical report shall be conducted by a registered Geologist to determine condition of fill material and provide any further recommendations to ensure fill material is sufficient to satisfy compacted fill thickness requirements.

**HAZ-1:** Should groundwater development be proposed, additional environmental investigations and research specific to groundwater quality at the site and in the vicinity shall be conducted.

**HAZ-2:** During grading, specific attention shall be directed to those areas identified as containing wind machine remnants, to verify the absence of underground tanks. Should underground storage tanks be identified, proper removal procedures shall be followed in accordance with the San Bernardino Hazardous Materials Division (section 5.2.1).

**HYD-1:** Implementing Project developer shall prepare, submit, and implement a site-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for construction activities, and a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) for post-construction activities such as operation and maintenance.

**PALEO-1:** Ground disturbances beyond a depth of 15 feet below the current ground surface shall require development and implementation of a paleontological resource impact mitigation program by a qualified paleontologist. The mitigation program shall be developed in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act as well as the proposed guidelines of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. The mitigation program shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Ground-disturbing activities in sediments identified as likely to contain paleontological resources, such as undisturbed older alluvium at depth, shall be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor. The monitor shall be prepared to quickly salvage fossils, if they are unearthed, to avoid construction delays, but must have the power to temporarily halt or divert construction equipment to allow for removal of abundant or large specimens.
- Samples of sediments shall be collected and washed to recover small invertebrate and vertebrate fossils. Recovered specimens shall be identified and curated at a repository with permanent retrievable storage that would allow for further research in the future.
- A report of findings, including, when appropriate, an itemized inventory of recovered specimens and a discussion of their significance, shall be prepared upon completion of the steps outlined above. The report and inventory, when submitted to the appropriate lead agency, would signify completion of the program to mitigate impacts on paleontological resources.

**TRANS-1:** Construct full width improvements on all internal roadways.

**TRANS-2:** Restripe eastbound approach at the intersection of Anderson Street/I-10 EB Ramps from one eastbound left turn lane and one shared left, through and right turn lane in the existing condition to include the following geometrics:

Eastbound: One exclusive left turn lane. One shared through and right turn lane. No additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

**TRANS-3:** Provide protected-permissive phase to the eastbound and westbound left-turns at the intersection of Anderson Street (NS)/Redlands Boulevard (EW).

**TRANS-4:** Construct an exclusive northbound right turn lane at the intersection of Mountain View Avenue/ I-10 EB ramps to include the following geometrics (existing condition includes one through lane and a shared through and right turn lane):

Northbound: Two through lanes and an exclusive right turn lane. Additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure. Per the Loma Linda General Plan, improvements to this intersection are being reviewed and anticipated that the improvements will be constructed in the future.

**TRANS-5:** Restripe eastbound and westbound approaches at the intersection of Mountain View Avenue/ Redlands Boulevard from one left turn lane, one through lane and a shared through and right turn lane to include the following geometrics:

Eastbound: One left turn lane. Two through lanes and one right turn lane. No additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

Westbound: One left turn lane. Two through lanes and one right turn lane. No additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

Also, provide protected-permissive phase to the northbound and southbound left turns.

**TRANS-6:** Restripe eastbound and westbound approaches at the intersection of Mountain View Avenue/ Barton Road from two left turn lanes, two through lanes and one exclusive right turn lane in the eastbound direction and one left turn lane, two through lane and an exclusive right turn lane in the westbound direction to include the following geometrics:

Eastbound: Two left turn lanes. Two through lanes and a shared through and right turn lane. No additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

Westbound: One left turn lane. Two through lanes and a shared through and right turn lane. No additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

Also, provide protected-permissive phase to the northbound and southbound left turns.

**TRANS-7:** Construct an exclusive westbound left turn lane at the intersection of California Street/I-10 WB ramps to include the following geometrics (existing condition includes one shared left and through lane and one right turn lane):

Westbound: One left turn lane. One shared left and through lane. One right turn lane. Additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

**TRANS-8:** Install a traffic signal at the intersection of Bryn Mawr Avenue – Project Driveway / Redlands Boulevard to include the following geometrics:

Northbound: One shared left-through-right turn lane.
Southbound: One shared left-through-right turn lane.
Eastbound: One left turn lane. One through lane. One shared through and right turn lane.
Westbound: One left turn lane. One through lane. One shared through and right turn lane.

**TRANS-9:** Construct an exclusive northbound left turn lane at the intersection of California Street/ Redlands Boulevard to include the following geometrics (existing condition includes one shared left, through and right turn lane):

Northbound: One left turn lane. One shared through and right turn lane. Additional right-of-way will be required to implement this mitigation measure.

Also, provide protected phasing for the northbound and southbound left turns. Provide overlap phasing for the westbound right turn movement. Loma Linda General Plan has identified the necessity to realign the two streets and eliminate the current offset configuration.

**TRANS-10:** Sight distance at the Project entrance roadway should be reviewed with respect to standard City of Loma Linda sight distance standards at the time of preparation of final grading, landscape and street improvement plans.

# 6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The analysis performed in this EA concludes that there would be no significant adverse impact, either individually or cumulatively, to the human environment, provided mitigation measures and commitments consisting of best management practices and all appropriate, required and applicable regulatory compliance measures described in this EA are fully implemented. Therefore, this EA concludes that a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is appropriate and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

# 7.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

Albert A. Webb Associates, Planning and Environmental Services Department

Sonya Hooker, Director of Planning and Environmental Services
Meenaxi R. Panakkal, AICP, Senior Planner
Melissa Perez, Associate Environmental Planner
Ryan Leonard, Assistant Environmental Analyst
Lisa Lemoine, Associate Environmental Technician

# 8.0 REFERENCES CITED

The following documents were referred to as general information sources during preparation of this EA. They are referenced in the EA by the acronyms shown at the beginning of each reference:


AMEC(a) AMEC Environmental & Infrastructure, Inc. *Biological Resources Assessment*, May 18, 2012. (Appendix B).

AMEC(b) AMEC Environmental & Infrastructure, Inc. *Focused Survey for Burrowing Owl*, August 23, 2012. (Appendix B).

AQMP South Coast Air Quality Management District, *2007 Air Quality Management Plan*, June 2007. (Available at http://www.aqmd.gov/aqmp/07aqmp/index.html, accessed May 21, 2012.)

CCR California Code of Regulations*, Title 22*, (Available at http://www.ccld.ca.gov/pg555.htm*,* accessed April 27, 2012.)

CDC California Department of Conversation, Division of Mines and Geology. (Available at http://www.conservation.ca.gov/Index/Pages/Index.aspx, accessed on April 30, 2012.)

CDR(a) California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery*, Solid Waste Characterization Database, Waste Disposal Rates for Business Types* (Available at http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/wastechar/DispRate.htm, accessed on April 24, 2012.)

CDR(b) California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, *Facility/Site Summary Details: San Timoteo Sanitary Landfill (36-AA-0087)*. (Available at http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/SWFacilities/Directory/36-AA-0087/Detail/, accessed on April 24, 2012.)

CEQ 1508 Council on Environmental Quality National Environmental Policy Act, *Regulations 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1508.7*. (Available at http://ceq.hss.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/1508.htm*,* accessed on April 30, 2012.)

CHJ(a) CHJ Consultants, *Geotechnical Investigation, Proposed Veterans Care Facility Southeast of Redlands Boulevard and Enterprise Drive Loma Linda CA*, May 2, 2012. (Appendix D)

CHJ(b) CHJ Consultants, *Phase I Environmental Assessment*, April 27, 2012. (Appendix E)

CHSC California Health and Safety Code, *Chapter 6.11, Sections 25404.3(b) and 25404(c)(6).* (Available at http://www3.calrecycle.ca.gov/, accessed on April 27, 2012.)

CIWMA California Integrated Waste Management Act, 1989. (Available at http://www3.calrecycle.ca.gov/, accessed on April 27, 2012.)

CRM(a) CRM Tech*, Identification and Evaluation of Historic Properties*, May 23, 2012. (Appendix C)

CRM(b) CRM Tech, *Paleontological Resources Assessment Report*, May 21, 2012. (Appendix C)

EO 12898 Executive Order 12898, Federal Register Volume 59, No. 32, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, February 16, 1994. (Available at http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/eo/eo12898.pdf, accessed on April 30, 2012.)

FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency, *Flood Insurance Rate Map – Map Numbers 06071C8703H*, August 28, 2008 and 06071C8711H, August 28, 2008. (Available at http://msc.fema.gov/ , accessed April 23, 2012.)

GP City of Loma Linda, *General Plan,* May 26, 2009. (Available at http://www.lomalinda-ca.gov/pdfs/General%20Plan/May%2009/GP-Adopted-May09.pdf, accessed April 9, 2012.)

MC City of Loma Linda, *Municipal Code*. (Available at http://qcode.us/codes/lomalinda/, accessed April 23, 2012.)

MS4 State of California Regional Water Quality Control Board – Santa Ana Region, *National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for the San Bernardino County Flood Control District, Order No. R8-2010-0036, NPDES No. CAS618036*,

January 29, 2010. (Available at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/rwqcb8/board_decisions/adopted_orders/orders/2010/10_036_SBC_MS4_Permit_01_29_10.pdf, accessed on April 24, 2012.)

NCA Noise Control Act, 42 *U.S.C. Sections 4901 et seq*. (1972). (Available at http://www.epa.gov/lawsregs/laws/nca.html, accessed on April 27, 2012.)

OMNI Omnitrans, *Bus Route 8*. (Available at http://www.omnitrans.org/routes/list/route8.shtml, accessed April 23, 2012.)

RCRA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, 1992. (Available at http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/LawsRegsPolicies/RCRA.cfm, accessed on April 27, 2012.)

SCDC State of California Department of Conservation – Division of Land Resource Protection, *Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program*, 2008. (Available at fftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/FMMP/pdf/2008/riv08_west.pdf, accessed April 23, 2011.)

USEPA United States Environmental Protection Agency, *Report No. EPA530-R-98-010, Characterization of Building-Related Construction and Demolition Debris in the United States*, June 1998. (Available at, http://www.epa.gov/osw/hazard/generation/sqg/cd-rpt.pdf, accessed April 24, 2012.)

WEBB(a) Albert A. Webb Associates, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Analysis for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Loma Linda Health Care Clinic (HCC) in Loma Linda, CA*, May 23, 2012. (Appendix A)

WEBB(b) Albert A. Webb Associates, *Traffic Impact Analysis, VA Health Care Clinic*, May 23, 2012. (Appendix F)

# 9.0 LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS | |
|---|---|
| AES | Aesthetics |
| AQMP | Air Quality Management Plan |
| Bgs | Below ground surface |
| BIO | Biological Resources |
| BMP | Best Management Practices |
| Caltrans | California Department of Transportation |
| CalVet | California Department of Veterans Affairs |
| CARB | California Air Resources Board |
| CCR | California Code of Regulations |
| CDFG | California Department of Fish & Game |
| CEQ | Council on Environmental Quality |
| CIWMA | California Integrated Waste Management Act |
| CNEL | Community Noise Equivalent Level |
| CO | Carbon monoxide |
| CO2 | Carbon dioxide |
| CR | Cultural Resources |
| CWA | Clean Water Act |
| dB | Decibel |
| dBA | A-Weighted Decibel |
| DTSC | Department of Toxic Substances Control |
| EA | Environmental Assessment |
| EDR | Environmental Data Resources, Inc. |
| EIC | Eastern Information Center |
| EO | Executive Order |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Agency |
| ESA | Endangered Species Act |
| ESA | Environmental Site Assessment |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| FIRM | Flood Insurance Rate Map |
| GEO | Geology/Soils |
| GHG | Greenhouse Gas |
| GP | General Plan |
| HAZ | Hazards/Hazardous Materials |
| HCC | Health Care Clinic |
| HCP | Habitat Conservation Plan |
| HYD | Hydrology/Water Quality |
| I-10 | Interstate 10 |
| JPA | Joint Powers Agreement |
| MBTA | Migratory bird Treaty Act |
| mph | Miles per hour |
| MRZ | Mineral Resources Zones |
| MTCO2 /year | Metric tonnes of carbon dioxide per year |

| | |
|---|---|
| NCA | Noise Control Act |
| NCCP | Natural Communities Conservation Plan |
| NEPA | National Environmental Policy Act |
| NFIP | National Flood Insurance Program |
| NO2 | Nitrogen dioxide |
| NOA | Notice of Availability |
| NOD | Notice of Determination |
| NOP | Notice of Preparation |
| NOX | Oxides of nitrogen |
| NPDES | National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System |
| OEM | Office of Emergency Services |
| OPR | Governor's Office of Planning and Research |
| p. | Page |
| PC | Planned Community |
| PM-10 | Particulate matter 2.5 to 10 microns in diameter |
| PM-2.5 | Particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter |
| pp. | Pages |
| PRC | Public Resources Code |
| R1 | Single Residential |
| RCRA | Resource Conservation Recovery Act |
| ROW | Right-of-Way |
| RWQCB | Regional Water Quality Control Board |
| SCAB | South Coast Air Basin |
| SCAG | Southern California Association of Governments |
| SCAQMD | South Coast Air Quality Management District |
| SCH | State Clearinghouse |
| SF | Square Footage |
| SO2 | Sulfur dioxide |
| SWPPP | Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan |
| TRANS | Transportation/Traffic |
| USACE | Army Corps of Engineers (acronym per agency web site) |
| USDA | United States Department of Agriculture |
| USGS | United States Geologic Survey |
| USGS | United States Geological Survey |
| VA | Veterans Affairs |
| VACRB | Veterans Affairs Clinic Redlands Boulevard |
| VAMC | Veterans Affairs Medical Center |
| VOC | Volatile organic compounds |
| WQMP | Water Quality Management Plan |