COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
"Parks Make Life Better!"
Russ Guiney, Director
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Executive Offices • 433 South Vermont Avenue • Los Angeles, CA 90020-1975 • (213) 738-2961

June 10, 2014

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

APPROVE THE FINAL SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED OPERATIONAL CHANGES AT VIRGINIA ROBINSON GARDENS AND AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO THE FRIENDS OF ROBINSON GARDENS SUPPORT AGREEMENT (SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT 3) (3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

The approval of the recommended actions will adopt the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report and amend the Friends of Robinson Gardens Support Agreement to reflect the proposed operational changes at Virginia Robinson Gardens.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Consider the 1980 Environmental Impact Report as revised by the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the proposed operational changes at Virginia Robinson Gardens together with any comments received during the public review period; certify that the Board has independently considered and reached its own conclusions regarding the environmental effects of the proposed project as shown in the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report; adopt the mitigation finding that there are no feasible mitigation measures within the Board's power that would substantially lessen or avoid any significant effect the proposed project would have on the environment; and determine that the significant adverse effect of the proposed project has either been reduced to an acceptable level or is outweighed by the specific considerations of the project, as outlined in the Environmental Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations, which findings and statement are adopted and incorporated by reference.

2. Authorize the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation to sign Amendment No. 1 to the Friends of Robinson Gardens Support Agreement, No. 010158, dated July 1, 1998, to reflect the

proposed operational changes at Virginia Robinson Gardens.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On June 10, 1980, your Board certified an Environmental Impact Report (1980 EIR) for Virginia Robinson Gardens (Gardens) to accompany the land use change from a single-family estate (residential purposes) to a public open space and garden. The 1980 EIR established a detailed schedule limiting the hours of operation and number of daily visitors allowed at the Gardens project site (Project Site) for guided tours, classes and seminars, and special events, as well as the number of employees at the Project Site. Effectively, the 1980 EIR codified operational regulations for the future use of the Project Site and has served as the governing land use document since that time.

When the 1980 EIR was adopted, the Project Site was most valued as an extension of the plant testing program at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Gardens. However, since the 1980 EIR was certified, the primary objectives of the Gardens have shifted. Today, preservation, programming, and public access are the primary goals of the Project Site. To meet these goals, the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) (Attachment I) includes revisions to the operation and public accessibility of the Project Site, thus requiring modifications to the operational limitations established in the 1980 EIR.

Approval of the recommended actions will allow the Gardens to implement the proposed Operational Changes at the Gardens (Project). In addition, approval of the proposed Project will amend Section 4 of the Friends of Robinson Gardens Support Agreement No. 010158 (Attachment I) to reflect the changes to the days and hours of operation to conform with changes described in the Final SEIR. The proposed operational changes are as follows:

■ Days open to the public: Monday through Saturday, and all holidays, with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

■ Hours for public use: six and a half hours per day; 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

■ Number of patrons in attendance: Maximum of 100 visitors per day with advanced reservations, in any combination of the currently allowed uses (i.e. tours, classes/seminars, commercial filming, etc.).

■ Types of events: Public programs to conform to new day/hours and number of participants allowed; however, subject matter for seminar/classes to be determined at the discretion of the Park Superintendent based on how well classes interpret the historical collections of Mrs. Virginia Robinson. This includes continuation of the use of the site for tours of the grounds for biology, botany, and horticulture groups.

■ Special Uses: Limited to four special events per year, with expanded themes. Themes to be determined at the discretion of the Park Superintendent. Programs must continue to focus on the historical interpretation of the facility, such as the non-living and living collections housed at the facility, the gardens, etc.

■ Parking: All parking requires advanced reservation, as follows:
o Parking required on the property (22 spaces, upper parking lot entrance off Elden Way); no street parking permitted.
o With advanced reservation, allow visitors to walk to the Gardens from nearby public streets, pursuant to street signs; visitors may also walk to the Gardens from public transportation (primarily

buses, but also includes taxi).
o Allow visitors to be dropped off at the entrance to the Gardens (e.g. via the City of Beverly Hills free ride for disabled residents).
o Overflow visitor parking (valet) and staff/volunteer parking allowed on the lower tennis court, accessed from Cove Way (20 cars).

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The proposed recommendations further the Board-approved County Strategic Plan Goals of Operational Effectiveness (Goal 1), Fiscal Sustainability (Goal 2), and Integrated Services Delivery (Goal 3) by enhancing education and enjoyment of the general public through the operational changes at the Gardens in the Third Supervisorial District.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The extended operating hours for the Gardens will result in additional costs, which are estimated at a total of $219,000. Staffing, equipment, and supplies will need to be augmented for tours and maintenance enhanced by the extended hours. The Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) will explore available funding resources for these additional costs.

OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT

Based on the recommended actions, the Department anticipates additional one-time costs of approximately $70,000 for maintenance vehicle, maintenance equipment, and a passenger van for tram service; and ongoing costs of approximately $149,000 for recreation staff, maintenance personnel, uniforms, and supplies. Based on available funding resources, the Department will include a funding adjustment in the Supplemental Changes to the Fiscal Year 2014-15 Budget. The extended operating hours and days for the Gardens will not be implemented until funding in the total amount of $219,000 is confirmed by the Chief Executive Office.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

County Counsel has reviewed and approved this letter and the attached Final SEIR and Amendment No. 1 to the Friends of Robinson Gardens Support Agreement No. 010158 as to form.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The Department, on behalf of the County, as lead agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), conducted an Initial Study of the proposed Project and determined that a SEIR was necessary for the Project. A Draft SEIR, Final SEIR, and Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations (Attachment II) have been prepared for the Project pursuant to CEQA (Cal. Pub. Res. Code 21000, et seq.).

A Notice of Availability of the Draft SEIR was advertised for public review in the Beverly Hills Weekly during the week of September 20 through 26, 2012, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21092, and posted at the Registrar Recorder/County Clerk, pursuant to Section 21092.3. Copies of the Draft SEIR for public review were located at the Department of Parks and Recreation, 510 South Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90020, and the Beverly Hills Public Library, 444 North Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Notices regarding the availability of the Draft SEIR were also mailed to over 750 homeowners and occupants within a half mile radius of the Gardens. A total of 35

comment letters were received from the public, including 33 residents, the City of Beverly Hills, and the Native American Heritage Commission. All comments received and responses to those comments are included in the Final SEIR. Responses to the comments were sent to the two public agencies mentioned above, pursuant to Section 21092.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines. A Statement of Overriding Considerations is provided with respect to the significant and unavoidable traffic impact on Saturdays. The benefits and value of the Project described above, compared to the significant impact, after all feasible mitigation has been proposed, would be weighed by the decision makers. Conforming changes in the operational schedule are contained in Amendment No. 1 (Attachment III) to the Friends of Robinson Gardens Support Agreement No. 010158.

The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of the proceedings upon which your Board's decision is based in this matter is the Department of Parks and Recreation, 510 South Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90020.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) has determined that, for purpose of the assessment of CEQA filing fees, Section 711.4(c) of the DFW Code, the Project has no potential effect on fish, wildlife, and habitat, and does not require payment of a CEQA filing fee. The “CEQA Filing Fee No Effect Determination Form” was approved by DFW on September 27, 2012. Upon your Board's adoption of the Final SEIR, the Department will file a Notice of Determination in accordance with Section 21152(a) of the California Public Resources Code, and pay the required filing and processing fees with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk in the amount of $75.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Approval of these actions will not impact any current services and programs.

CONCLUSION

Please instruct the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board to return two adopted copy of this action to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Should you have any questions, please contact Joan Rupert at (213) 351-5126 or jrupert@parks.lacounty.gov, Julie Yom at (213) 351-5127 or jyom@parks.lacounty.gov, Kasey Dizon at (213) 738-2986 or kdizon@parks.lacounty.gov, or Kaye Michelson at (213) 738-2955 or kmichelson@parks.lacounty.gov.

Respectfully submitted,

RUSS GUINEY

Director

RG:JAR:JY:tls

c: Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors

ATTACHMENT I

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

PROPOSED OPERATIONAL CHANGES TO THE VIRGINIA ROBINSON GARDENS

Final Supplemental EIR

Prepared for
Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation
510 South Vermont Avenue, Room 201
Los Angeles, California 90020

Prepared by
Atkins
12301 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 430
Los Angeles, California 90025

May 2014

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INTRODUCTION TO THE FINAL SUPPLEMENTAL EIR

CEQA REQUIREMENTS

Before approving a project that may cause a significant environmental impact, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires the Lead Agency to prepare and certify a Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR). In the case of the proposed project at Virginia Robinson Gardens, the Final EIR would be in the form of a Final Supplemental EIR (FSEIR). The contents of a Final SEIR are specified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15132, which states that:

> The Final EIR shall consist of:
>
> (a) The Draft EIR or a revision of the Draft EIR.
>
> (b) Comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR either verbatim or in summary.
>
> (c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR.
>
> (d) The responses of the Lead Agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process.
>
> (e) Any other information added by the Lead Agency.

The County of Los Angeles as Lead Agency must also provide each public agency that commented on the Draft SEIR with a copy of County's response to those comments at least 10 days before certifying the Final SEIR. In addition, the County may also provide an opportunity for members of the public to review the Final SEIR prior to certification, though this is not a requirement of CEQA.

PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

The Draft SEIR for the Proposed Operational Changes to Virginia Robinson Gardens Project (proposed project) was circulated for review and comment by the public, agencies, and organizations for a 30-day public review period that began on September 13, 2012, and was set to conclude on October 12, 2012. In response to the Draft SEIR, 35 written letters were received during the review period – one from a state agency, one from a local agency, and 33 from private individuals.

CONTENTS AND ORGANIZATION OF THE FINAL SEIR

This Final SEIR is composed of two volumes. They are as follows:

Volume I — **Draft SEIR**—This volume describes the existing environmental conditions in the project area and in the vicinity of the proposed project, and analyzes potential impacts on those conditions due to the proposed project; evaluates cumulative impacts that would be caused by the proposed project in combination with other past, present, and future projects or growth that could occur in the region; and analyzes growth-inducing impacts. No potentially significant and unavoidable impacts were identified with respect to the proposed project; accordingly, no mitigation measures were proposed. Text revisions to the Draft SEIR resulting from corrections of minor errors and/or clarification of items are identified in Volume V, as described below. The Draft SEIR is incorporated by reference into the Final SEIR.

Volume II **Final SEIR (Text Changes and Responses to Comments)**—This volume contains an explanation of the format and content of the Final SEIR; all text changes to the Draft SEIR; a complete list of all persons, organizations, and public agencies that commented on the Draft SEIR; copies of the comment letters received by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation on the proposed project; and the Lead Agency's responses to these comments. As stated above, the Draft SEIR is incorporated by reference into the Final SEIR.

USE OF THE FINAL SEIR

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15088(a) and 15088(b), the lead agency must evaluate comments on environmental and CEQA-related issues received from persons who reviewed the Draft SEIR and must prepare written responses to each of these comments. The Final SEIR allows the public and the County of Los Angeles an opportunity to review the response to comments, revisions to the Draft SEIR, and other components of the SEIR, prior to the County Board of Supervisor's decision on the project. The Final SEIR serves as the environmental document to support approval of the proposed project, either in whole or in part.

After completing the Final SEIR, and before approving the project, the Lead Agency must make the following three certifications as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15090:

- That the Final SEIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA
- That the Final SEIR was presented to the decision-making body of the Lead Agency, and that the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information in the Final SEIR prior to approving the project
- That the Final SEIR reflects the Lead Agency's independent judgment and analysis

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a), if an EIR that has been certified for a project identifies one or more significant environmental effects, the lead agency must adopt "Findings of Fact." For each significant impact, the lead agency must make one of the following findings:

1. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the EIR.
2. Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.
3. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the final EIR.

Each finding must be accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for the finding. In addition, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(d), the agency must adopt, in conjunction with the findings, a program for reporting on or monitoring the changes that it has either required in the project or made a condition of approval to avoid or substantially lessen environmental effects. These measures must be fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other measures. This program is referred to as the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP). However, there were no feasible mitigation measures to reduce the Saturday traffic impact to a less than significant level, therefore there are no

mitigation measures for this project. Further, a Statement of Overriding Considerations is necessary to meet the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15093(b).

CHANGES TO THE DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL EIR

Text changes are intended to clarify or correct information in the Draft SEIR in response to comments received on the document, or as initiated by the Lead Agency staff. Revisions are shown in Section 9.2 (Text Changes) as excerpts from the Draft SEIR text, with a ~~line through~~ deleted text and a double underline beneath inserted text. In order to indicate the location in the Draft SEIR where text has been changed, the reader is referred to the page number of the Draft SEIR as published on September 12, 2012.

TEXT CHANGES

This section includes revisions to text, by Draft SEIR section, that were initiated either by Lead Agency staff or in response to public comments. All changes appear in order of their location in the Draft SEIR.

Contents, page iv, Appendices

Appendices

Appendix A Air Quality Modeling
Appendix B CNDDB Search Results
Appendix C Historic Resources Memorandum
Appendix D Greenhouse Gas Emissions Calculations
Appendix E Noise Modeling
Appendix F Traffic Impact Analysis [revised]
Appendix G Virginia Robinson Gardens Infeasibility Analysis of Traffic Mitigation Memo

"Introduction" section, page 4, Table 1

Table 1 Comparison of Existing and Proposed Operations

Limitation	*Current Operating Schedule*	*Proposed Operating Schedule*
Days Open to the Public	■ Tuesday to Friday; 4 days per week ■ Closed on holidays	■ ~~Tuesday~~ Monday to Saturday; ~~5~~ 6 days per week ■ Closed Sunday ■ Open on holidays, with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, and New Years Day. Generally, operating hours would follow the County holiday schedule meaning, for example, that if a holiday falls on a Sunday and is observed on a Monday, Virginia Robinson Gardens would be closed on Sunday and open on Monday.
Hours for Public Use	■ 6 hours per day (9:30 AM to 3:30 PM)	■ ~~8~~6.5 hours per day (9:30 AM to ~~5:30~~4:00 PM)
Number of Patrons in Attendance	■ With advanced reservations: > 100 visitors per day for public tours; OR > 80 visitors per day for classes/seminar or commercial filming	■ With advanced reservations: > 100 visitors per day for docent tours, seminar/classes, or commercial filming (video only, no motion picture) or a combination of any of these activities

Table 1 Comparison of Existing and Proposed Operations

Limitation	*Current Operating Schedule*	*Proposed Operating Schedule*
Types of Events	■ Educational programs to include special tours of the grounds for biology, botany, and horticulture groups, with related classes and seminars	■ Public programs to conform to new day/hours and number of participants allowed; however, subject matter for seminar/classes to be determined at the discretion of the Superintendent based on how well the classes interpret the historical collections at the facility. Also to include tours of the grounds for biology, botany, and horticulture groups
Commercial Filming	■ Allowed Tuesday–Friday between the hours of 9:30 AM and 3:30 PM (6 hours/day) when no tours or other events are scheduled	■ Commercial filming would conform to the restrictions listed ~~above~~in this document
Special Uses	Special uses are limited to two per year, currently consisting of: ■ Patron Party (7:00 PM to 12:00 AM) attended by approximately 250 guests for a sit-down dinner/dance ■ Garden Tour (10:00 AM to 4:00 PM) attended by approximately 675 guests, staggered throughout this time period For special uses, there are no restrictions on the number of guests or hours/day of operations; however, tickets are sold to regulate the number of visitors to assure safety and a quality experience. Additionally, the event ~~must comply~~ voluntarily complies with city ordinances, which require no amplified music after 10:00 PM, and valet service must obtain city parking permits for use of public streets to avoid overlapping events with surrounding neighbors.	Special uses limited to ~~six~~ four per year, with expanded themes to include, but not be limited to: ■ Extend Garden Tour to two consecutive days to allow greater overall attendance ■ Offer public tour in the evening with a meal served with or without tables ■ Offer public tours for donors during daylight hours featuring seasonal aspects of the garden or recent restoration projects ■ Offer performing arts in the garden, such as classical music, theatre, or poetry readings ■ Offer temporary exhibits to feature and interpret the many artifacts in the collections at Virginia Robinson Gardens For special uses, theme would be determined at the discretion of the Superintendent. Programs must continue to focus on the historical interpretation of the facility, such as the non-living and living collections housed at the facility, the gardens, etc. For special uses, there are no restrictions on the number of guests or hours/day of operations; however, tickets are sold to regulate the number of visitors to assure safety and a quality experience. Additionally, the event voluntarily complies with city ordinances, which require no amplified music after 10:00 pm, and valet service must obtain city parking permits for use of public streets to avoid overlapping events with surrounding neighbors.
Parking	■ With advanced reservations: > Parking required on the property (20 spaces available) > No street parking is permitted > Even with advanced reservations visitors are not allowed to walk on public sidewalks to reach the garden or be dropped off at front gate	■ With advanced reservations: > Parking required on the property (22 spaces, upper parking lot, entrance off Elden Way) > No street parking permitted, including along Elden Way. Further, a sign will be posted on the property indicating that no parking on Elden Way is allowed for visitors > With advanced reservation, allow visitors to walk to the gardens from nearby public streets pursuant to street signs; visitors could also walk to the gardens from public transportation (primarily buses, but also to include taxi) > ~~With limited exceptions, a~~Allow visitors to be dropped off at the entrance of the gardens (e.g., via the City of Beverly Hills free ride for disabled residents) ~~> With limited exception, allow street parking, if a vehicle does not fit through driveway gate or porte cochere~~ ■ Overflow visitor parking (valet) and staff/volunteer parking allowed on the lower tennis court, accessed from Cove Way (20 cars)

SOURCE: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (2012).

"Introduction" section, page 6, "Site Access, Circulation, and Parking" section, fourth and fifth paragraphs

Per the current operations of the Virginia Robinson Gardens, patrons must park on site; no public, on-street parking is allowed for visitors. As shown on Figure 2, …

Elden Way is the only roadway in the vicinity that provides unrestricted on-street parking. … Parking on site is thus a functional requirement (rather than an environmental requirement). However, a sign will be posted on the property indicating that no parking along Elden Way is allowed for visitors.

"Introduction" section, page 9, "Days of the Week" section, second paragraph

The proposed project would ensure that the Virginia Robinson Gardens are available for visitation ~~5~~6 days a week, ~~Tuesday~~ Monday through Saturday. Further, the facility would be open on holidays, with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, and New Years Day. …

"Introduction" section, page 9, "Hours of Use" section, second paragraph

The proposed project would expand the daily operating hours to ~~8~~6.5 hours per day, consistent with typical working hours, from 9:30 AM to ~~5:30~~4:00 PM. Accordingly, the hours of use would not substantially conflict with the surrounding neighborhood's residential functions. The operating hours would also be expanded to include both Monday and Saturday. The change in operating hours would meet the primary goals of the Virginia Robinson Gardens by increasing public access and allowing daily docent tours to begin and end later in the afternoon (however, the number of patrons daily would remain the same). Also, this change would provide greater flexibility for educational programming, as courses could begin and end later in the day, thereby serving a wider audience. Additionally, this change would enable more working families to enjoy the facility on Saturdays.

"Introduction" section, page 10, "Number of Patrons" section, last paragraph

This change would not alter the existing maximum number of visitors on site daily (100) but would allow greater flexibility for the Virginia Robinson Gardens to provide programming that meets public interests while simultaneously meeting the goal of greater site accessibility. For example, under the proposed project, a 49-member class/seminar could be offered in the morning and a 51-person tour in the afternoon. However, under current operations, if both a tour and a class/seminar are offered in the same day, the total number of visitors is restricted to 50 people per tour at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM or 100 visitors per day, or if a seminar or luncheon is scheduled, visitation is restricted to 80 persons. All public visitations would continue to require advanced reservations and parking on site. The maximum number of daily visitors (100) excludes any staff or security on site.

"Introduction" section, page 11, "Special Uses" section, first full paragraph

Under the proposed project, special uses at the site would be increased to ~~six~~ four events annually. The themes of the special uses would be expanded, at the discretion of the property Superintendent, but would continue to focus on the cultural and historical interpretation of the Virginia Robinson Gardens. Example themes could include the following:

"Introduction" section, page 11, "Parking" section

Currently, an advanced reservation is required for parking to ensure that all visitors are able to park on site. No street parking is permitted by visitors. Further, visitors cannot arrive to the site by foot and cannot be dropped off at the front gate (e.g., by taxi).

Under the proposed project, an advanced parking reservation would continue to be required to ensure that visitors park on site to the greatest extent possible; street parking by visitors would continue to be prohibited. ~~The sole exception would be to allow single vehicles to park in the Elden Way cul-de-sac if they do not fit through the driveway gate or the 8-foot-by-8-foot porte cochere.~~ A sign will be posted on the property indicating that no parking along Elden Way is allowed for visitors. Additionally, with advanced reservations, visitors would be allowed to arrive at the site on foot or be dropped off at the gate. This would support the current trend of visitors from the adjacent neighborhood walking to the site, as well as the current social promotion of the use of public transportation and alternative modes of transportation (such as taxis). An analysis of available off-site parking options was prepared as part of the proposed project and can be found in Appendix G of this document.

"Environmental Factors Potentially Affected" section, page 16, first paragraph/table

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture/Forestry Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Geology/Soils
☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Hazards/Hazardous Materials	☐ Hydrology/Water Quality
☐ Land Use/Planning	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise
☐ Population/Housing	☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation
~~☐~~ ☒ Transportation/Traffic	☐ Utilities/Service Systems	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

"Determination" section, page 16, fourth bullet

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☒ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "significant impact", "potentially significant impact," or "less than significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been

adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. A SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects *(a)* have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and *(b)* have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

"Environmental Analysis" Section I (Aesthetics), page 49, third full paragraph

The proposed project would continue to maintain and preserve the Virginia Robinson Gardens and its historic structures and gardens, which is key to maintaining the current aesthetic conditions of the area. The proposed project would not construct new buildings, alter existing buildings, or alter the visual aspects of the site in any way. As such, the proposed project would not degrade the visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings. However, the proposed project would allow visitors to walk to the gardens from nearby residences or public transit stops (Los Angeles Metro). ~~With limited exception, the proposed project would allow visitors to park on the street when a vehicle cannot fit down the narrow, single-lane driveway or through the narrow porte cochere.~~ The movement of visitors through the surrounding neighborhood ~~and the potential for a limited number of parked cars along Eden Way~~ would create a new, short-term, visual element to the project area. However, as Elden Way is the only street in the surrounding neighborhood with unrestricted parking, the cul-de-sac frequently contains construction and landscaping vehicles parked by workers at estates on the surrounding streets. ~~As such, the infrequent (and prearranged) parking of a vehicle on Elden Way associated with the Virginia Robinson Gardens would not change the visual characteristics of the streetscape.~~ No ~~more~~ additional cars will be allowed to park on the street under the proposed project than are currently allowed. ~~The only potential difference is that some of those cars will be patrons of Virginia Robinson Gardens and not just other visitors to the neighborhood. Further, due to the short-term and minor nature of this new visual element, the proposed project~~ As such, the proposed project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the project area, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

"Environmental Analysis" Section I (Aesthetics), page 50, first paragraph

The proposed project does not include any new permanent sources of light or glare on the project site. … Although the proposed project would increase special events from two per year to ~~six~~ four per year, most of these events would occur during daytime hours, such Garden Tours, public tours for donors, performing arts, and temporary exhibits. …

"Environmental Analysis" Section I (Aesthetics), page 50, third paragraph

Currently, visitors are not allowed to park on the street ~~and walk into the project site, but with the proposed project, limited, prearranged street parking would be allowed if a vehicle does not fit through the narrow, single-lane driveway or through the narrow porte cochere. As such, a limited number of cars associated with the proposed project could be parked infrequently on the adjacent residential streets~~; this would continue under the proposed project.along Elden Way would be restricted for visitors. Further, a sign

would be posted on the property indicating this restriction. Light could reflect off of visitor car windows parking on site and create glare on surrounding residential properties. However, this impact would be temporary, as cars associated with the proposed project site would ~~not usually be permitted to park on the street for daily operations and visitors would be required to leave the site by 5:30 PM daily~~ be parking on site and only along Elden Way as they approach for entrance. Further, the proposed project would not change the amount of allowable street parking in the project area. Under the proposed project, no more cars would be allowed to park on the street than are currently allowed. ~~The only change from existing conditions would be that some cars parked along streets leading to the project site would be patrons of Virginia Robinson Gardens, in addition to other visitors to the neighborhood.~~ Because no new parking would be created on or off the project site, no additional vehicles would be able to park on the street and light and glare associated with parked cars would remain largely the same as conditions currently.

"Environmental Analysis" Section III (Air Quality), page 54, third paragraph

Table 2 (Criteria Pollutant Emissions [lbs/day]) shows the results of the criteria pollutant analysis. The emissions calculations factor in the proposed increase in days of operation per week (from 4 days to ~~5~~6 days) and the increase of special events per year (from two events to ~~six~~ four events). The minor change in site operations results in additional operational emissions on an annual basis; however, these air quality emissions are well below the SCAQMD thresholds of significance (less than 1 percent of each threshold). Further, it is important to note that the daily emissions and the single-event emissions would remain the same as existing, because the same number of people would be permitted to access the site during these times. The minor change in criteria pollutant emissions occurs over the course of the year with ~~one~~ two additional days per week and ~~four~~ two additional special events per year. Further, air quality emissions and associated impacts are based on a per-day emission level and threshold. As such, proposed project is not anticipated to violate any air quality standard or to contribute significantly to an existing air quality violation and would result in a *less-than-significant* impact.

"Environmental Analysis" Section III (Air Quality), pages 55 to 56, "CO Hotspot Analysis" section

A carbon dioxide (CO) "hot spot," or area of high CO concentration, can occur at traffic congested roadway intersections as a result of accumulating vehicle emissions. CO concentrations must be calculated for study intersections when an increase of traffic from the implementation of a proposed projected causes an intersection to operate at level of service (LOS) D or worse. The proposed project is anticipated to increase vehicle trips to the project site by approximately 3,000 annually, or a minimal daily average of 15 vehicle trips. The proposed project would extend the daily operating hours into the ~~evening~~ later afternoon (~~5:30~~4:00 PM). Although not anticipated, this analysis conservatively assumes that all 15 trips would occur during the PM peak hour commute. However, even if all 15 vehicle trips would use the same intersections within that peak hour, the minimal increase of 15 trips would not adversely impact the roadway's level of service (refer to Section XVI [Transportation/Traffic] for further information regarding LOS calculations and impacts). Therefore, the proposed project would not result in an acute buildup of CO at roadway intersections (or other locations) on a daily basis.

The proposed project also includes the increase of special uses at the project site from two to ~~six~~ four annually. However, a CO hotspot is triggered only when roadway levels of service are degraded

such that vehicles become backed up, resulting in the accumulation of vehicle emissions. The characteristics of the proposed special uses (i.e., number of attendees, valet operations, etc.) would not change substantially from the two events that are held annually; therefore, the number of vehicles arriving at the site at any one time (or on any given day) would not increase. Further, attendees are anticipated to arrive at the site and deliver their vehicle to a valet who will park their cars immediately, which is consistent both with current conditions for the project site, as well as with the neighborhood, where large estate events are held regularly. Valet service would ensure that vehicles arriving at the site would not remain idling and would not contribute to a CO hotspot. As such, the addition of ~~four~~ two events annually would not affect the potential for the proposed project to result in a CO hotspot. The proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact with respect to localized CO concentrations.

"Environmental Analysis" Section III (Air Quality), page 56, "Toxic Air Contaminant Analysis" section, third paragraph

The proposed project includes the extension of daily operating hours and the increase of special events at the site by ~~four~~ two (for a new total of ~~six~~four) annually. The proposed project is anticipated to result in approximately 15 additional daily trips in the project area, which would not result in the generation of any considerable TACs and, therefore, would not have the potential to impact nearby sensitive receptors. Conversely, the proposed project, as a park/botanical garden, is not specifically considered by the County or SCAQMD to be a sensitive receptor. Regardless, the proposed project is in a predominantly residential area and, therefore, is not located within 1,000 feet of any identified land use type identified as a potential TAC emitter. Further, the proposed project is not located within 500 feet of a high-volume roadway. Therefore, the project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact with respect to the generation of or proximity to TAC emissions.

"Environmental Analysis" Section IV (Biological Resources), page 59, last paragraph

The proposed project does not include construction or land alteration activities that could result in the removal of existing vegetation or the addition of new vegetation at the project site. Although the proposed project would increase the number of visitors per week (due to the additional days of operation) and the number of special uses, all precautions that are currently in place to protect the integrity of the structures and gardens would be retained and adhered to, such that the existing vegetation remains undisturbed. Common wildlife will continue to benefit from the habitat that the gardens provide, and the biological functions and values associated with the existing environment will be conserved and even enhanced with implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not have the potential to adversely affect sensitive or special-status species, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

"Environmental Analysis" Section IV (Biological Resources), page 61, third paragraph

The garden, arboretum, and associated trees at the project site could provide temporary dispersal and foraging habitat for migratory birds. However, the proposed project would not involve removal or disturbance of any trees, shrubs, or other vegetation on the project site that could be used by birds and other wildlife species. Therefore, no direct impacts or loss of habitat would occur as a result of project implementation. Further, the proposed project includes the maintenance and preservation of the gardens as a resource that could result in a beneficial impact to wildlife. Although the proposed project would

increase the number of visitors to the site on a weekly basis due to the addition of ~~one~~ two operational days weekly, the visitor activities would not require encroachment into garden habitat and would continue to be non-invasive to the existing environment, avoiding indirect impacts. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not have an adverse affect on migratory birds and other wildlife species potentially moving through the area, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact on migratory wildlife.

"Environmental Analysis" Section V (Cultural Resources), page 64, third full paragraph

The proposed project would expand hours of operation, increase the number of visitors at the site on a weekly basis (by adding ~~one~~ two additional operational days weekly), revise the types of daily operational uses permitted on the property, and increase the number of special uses permitted at the site. The proposed project would not involve changes to the physical environment, such as alterations to the existing structures or gardens on the project site. The expanded operating hours and increased events would not impact the property and would be consistent with historical preservation objectives. Similarly, the proposed changes to public accessibility would not result in alterations to the site itself and no additional facilities would be constructed on site or in the vicinity that would negatively impact the property's integrity of setting.

"Environmental Analysis" Section V (Cultural Resources), page 64, fourth full paragraph

Currently, operations at the project site focus on biology, botany, and horticulture with limited interpretation of the history of the property itself or its role in early development in Beverly Hills. … In addition, this proposed change would support local historic preservation efforts in compliance with goals outlined in the County of ~~Beverly Hills~~ Los Angeles General Plan Policy C/NR 14.5, which serves to promote public awareness of the County's historic, cultural, and paleontological resources. As the project site is owned by the County, actions are not subject to the requirements of the City of Beverly Hills. However, the proposed project is in accordance with the City of Beverly Hills General Plan Policy HC 2.1. This policy specifically states it intention to develop partnerships for public education on local historic resources with preservation groups such as The Friends of Robinson Gardens.

"Environmental Analysis" Section VI (Geology/Soils), page 68, last paragraph

The project site is located approximately 1 mile from the Santa Monica fault that bisects Beverly Hills. However, the Santa Monica fault has not been active during recorded history. Although an increased number of people would visit the project site on a weekly basis (due to the addition of ~~one~~ two operational days weekly) and annual basis (due to the increased operational days ~~weekly~~ monthly and ~~four~~ two special events) under the proposed project, visitors would not be further exposed to geologic hazards. It is expected that most of these visitors would come from Southern California would not experience an appreciable increase in risk …

"Environmental Analysis" Section VI (Geology/Soils), page 73, third paragraph

However, no ground disturbance would occur under the proposed project that could trigger landslides and no new structures would be added to the property that could increase the exposure to landslides. Although an increased number of people would visit the project site on a weekly basis (due to the addition of ~~one~~ two operational days weekly) and annual basis (due to the increased operational

days ~~weekly~~ monthly and ~~four~~ two special events) under the proposed project, the risk to each visitor due to landslides would not be increased by the proposed project. The existing exposure level would continue to each visitor. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not increase the landslide potential at the project site and would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to exposure of people to landslides.

"Environmental Analysis" Section VI (Geology/Soils), page 74, first full paragraph

The proposed project would not be susceptible to liquefaction or lateral spreading. Subsidence can occur as a result of excessive groundwater or petroleum extractions, causing the ground surface to sink. As groundwater and/or petroleum extraction do not occur and are prohibited at the project site, the project site is not subject to subsidence or collapse. Although, as discussed above, a portion of the project site is vulnerable to landslides, the proposed project would not involve construction activities, modifications to the existing project site, or any changes to the physical environment. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause any geologic unit or soil to become unstable. Although the proposed project would increase the number of visitors at the project site on a weekly basis (due to the addition of ~~one~~ two operational days weekly) and annual basis (due to the increased operational days ~~weekly~~ monthly and ~~four~~ two special events), the risk to each visitor would not change from current conditions, which have not been identified as problematic. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

"Environmental Analysis" Section VIII (Hazards/Hazardous Materials), page 77, first full paragraph

As with most residences and other facilities in the City of Beverly Hills, small consumer quantities of household cleaning and other hazardous materials in the City of Beverly Hills are routinely used, stored, and transported in commercial/retail businesses, educational facilities, hospitals, and households. The proposed project would expand the current operating hours (by up to 0.5~~2~~ hour~~s~~ daily and ~~one~~ two additional days weekly), and, as a result, more visitors would be able to access the Virginia Robinson Gardens, a main objective of the County. Further, more visitors would have access to the site during the ~~four~~ two additional special events annually.

"Environmental Analysis" Section VIII (Hazards/Hazardous Materials), page 81, first partial paragraph

Elden Way is not a street that carries regional traffic that could serve as a major evacuation route.[1] Therefore, although traffic in the area would increase slightly as a result of the proposed project, this change would be minimal and would not impact local streets and emergency evacuation routes. In addition, the proposed project would not involve any changes to the on-site uses. Although more events would occur throughout the year (an increase of ~~four~~ two events), attendance at those events would be generally the same. The proposed project would also still only allow a maximum of 100 visitors per day for non-special-

[1] City of Beverly Hills, *City of Beverly Hills General Plan*, Circulation Element, Map CIR1 (Streets Carrying Regional Traffic), http://www.beverlyhills.org/services/planning_division/land_use_n_zoning/general_plan/genplan.asp (accessed June 26, 2012).

use events. Therefore, the proposed project would not interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan, resulting in ***a less-than-significant*** impact.

"Environmental Analysis" Section VIII (Hazards/Hazardous Materials), page 81, last paragraph

The project site is in the VHFHSZ and includes dense vegetation that could propagate a fire. However, Fire Station #2, located at 1100 Coldwater Canyon Drive, is approximately 0.5 mile from the project site and would respond in the case of a wildland fire. Further, the project site meets, and the proposed project would meet, all applicable regulations related to fire safety. Although the proposed project would increase the number of visitors to the site weekly (due to increased daily hours and ~~one~~ two additional operational days weekly) and annually (due to ~~four~~ two additional special events), the risk to each visitor due to wildland fires would not change as a result of the proposed project. The proposed project would not introduce a new use into a wildland fire zone and would not increase the maximum number of people at the site at any given time. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact due to the exposure of people to wildland fire hazards.

"Environmental Analysis" Section IX (Hydrology/Water Quality), page 85, third full paragraph

While the proposed project would increase visitation to the project site on a weekly basis (due to the increase in daily hours and the additional operational days weekly) and annually (due to the increase of ~~four~~ two special events), the project would not result in a substantial water demand that would require MWD to obtain more water resources from groundwater sources (refer to Section XVII [Utilities/Service Systems] for further information regarding project-related water demand). Further, the proposed project would not change its existing land use to a use that would deplete groundwater sources. As such, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact to the City's groundwater supplies.

"Environmental Analysis" Section IX (Hydrology/Water Quality), page 86, first full paragraph

As discussed in Section IX(c), the project site is located approximately 0.75 mile east of Benedict Canyon Creek. However, the proposed project would not increase impervious surfaces or change existing conditions in a way that would create additional runoff. Further, the proposed project would not alter any aspect of drainage at the project site. There are existing storm drains along Eld~~i~~en Way and other surrounding streets that serve the project site. The existing storm drains have sufficient capacity to serve the project site, and the proposed project would not increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in any flooding, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

"Environmental Analysis" Section IX (Hydrology/Water Quality), page 88, third full paragraph

The proposed project would not result in the construction of new structures but would increase the number of visitors to the site on a weekly basis (due to an increase in daily operating hours and the addition of ~~one~~ two operational days weekly) and annually (due to the additional of ~~four~~ two special events). Although the project site is located in an area that the City's General Plan considers as susceptible to

potential flooding from the Lower Franklin Canyon Dam, the project site sits on the top of a hill. As such, in the highly unlikely event of dam failure, it is not expected that the project site would experience flooding. Further, the proposed project would not increase the exposure risk to individual visitors. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant loss, injury, or death involving flood due to failure of a dam, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XII (Noise), page 99, second paragraph

The proposed project would not involve construction activities of any kind and, therefore, would not result in short-term construction-related noise impacts. The proposed project would not result in an increase in the maximum number of visitors at the project site each day; therefore, the daily increase in noise levels from activity at the project site would not change. However, the number of days that the project would generate noise would increase (~~one~~ two additional operational days weekly; ~~four~~ two additional special events annually, some of which could occur in the evening hours~~, annually~~). The primary operational component of the project site that increases noise is periodic traffic noise. Noise from tours typically consists of normal, human conservation levels. Noise from events typically consists of conversation and live, and potentially amplified, music until 10:00 PM, consistent with the City of Beverly Hills Noise Ordinance. These sources of operational noise are discussed below.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XII (Noise), page 100, first full paragraph

On public tour days, the site generates up to approximately 50 vehicle trips for both tours. Tours are currently offered four days per week, Tuesday through Friday. Under the proposed project, tours would be offered ~~five~~ six days per week, ~~Tuesday~~ Monday through Saturday. Therefore, ~~one~~ two additional days per week would experience an increase in traffic of 50 trips per day under the proposed project. Large events at the site generate up to 460 vehicle trips per event, assuming a maximum capacity of 700 guests. Two special uses are currently hosted at the site annually; under the proposed project, up to ~~six~~ four special uses would occur annually. Therefore, ~~four~~ two additional events/days per year would experience an increase in traffic of up to approximately 460 trips per day from special use traffic. Trips generated by site staff, volunteers, and the live-in caretaker are included in the traffic volumes without project operation. These trips are part of the ambient condition because they occur whether or not tours and special uses are hosted on the project site on a given day.

The conservative-scenario increase in traffic noise generated by the project site under existing conditions is provided in Table 6 (Existing Site-Generated Increases in Ambient Noise Levels [Year 2012]). As shown in Table 6, calculated noise levels from existing traffic range from 48 to 64 dBA CNEL. These noise levels are consistent with the measured ambient noise levels provided in Table 5, which range from 51 to 69 dBA and also include other sources of noise, including leaf blowers and helicopter flyovers. The conservative-scenario increase in traffic noise generated by the proposed project under future (Year 2014) conditions is provided in Table 7 (Future Site-Generated Increases in Ambient Noise Levels [Year 2014]).[22] Similar to existing conditions, potential increases in noise level in Year 2014 would occur with or without implementation of the proposed project. Implementation of the proposed project would increase the frequency that the increase in daily traffic from site operation would occur.

[22] Although changes proposed for the project site are anticipated to take effect by fall 2013, opening year conditions (future year) were analyzed using year 2014 volumes to yield the most conservative analysis. This assumes that it would take County staff at least a year to put together a full schedule of ~~six~~ four proposed special events.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XII (Noise), pages 102 to 103, last paragraph

As shown in Table 6, public tour days do not result in an increase in ambient noise level on any roadway, with the exception of Elden Way. Tour-generated trips result in a conservative-scenario increase in noise level of 1 dBA CNEL on Elden Way. Generally, 1 to 2 dBA changes are not perceptible. Therefore, ~~one~~ two additional tour days per week would not result in any detectable increase in ambient noise level compared to existing ambient noise levels. On days when special uses are held at the project site, the project site does not generate any increase in noise level on Benedict Canyon Drive, Lexington Road, or Beverly Drive, but does generate increases in noise level of 3 dBA CNEL and 5 dBA CNEL on North Crescent Drive and Elden Way, respectively, which are low-traffic residential streets that do not provide connection to the regional circulation network. In general, a 5 dBA change in community noise levels is noticeable, and a 3 dBA change is the smallest increment that is perceivable by most receivers. Therefore, the increase in noise level on event days may be noticeable; however, the per-event noise would not be different than on special use days that occur twice annually under current conditions. The proposed project would result in ~~four~~ two additional days of special uses, when an increase in traffic noise would potentially be noticeable. However, roadway noise would not exceed 55 dBA and would not result in a significant increase in roadway noise on either North Crescent Drive or Elden Way. Additionally, the calculated noise levels of 50 dBA CNEL and 51 dBA CNEL are within the normally acceptable noise level range for single-family residences. Therefore, the increase in traffic noise as a result of operation of the project site would not result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of applicable noise standards under the existing plus project scenario.

As shown in Table 7, public tour days would not result in an increase in ambient noise level on any roadway in Year 2014, with the exception of a 1 dBA CNEL increase in noise level on Elden Way. Similar to existing conditions, ~~one~~ two additional tour days per week would not result in a detectable increase in ambient noise level compared to future ambient noise levels. On days when special uses are held at the project site, the project site would not generate any increase in noise level on Beverly Drive or Benedict Canyon Drive. A 1 dBA CNEL increase in noise level would occur on Lexington Road; however, this increase in noise level would generally not be perceptible. Similar to existing conditions, special uses would have the potential to generate an increase in noise levels up to 5 dBA CNEL on North Crescent Drive and Elden Way. Therefore, the increase in noise level on special use days may be noticeable. However, roadway noise would not exceed 55 dBA noise levels and would remain within the normally acceptable noise level range for single-family residences. Therefore, the increase in traffic noise as a result of operation of the project site would not result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of applicable noise standards under the Year 2014 scenario.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XII (Noise), pages 103 to 104, last paragraph

Tours of the site do not generate noise levels beyond normal human conversation levels. The noise level for normal conversation is approximately 65 dBA at 3 feet (Caltrans 1998). Existing noise levels on the project site and along Cove Way, Elden Way, and Carolyn Way adjacent to the project site range from 51

to 55 dBA. Noise levels form normal conservation and would not exceed 50 dBA more than 20 feet from the source. Further, tours of the site would typically not reach the project-site boundaries along Carolyn Way based on the terraced topography at the east-northeast side of the property. ~~Parking may be provided for tour-attendees in the future near the lower tennis court, off Cove Way.~~ However, conversational noise levels would not exceed 50 dBA at nearby residences based on the distance between this location and the residences. The only tour~~-~~ conversation that would take place near the Elden Way entrance to the site includes entrance to the site by call box, and a few patrons who might be interested in seeing the front of the Main Residence. This is typical of current conditions and conversational noise levels would not exceed the 50 dBA level at the two adjacent residences based on the spatial separation. Therefore, noise from tours is generally not audible off site over ambient noise levels and does not generate excessive noise levels at any nearby sensitive receptor. An increase in tour operations ~~from~~ to ~~5~~6 days per week from 4 days per week would not result in any exposure to an excessive noise source.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XII (Noise), page 104, third full paragraph

The great lawn is the only area on the project site capable of hosting sit-down events with live music that would concentrate guests in one location. Speech and music noise together generate noise levels up to 64 dBA at 100 feet. The nearest residences to the great lawn are located approximately 150 feet away on Elden Way and Carolyn Way. At this distance, events generate noise levels of up to 61 dBA. Therefore, typical event noise is audible over ambient noise levels. However, the tall, dense landscaping that surrounds the great lawn, as well as the Main Residence structure would help to deaden any sound bleeding onto nearby residences. Implementation of the proposed project would result in ~~four~~ two additional events/days that residents may be exposed to special use noise. Typical special use noise levels would have the potential to exceed the maximum normally acceptable noise level of 60 dBA at the nearest residences. However, noise levels would not exceed the conditionally acceptable noise level of 70 dBA. This noise level limit is intended to protect residences from permanently noisy environments.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XII (Noise), page 105, first partial paragraph

acceptable noise level range for single-family residences, special uses would occur on only ~~four~~ two additional events/days per year, and events would be subject to a discretionary Facility Use Permit, additional events at the project site would not result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of applicable noise standards.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XII (Noise), page 105, second full paragraph

Street parking for public tours and special uses is currently prohibited. Under the proposed project, street parking would continue to be prohibited~~, with the exception of guests who obtain a reservation in advance if parking cannot be made available on site due to vehicle size restrictions~~ for visitors along Elden Way and a sign will be posted on the property indicating as much. Noise sources from cars parked on public streets would potentially include car alarms, door slams, radios, and normal conversation. These sources are generally short-term and intermittent and would be scattered throughout the neighborhood on roadways that allow public parking. Public street parking is currently allowed in the project vicinity~~ and street parking for public tours and events at the project site would not generate any unusual noise sources that would~~

~~differ from existing street parking~~; however, the proposed project would not alter this as street parking on Elden Way by visitors would be prohibited. It should be noted that on-street parking along Elden Way is unrestricted; this is the only stretch of roadway within the vicinity that provides for unrestricted parking. For example, on-street parking along Lexington Road, N Crescent Drive, Cove Way, and Oxford Way is limited to 2-hour parking from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. As such, Elden Way is heavily utilized by construction and landscaping personnel for the estates in the larger vicinity (i.e., north of Sunset Boulevard) for daily long-term, unrestricted parking. Accordingly, even if on-street parking were allowed on Elden Way for patrons of Virginia Robinson Gardens, it is incredibly difficult to find an open parking space during daytime hours along Elden Way. ~~As such, noise levels from an infrequent tour attendee parking on Elden Way would register a greater noise level. Additionally, noises would be different from each other in kind, duration, and location based on tour, class, seminar, etc, so that the overall effects would be separate and in most cases would not affect noise-sensitive receptors at the same time.~~ However, as parking for visitors would be prohibited along Elden Way, the proposed project would not alter the existing noise environment due to on-street parking. Therefore, noise generated from street parking would not result in exposure to an excessive noise source.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XII (Noise), page 106, first partial paragraph

… and silent auctions would generally not be perceptible over existing conditions. Noise from sit-down events with live music and guests concentrated in one location would have the potential to result in noticeable increase in noise levels over ambient conditions. However, these noise levels would be within the conditionally acceptable noise ranges for residential land use and would be subject to a Facility Use Permit, granted by the property Superintendent. Therefore, additional events at the project site would not result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of applicable noise standards. ~~Additionally, occasional street parking would not generate excessive noise.~~ This impact would be ***less than significant***.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XII (Noise), page 106, second full paragraph

The proposed project would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project area. Under the proposed project, the project site would be open to the public ~~two~~ a maximum of 0.5 additional hour~~s~~ per day and ~~one~~ two additional days per week annually. As stated above, this intensity of use would increase traffic noise in the area but would not exceed the thresholds as outlined by the City's General Plan. In addition, the daily on-site noise as a result of public tours, special-use tours, classes, and silent auctions would generally not be perceptible over existing conditions. Special events would occur periodically, no more than ~~six~~ four times per year, but would not contribute to a permanent noise increase in the vicinity. Noise associated with the operation of the proposed project would increase but would be within acceptable levels, would be periodic, and would not be excessive. This impact would be ***less than significant***.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XII (Noise), page 107, first partial paragraph

… the project site would not result in a substantial increase in operational noise levels. Special events would occur sporadically, ~~six~~ four times per year, but would be within the conditionally acceptable noise ranges

for residential land use and would be subject to a Facility Use Permit, granted by the property Superintendent. The proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to periodic increases in ambient noise levels.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XIII (Population/Housing), page 108, third paragraph

The proposed project would modify the existing operating schedule for the Virginia Robinson Gardens but would not increase the number of volunteers/employees at the project site. The hours of operation for the project site would be increased by ~~two~~ a maximum of 0.5 hour~~s~~ per day and ~~extended an~~ two additional days each week (open to the public ~~five~~ six days per week compared to four). The number of allowable visitors per day would remain the same (100 visitors per day); however, the restrictions as to their activities on site would be relieved. As such, the proposed project would not increase the number of daily visitors but would increase the number of visitors at the project site on a weekly basis.

Similarly, the number of attendees at special uses would not increase above the approximately 700 that occurs currently, but the number of special uses would increase on site from two to ~~six~~ four annually under the proposed project. …

"Environmental Analysis" Section XIV (Public Services), page 110, second paragraph

Generally, impacts associated with the provision of fire protection services would occur if a project would result in an increase in demand for fire protection services to the extent that construction of new or expanded fire department facilities is required to maintain existing service levels. Typically, an increase in demand for fire services is associated with a substantial increase in population in a service area or development of a previously undisturbed area requiring entirely new fire services. As described under Section IV (Population/Housing), the proposed project would not result in substantial population growth in the project area. Further, the number of people visiting the site on a daily basis (100 visitors) would not change from existing conditions; rather, the number of days that number of people would be allowed on site would increase by ~~one~~ two (from 4 to ~~5~~6 days per week). Additionally, the number of special uses on the site would increase from two to ~~six~~ four annually; however, the number of per-event attendees would not change substantially from current conditions. The increase in visitors at the project site would be minor, intermittent, and not permanent and would not adversely affect existing service levels. As such, the proposed project would not result in a substantial increase in demand for fire protection services and would not necessitate construction of new or expansion of existing facilities.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XIV (Public Services), page 111, second paragraph

Generally, impacts associated with police protection services would occur if a project would result in an increase in demand for police protection services to the extent that construction of new or expanded facilities is required to maintain existing service levels. Typically, an increase in demand for police protection services is associated with a substantial increase in population in the service area or development of a previously undisturbed area requiring entirely new fire services. As described under Section IV, the proposed project would not result in substantial population growth in the project area. Further, the number of people visiting the site on a daily basis (100 visitors) would not change from existing conditions; rather, the number of days that number of people would be allowed on site would increase by ~~one~~ two (from 4

to ~~5~~6 days per week). Additionally, the number of special uses on the site would increase from two to ~~six~~ four annually; however, the number of per-event attendees would not change substantially from current conditions. The increase in visitors at the project site would be minor, intermittent, and not permanent and would not adversely affect existing service levels. As such, the proposed project would not result in a substantial increase in demand for police protection services that would necessitate construction of new or expansion of existing facilities. The BHPD would have sufficient capacity to accommodate the increase in visitor population associated with the proposed project.[2] Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact on the provision of police protection services in the project vicinity.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XV (Recreation), page 113, last paragraph

One of the primary objectives of the proposed project is to increase the availability of the Virginia Robinson Gardens to the general public by expanding the hours of operation, increasing the allowable themes for classes and seminars, and adding ~~four~~ two additional special events annually. As such, the proposed project would increase the public availability and use of the project site, including the botanical gardens and grounds. The increase in public availability resulting from the proposed project would remain within the original intent and boundaries set forth by the Robinson Will. However, visitors would be subject to the same restrictions that are currently in place for the purpose of protecting the integrity of the project site. As such, the proposed project would not result in the deterioration of the project site and would not contribute to the deterioration of other parks and recreational facilities in the project vicinity. In addition, the proposed project would not include construction of recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on recreation.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVI (Transportation/Traffic), page 114, "Transportation/Traffic" heading, first impact selection box

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and nonmotorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including, but not limited to, intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	~~☐~~ ☒	☐	~~☒~~ ☐	☐

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVI (Transportation/Traffic), page 118, "Approach to Analysis" section, after second full paragraph

In addition to these intersection thresholds, the City of Beverly Hills also maintains thresholds pertaining to impacts on residential or Local streets. These thresholds are based on the existing average daily trips (ADT) and the proposed increase in ADT, by percentage, anticipated from a project. Based on the current ADT along Elden Way, the relevant threshold relates to a roadway with ADT less than 2,000 volume per

[2] Gregg Mader, Email communication with Sergeant, Beverly Hills Police Department (July 16, 2012).

day (vpd) and a significant impact would result if the project increases ADT by 16 percent, or increases peak hour [trips] by 16 percent, or both.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVI (Transportation/Traffic), page 119, "Trip Generation" section, first paragraph

Under existing conditions, the project site generates approximately 40 total vehicle trips per day and approximately 25 round trips per day, which translates to a total of 50 vehicle trips per day. The proposed project would extend operating hours by a maximum of 0.5~~2~~ hour~~s~~ per operating day (until ~~5:30~~4:00 PM daily); extend the weekly operation from four days per week to ~~five~~ six (~~Tuesday~~ Monday to Saturday); and allow for an additional ~~four~~ two special events per year. The proposed project is not projected to result in additional vehicle trips during weekdays, but it would shift the departure time of trips from the project site.

Currently, operation of the project site adds no trips during the analysis peak hour since the visiting hours end at 3:30 PM. Extending the project site hours-of-operation to ~~5:30~~4:00 PM ~~w~~could add approximately 10 trips to the PM peak hour (assuming a worst-case scenario), which extends from 4:45 to 5:45 PM. However, this is a conservative estimate since the peak hour starts well after the closure time of the project site and these trips reflect potential employee or other residual visitor trips. The proposed increase in special events that would be held throughout the year would occur during non-peak hours and will be accompanied by valet parking which would negate any impacts to intersection operations or impacts due to parking issues for these events.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVI (Transportation/Traffic), page 120, "Existing plus Project Conditions" section, after last paragraph

Similarly to the intersection analysis, project-related traffic was added to existing conditions volumes along Elden Way to determine the potential for impact on Local streets. As the proposed project will not change operations substantially during weekdays, the increase in traffic volumes along Elden Way during weekday operation would not be substantial and would not result in an increase that would exceed the City's Local street threshold. However, based on the current ADT of approximately 200 along Elden Way, the additional project trips of approximately 160 on Saturdays would result in an increase greater than the City's threshold of 16 percent, resulting in a significant impact, by percentage. However, this impact would not create an operational impact along Elden Way or the surrounding intersections, as noted above.

In order to reduce this potential impact, project-related trip volumes on Saturdays would have to be reduced below 40 ADT, which would be impractical, operationally infeasible, and would preclude the proposed project from meeting the identified Project Objectives. As such, an analysis of off-site parking opportunities was completed to address the feasibility of reducing the number vehicular trips to the project site on Saturday below 40 to conform to the City's Local street threshold (Appendix G). This analysis included an in-depth study of the potential use of five local parking alternatives including Greystone Mansion and Park, the Beverly Hills Women's Club, City of Beverly Hills parking structures (two), and the use of the Cove Way parking area. In summary, this analysis determined that the use of off-site parking opportunities was not feasible.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVI (Transportation/Traffic), page 122, "Opening Year (2014) plus Project Conditions" section, after last paragraph

Similarly to the intersection analysis, project-related traffic was added to Opening Year condition volumes along Elden Way to determine the potential for impact on Local streets. As the proposed project will not change operations substantially during weekdays, the increase in traffic volumes along Elden Way during weekday operation would not be substantial and would not result in an increase that would exceed the City's Local street threshold. However, based on the anticipated Opening Year ADT along Elden Way, the additional project trips of approximately 160 on Saturdays would result in an increase greater than the City's threshold of 16 percent, resulting in a significant impact, by percentage. However, this impact would not create an operational impact along Elden Way or the surrounding intersections, as noted above.

In order to reduce this potential impact, project-related trip volumes on Saturdays would have to be reduced below 40 ADT, which would be impractical, operationally infeasible, and would preclude the proposed project from meeting the identified Project Objectives. As such, an analysis of off-site parking opportunities was completed to address the feasibility of reducing the number vehicular trips to the project site on Saturday below 40 to conform to the City's Local street threshold (Appendix G). This analysis included an in-depth study of the potential use of five local parking alternatives including Greystone Mansion and Park, the Beverly Hills Women's Club, City of Beverly Hills parking structures (two), and the use of the Cove Way parking area. In summary, this analysis determined that the use of off-site parking opportunities was not feasible.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVI (Transportation/Traffic), page 125, "Conclusion" section

Implementation of the proposed project (under current and future conditions) would not degrade LOS at any of the six study intersections below the thresholds established by the City of Beverly Hills. However, the proposed project would result in an increase of vehicle trips to the project site on Saturdays that would exceed the Local street threshold established by the City of Beverly Hills (an impact would occur only on Saturday). As noted in the impact discussion and in Appendix G, in order to reduce this potential impact, project-related trip volumes on Saturdays would have to be reduced below 40 ADT, which would be impractical, operationally infeasible, and would preclude the proposed project from meeting the identified Project Objectives. An analysis of five off-site parking opportunities was prepared to address the feasibility of reducing the number vehicular trips to the project site on Saturday below 40 to conform to the City's Local street threshold. In summary, this analysis determined that the use of off-site parking opportunities was not feasible. As such, the proposed project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact due to the exceedance of the City of Beverly Hill's Local Street threshold. It should be noted that this impact would not create an operational impact along Elden Way or the surrounding intersections.

Therefore, in accordance with the City's Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact to traffic conditions and intersection functionality and a ***significant*** impact due to the exceedance of the City of Beverly Hills Local Street threshold.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVI (Transportation/Traffic), page 126, last paragraph

The project site is most conveniently accessed by single occupancy vehicle. Currently, visitors are not allowed to arrive at the site on foot or by taxi, and parking on surrounding roadways is prohibited. Under the proposed project, access by multiple modes of transportation would be increased: visitors would be allowed to arrive at the site on foot, having arrived to the neighborhood via public transit~~;~~ and via taxi~~; and, and with advanced reservations, although generally visitor parking would be prohibited on surrounding streets, parking of a vehicle that would not otherwise fit on site would be allowed on Elden Way~~.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVII (Utilities/Service Systems), page 127, third paragraph

The proposed project would modify the operating schedule of the project site by increasing daily operating hours and extending days of operation to ~~five~~ six days per week. However, the number of daily visitors would remain the same as existing (100 people per day). Additionally, the proposed project would allow for an increase of ~~four~~ two "special events" per year. For special uses, visitors utilize restroom facilities on site and VIP portable facilities are arranged for the facility. As such, special uses do not generate a substantial increase in wastewater discharge as much of the services are portable and brought to the site (including water, electricity, and sewage provided by the VIP portable facilities). The increase in operating hours and visitation described above would result in an increase in wastewater discharged from the project site. The increase in wastewater discharge would primarily be caused by additional use of bathroom facilities at the project site over existing conditions. However, the increase in wastewater due to the proposed project would generally be minor.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVII (Utilities/Service Systems), page 128, first paragraph

However, as discussed below in Section XVII(d), the proposed project would result in an increase in water annually of ~~28,160~~41,536 gallons. Assuming an industry standard that the wastewater discharge from a property equals 110 percent of the water demand, the proposed project would result in an increase in wastewater discharge of approximately ~~30,976~~45,690 gallons annually. It is important to note that this is a conservative estimate provided to illustrate the worst-case scenario. According to the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation, the proposed project would not exceed the wastewater limits of the HTP and could be accommodated within existing local infrastructure.[3] Therefore, the plant would be able to adequately treat project-generated sewage in addition to existing sewage, and the treatment requirements of the RWQCB would not be exceeded. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to wastewater treatment requirements and available capacity at the Hyperion Treatment Plant.

[3] Ali Poosti, Written communication from Division Manager, Wastewater Engineering Services Division, City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation, Re: Virginia Robinson Garden – Request for Wastewater Service Information (August 20, 2012).

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVII (Utilities/Service Systems), page 128, second paragraph

As discussed in Sections XVII(a) and (d), the proposed project would result in an increase of approximately ~~30,976~~45,690 gallons of wastewater and ~~28,160~~41,536 gallons of water (demand) annually. These increases would be accommodated within existing entitlements and infrastructure and would not require the expansion of treatment facilities that could cause significant environmental impacts. As such, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact due to the necessity to build new or additional facilities.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVII (Utilities/Service Systems), page 129, second paragraph

Based on utility information provided by the Los Angeles County Parks, for the 2011/12 fiscal year, water usage for both indoor and outdoor facilities at the project site was 634,000 cubic feet (or an average of 0.013 million gallons per day [mgd]). However, the majority of water use at the project site is for irrigation purposes, as there is only one full-time resident (a grounds keeper) and a maximum of eleven staff or volunteers at the project site daily. The proposed project would not change the amount of landscaped area at the project site and, therefore, would have no effect on irrigation water demand. The proposed project would result in a minor and intermittent increase in visitors at the project site due to the addition of ~~2~~ 0.5 hour~~s~~ per operational day, ~~one~~ two additional operational days weekly (Monday through Saturday), and ~~four~~ two additional special use events annually. Additional visitors would cause an incremental increase in demand for water while at the project site primarily associated with bathroom use. For daily use, visitors utilize restroom facilities on site, associated with the existing residence and Pool Pavilion. For special uses, visitors utilize restroom facilities on site and VIP portable facilities are arranged for the facility. As such, special uses do not generate a substantial increase in water demand as much of the services are portable and brought to the site (including water, electricity and sewage provided by the VIP portable facilities). In any event, the proposed project would not result in the need for construction of new facilities at the project site or change the existing land uses. In addition, the proposed project would not induce substantial population growth in the project area. As such, the increase in water demand at the project site would conservatively be based on ~~100~~200 additional people per week (~~5,200~~10,400 visitors annually) and 700 additional visitors per ~~four~~ two additional special uses (~~2,800~~1,400 visitors annually). This would result in an increase in water demand of approximately ~~28,160~~41,436 gallons annually.[32]

[32] *US Energy Policy Act*; *1994 Plumbing Code* (requiring 1.6 GPF); and Vickers, *Handbook of Water Use and Conservation* (2001) (frequency of uses by sex). Assumes 60% women and 40% men; Women use toilet 3 times per each male use. [~~5,200~~10,400 visitors (annually for the additional operational day) x 0.4 men x 1.6 gallons per flush] + [~~5,200~~10,400 visitors (annually for the additional operational day) x 0.6 (for women) x 3 flushes per day x 1.6 gallons per flush] + [~~2,800~~1,400 visitors (annually for special events) x 0.4 men x 1.6 gallons per flush] + [~~2,800~~1,400 visitors (annually for special events) x 0.6 women x 3 flushes per day x 1.6 gallons per flush].

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVII (Utilities/Service Systems), page 131, Table 15

Table 15 Solid Waste Generation

Activity	*Generation Rate*	*Existing (lbs/yr)*[a]	*Proposed Project (lbs/yr)*[b]
Daily Operations (Public Tours and Classes/Seminars)	0.09 ton/acre/yr or 0.493 lb/acre/day	636	~~795~~954
Special Events	120 lbs/event	240	~~720~~480
Total	—	*876*	~~*1,515*~~*1,434*

SOURCE: CalEEMod; Atkins, *San Diego Marriot Marquis and Marina Facilities Improvement and Port Master Plan Amendment Project Draft EIR* (2011).

a. Assumes conservative estimate of 208 operating days (Tuesday–Friday, 52 weeks per year).

b. Assumes conservative estimate of ~~260~~312 operating days (~~Tuesday~~Monday–Saturday, 52 weeks per year), to include holidays with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, and New Years Day.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVII (Utilities/Service Systems), page 132, first paragraph

The proposed project would result in an increase of approximately ~~639~~ 558 pounds of solid waste per year. Given the City's diversion rate of 57 percent, the proposed project would generate a total approximately ~~864~~ 817 pounds of solid waste annually, which would be accommodated by the available capacity at nearby landfills, identified in Table 14.

"Environmental Analysis" Section XVII (Utilities/Service Systems), page 133, second paragraph

The proposed project would not result in new development or a change in existing land use at the project site. Although the proposed project would result in a minor increase in public access to the project site, use of the project site is not energy intensive. Based on utility information provided by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, the project site used approximately 42,190 kilowatt hours (kWh) during the 2011/2012 fiscal year. As described under Sections VIII(f) and (g), the proposed project would result in an approximate ~~25~~50 percent increase in operating days at the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would result in an approximate ~~25~~50 percent increase in energy use over existing conditions. Project-related electricity demand would be approximately ~~52,737.5~~63,285 kWh per year, representing a net increase of ~~10,547.5~~21,095 kWh per year. A similar increase in natural gas demand would result from implementation of the proposed project; project-related natural gas demand would be approximately ~~483,000~~579,600 cubic feet per year (or ~~4,830~~5,796 therms per year), representing a net increase of approximately ~~96,600~~193,200 cubic feet per year (~~966~~1,932 therms per year).

When compared with energy demand at the county level (the County of Los Angeles is within the Southern California Edison service area) the net increase in electricity associated with the proposed project would represent approximately ~~0.000015~~0.00094 percent of the total 67,323 million kWh used by the County.[39] This would be a negligible increase in electricity demand. Similarly, the increase in natural gas demand associated with the proposed project would represent approximately 0.00003 percent of the County's total natural gas usage in 2010. This would also be a negligible increase in natural gas demand.[40]

APPENDIX CHANGES

Appendix C (Historic Resources Memorandum), page 1, first paragraph

In compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as it applies to historic resources, a professional historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) Standards for History and Architectural History evaluated potential effects to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-listed Virginia Robinson Gardens in Beverly Hills, Los Angeles County, California from proposed administrative changes by the property's owner (Figures 1–4). The property is currently operated by the County ~~Arboretum~~ of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, and along with its national designation, is also a California Point of Historical Interest (McAvoy and Heumann 1986). Additionally, though the city of Beverly Hills does not currently maintain a local register of historic resources, the resource is identified as a significant property in the city's General Plan (City of Beverly Hills 2010). Because the proposed project does not involve any construction, demolition, or landscape modifications, the area of potential effects (APE) for the purposes of this evaluation were limited to the current property boundaries (see Figure 5).

Appendix F (Traffic Impact Analysis)

Appendix F (Traffic Impact Analysis) has been revised throughout, so it is included, as revised, in its entirety at the end of this Final SEIR.

Appendix G (Virginia Robinson Gardens Infeasibility Analysis of Traffic Mitigation Memo)

Appendix G (Virginia Robinson Gardens Infeasibility Analysis of Traffic Mitigation Memo) was added as a new appendix so it is included in its entirety at the end of this Final SEIR.

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL EIR

ORGANIZATION OF THE RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

This chapter of the Final SEIR contains all comments received on the Draft SEIR during the public review period, as well as responses to each of these comments. Reasoned, factual responses have been provided to all comments received, with a particular emphasis on significant environmental and CEQA-related issues. Detailed responses have been provided where a comment raises a specific issue; however, a general response has been provided where the comment is relatively general. Although some letters may raise legal or planning issues, these issues do not always constitute significant environmental issues or issues as defined by CEQA. Therefore, the comment has been noted, but no response has been provided. Generally, the responses to comments provide explanation or amplification of information contained in the Draft SEIR.

In total, 35 comment letters regarding the Draft SEIR were received from one state agency, one local agency, and 33 private individuals. Table 10-1 (Comment Letters Received during the Draft SEIR Public Review Period) provides a comprehensive list of comment letters in the order that they are presented in this section.

Table 1 Comment Letters Received during the Draft SEIR Public Review Period

No.	Commenter/Organization	Letter Code	Letter Date	Page Where Comment Begins	Page Where Response Begins
			STATE AGENCY		
1	Native American Heritage Commission	NAH	10/5/2012	28	33
			LOCAL AGENCY		
2	City of Beverly Hills	BEV	10/11/12	34	40
			INDIVIDUALS		
3	Charles Alpert	ALP	10/8/2012	43	47
4	Nancy Blumenfeld	BLU	9/27/2012	59	59
5	Ellisa Bregman	BRE	9/22/2012	60	60
6	Alan Buster	BUS	9/26/2012	61	61
7	Marion Buxton	BUX	9/19/2012	62	62
8	Angela Cohan	COH	9/27/2012	63	63
9	Cynthia Comsky	COM	10/4/2012	64	64
10	Mary deKernion	DEK	9/26/2012	65	65
11	Claudia Deutsch	DEU	10/5/2012	66	66
12	Cynthia Fields	FIE	9/19/2012	67	67
13	Teri Fox-Stayner	FOX	9/18/2012	67	68
14	Barbara Fries	FRI	9/19/2012	68	68
15	Suzanne Gilbert	GIL	9/28/2012	69	69
16	Dorothy Kamins	KAM	9/27/2012	70	70

Table 1 Comment Letters Received during the Draft SEIR Public Review Period					
No.	*Commenter/Organization*	*Letter Code*	*Letter Date*	*Page Where Comment Begins*	*Page Where Response Begins*
17	Iris and Dick Kite	KIT	10/10/2012	71	71
18	Julia Klein	KLE	9/26/2012	72	72
19	Suz Landay	LAN	9/26/2012	73	74
20	Thelma Levin	LEV	9/14/2012	74	74
21	Kathleen Luckard	LUC	9/18/2012	75	75
22	Mike Mc Alister	MCA	10/12/2012	76	76
23	Worthy McCartney	MCC	9/26/2012	77	77
24	Nancy Miller	MIL	9/28/2012	78	79
25	Carol Morava	MOR	9/24/2012	79	79
26	Tania Norris	NOR	9/18/2012	80	80
27	Donald Philipp	PHI	10/8/2012	81	83
28	Susan Rifkin	RIF	10/8/2012	85	85
29	Greer Saunders	SAU	10/7/2012	86	86
30	Debra Shaw	SHA	10/7/2012	87	88
31	Charles Tellalian	TEL	9/28/2012	88	89
32	Leslie Tillmann	TIL1	10/6/2012	90	91
33	Rolf Tillmann	TIL2	9/26/2012	91	91
34	Jamie Wolf	WOL	9/25/2012	92	93
35	Tony Yakimowich	YAK	10/10/2012	93	94

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIR

This section contains the original comment letters, which have been bracketed to isolate the individual comments, each followed by responses to the individual, bracketed comments within that letter. As noted above, and stated in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15088(a) and 15088(b), comments that raise significant environmental issues are provided with responses. Comments that are outside of the scope of CEQA review do not merit a response, but are included within this Final SEIR and will be considered by the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors prior to taking action on this Final SEIR and the proposed project. In some cases, a response may refer the reader to a previous response, if that previous response substantively addressed the same issues.

State Agency

Native American Heritage Commission (NAH), 10/5/2012

Comments

NAHC

STATE OF CALIFORNIA Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION
915 CAPITOL MALL, ROOM 364
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PLANNING DIVISION

October 5, 2012

Ms. Joan Rupert, Section Head
Environmental and Regulatory Permitting
County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation
510 South Vermont Avenue, Room 201
Los Angeles, CA 90020

Re: SCH#2012091034; CEQA Notice of Completion; draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (DSEIR); for the **"Proposed Operational Changes to the Virginia Robinson Gardens Project;"** located in the Hollywood area; Los Angeles County, California

Dear Ms. Rupert:

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) is the State of California 'Trustee Agency' for the protection and preservation of Native American cultural resources pursuant to California Public Resources Code §21070 and affirmed by the Third Appellate Court in the case of EPIC v. Johnson (1985: 170 Cal App. 3rd 604).

This letter includes state and federal statutes relating to Native American historic properties or resources of religious and cultural significance to American Indian tribes and interested Native American individuals as 'consulting parties' under both state and federal law. State law also addresses the freedom of Native American Religious Expression in Public Resources Code §5097.9. This project is also subject to California Government Code Section 65352.3.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA – CA Public Resources Code 21000-21177, amendments effective 3/18/2010) requires that any project that causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource, that includes archaeological resources, is a 'significant effect' requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) per the CEQA Guidelines defines a significant impact on the environment as 'a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of physical conditions within an area affected by the proposed project, including ...objects of historic or aesthetic significance." In order to comply with this provision, the lead agency is required to assess whether the project will have an adverse impact on these resources within the 'area of potential effect (APE), and if so, to mitigate that effect. The NAHC recommends that the lead agency request that the NAHC do a Sacred Lands File search as part of the careful planning for the proposed project. NAHC-1

The NAHC "Sacred Sites,' as defined by the Native American Heritage Commission and the California Legislature in California Public Resources Code §§5097.94(a) and 5097.96. Items in the NAHC Sacred Lands Inventory are confidential and exempt from the Public Records Act pursuant to California Government Code §6254 (r).

Early consultation with Native American tribes in your area is the best way to avoid unanticipated discoveries of cultural resources or burial sites once a project is underway. Culturally affiliated tribes and individuals may have knowledge of the religious and cultural significance of the historic properties in the project area (e.g. APE). We strongly urge that you make contact with the list of Native American Contacts on the attached list of Native American contacts, to see if your proposed project might impact Native American cultural resources and to obtain their recommendations concerning the proposed project. Pursuant to CA Public Resources Code § 5097.95, the NAHC requests cooperation from other public agencies in order that the Native American consulting parties be provided pertinent project information. Consultation with Native American communities is also a matter of environmental justice as defined by California Government Code §65040.12(e). Pursuant to CA Public Resources Code §5097.95, the NAHC requests that pertinent project information be provided consulting tribal parties, including archaeological studies. The NAHC recommends *avoidance* as defined by CEQA Guidelines §15370(a) to pursuing a project that would damage or destroy Native American cultural resources and California Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 (Archaeological Resources) that requires documentation, data recovery of cultural resources, construction to avoid sites and the possible use of covenant easements to protect sites.

Furthermore, the NAHC if the proposed project is under the jurisdiction of the statutes and regulations of the National Environmental Policy Act (e.g. NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321-43351). Consultation with tribes and interested Native American consulting parties, on the NAHC list, should be conducted in compliance with the requirements of federal NEPA and Section 106 and 4(f) of federal NHPA (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq*), 36 CFR Part 800.3 (f) (2) & .5, the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CSQ, 42 U.S.C 4371 *et seq.* and NAGPRA (25 U.S.C. 3001-3013) as appropriate. The 1992 *Secretary of the Interiors Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* were revised so that they could be applied to all historic resource types included in the National Register of Historic Places and including cultural landscapes. Also, federal Executive Orders Nos. 11593 (preservation of cultural environment), 13175 (coordination & consultation) and 13007 (Sacred Sites) are helpful, supportive guides for Section 106 consultation. The aforementioned Secretary of the Interior's *Standards* include recommendations for all 'lead agencies' to consider the historic context of proposed projects and to "research" the cultural landscape that might include the 'area of potential effect.'

NAHC-1 Cont.

Confidentiality of "historic properties of religious and cultural significance" should also be considered as protected by California Government Code §6254(r) and may also be protected under Section 304 of he NHPA or at the Secretary of the Interior discretion if not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Secretary may also be advised by the federal Indian Religious Freedom Act (cf. 42 U.S.C., 1996) in issuing a decision on whether or not to disclose items of religious and/or cultural significance identified in or near the APEs and possibility threatened by proposed project activity.

Furthermore, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, California Government Code §27491 and Health & Safety Code Section 7050.5 provide for provisions for inadvertent discovery of human remains mandate the processes to be followed in the event of a discovery of human remains in a project location other than a 'dedicated cemetery'.

To be effective, consultation on specific projects must be the result of an ongoing relationship between Native American tribes and lead agencies, project proponents and their contractors, in the opinion of the NAHC. Regarding tribal consultation, a relationship built around regular meetings and informal involvement with local tribes will lead to more qualitative consultation tribal input on specific projects.

2

Finally, when Native American cultural sites and/or Native American burial sites are prevalent within the project site, the NAHC recommends 'avoidance' of the site as referenced by CEQA Guidelines Section 15370(a).

If you have any questions about this response to your request, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 653-6251.

NAHC-1 Cont.

Sincerely,

Dave Singleton
Program Analyst

Cc: State Clearinghouse

Attachment: Native American Contact List

3

Native American Contacts
Los Angeles County
October 5, 2012

LA City/County Native American Indian Comm
Ron Andrade, Director
3175 West 6th St, Rm. 403
Los Angeles , CA 90020
randrade@css.lacounty.gov
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(213) 386-3995 FAX

Gabrielino Tongva Nation
Sam Dunlap, Cultural Resources Director
P.O. Box 86908 Gabrielino Tongva
Los Angeles , CA 90086
samdunlap@earthlink.net

(909) 262-9351 - cell

Ti'At Society/Inter-Tribal Council of Pimu
Cindi M. Alvitre, Chairwoman-Manisar
3094 Mace Avenue, Apt. B Gabrielino
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calvitre@yahoo.com
(714) 504-2468 Cell

Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
Robert F. Dorame, Tribal Chair/Cultural Resources
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562-761-6417 - voice
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Tongva Ancestral Territorial Tribal Nation
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,
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Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe
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Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission
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Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe
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lcandelaria1@gabrielinoTribe.org
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(310) 587-0170 - FAX

This list is current only as of the date of this document.

Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of the statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources for the proposed SSCH#2012091034; CEQA Notice of Completion; draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (DSEIR(; for the Proposed Changes to the Virginia Robinson Gardens Project; located in Los Angeles County, California.

Native American Contacts
Los Angeles County
October 5, 2012

Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians
Andrew Salas, Chairperson
P.O. Box 393 Gabrielino
Covina , CA 91723
(626) 926-4131
gabrielenoindians@yahoo.com

This list is current only as of the date of this document.

Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of the statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources for the proposed SSCH#2012091034; CEQA Notice of Completion; draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (DSEIR(; for the Proposed Changes to the Virginia Robinson Gardens Project; located in Los Angeles County, California.

Responses to Native American Heritage Commission (NAH), 10/5/2012

NAH-1 This comment provides introductory or general information regarding the role of the Native American Heritage Commission, applicable CEQA statutes, as well as other policies and requirements, and encourages consultation with Native American Tribes in the area.

The comment further details the requirements of CEQA, identifying [paraphrasing] that if a project causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource including archaeological or paleontological resources, an EIR must be prepared. Additionally, an adverse impact is identified; the NAHC recommends that that the Lead Agency request that the NAHC prepare a Sacred Lands File search for the project under consideration. As discussed in Section V (Cultural Resources) of the Draft SEIR, beginning on page 63, the proposed project site was placed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) on November 15, 1978, and is registered as a California Point of Historical Interest under the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), with the notation that access is restricted. The property is listed under NRHP Criterion C for Architecture and under Criterion A for Exploration/Settlement at the local level of significance. The nomination specifically states that one of the most significant characteristics of the property is the carefully designed landscape that integrates the Main Residence, Pool Pavilion, and garden. Further, the SEIR identifies that the City of Beverly Hills compiled a Historic Resource Inventory in 1986 which has not been adopted by the City as a local register, but it serves as a guide to potentially significant historic properties that may have historic or cultural significance to the City.

In compliance with the requirements of CEQA as it applies to historic resources, a professional historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) Standards for History and Architectural History evaluated potential effects of the proposed project on the NRHP-listed Virginia Robinson Gardens. The results of this evaluation are included as Appendix C of this document. Since the proposed project would not involve any construction, demolition, or landscape modifications, the area of potential effects (APE) was limited to the current property boundaries. Under the proposed project, no physical changes would be made to the project site that would affect its historic integrity and a less-than-significant impact was identified with respect to historical resources. Further, the proposed project was determined to have no impact on archaeological and paleontological resources in Section V (Cultural Resources) of the SEIR. As such, no significant and unavoidable impacts were identified to resources under the prevue of the NAHC and further research, including a Sacred Lands File search is not required.

Local Agency

City of Beverly Hills (BEV), 10/11/2012

Comments

BEV

October 11, 2012

Los Angeles County
Department of Parks and Recreation
Attn: Joan Rupert, Section Head, Environmental and Regulatory Permitting
510 S. Vermont Avenue, Room 201
Los Angeles, CA 90020
Via Email: jrupert@parks.lacounty.gov, hard copy to follow

Subject: Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Operational Changes to the Virginia Robinson Gardens

Dear Ms. Rupert,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the subject environmental report.

The City of Beverly Hills encourages the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation to study the street segment on Elden Way between the subject property and the Elden Way / North Crescent Drive intersection using the City's traffic thresholds of significance. And, if an impact is identified, explore reasonable measures to mitigate the impact. The City's thresholds are attached for your convenience. BEV-1

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss further, please contact the undersigned.

Thank you,

Ryan Gohlich, Senior Planner

City of Beverly Hills
455 N. Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
(310) 285-1194
rgohlich@beverlyhills.org

RESOLUTION NO. 1586

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS ADOPTING THRESHOLDS OF SIGNFICANCE FOR TRAFFIC IMPACTS

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Beverly Hills has requested revisions to the City's thresholds of significance for certain traffic impacts, which are utilized in the City's actions implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to be more aligned with adjacent jurisdictions.

WHEREAS, Planning Commission finds and determines that the City of Beverly Hills' existing thresholds of significance for certain traffic impacts, which are utilized in the City's actions implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), have not been amended in over twelve (12) years and are not reflective of the thresholds used by adjacent jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, on June 24, 2010, the Planning Commission held a public meeting to discuss potential changes to the thresholds, and continued the meeting and discussion to its public meeting on July 22, 2010 and subsequently to September 16, 2010. Notice of the June 24th meeting was published in the *Beverly Hills Courier* newspaper, and opportunities for public input were provided at the June 24, July 22, 2010 and September 16 meetings.

BEV-2

NOW, THEREFORE, the Planning Commission of the City of Beverly Hills does resolve as follows:

Section 1. The Planning Commission finds and determines based on the staff reports and research, expert testimony from the City's Transportation Division staff, and public testimony, that the revised thresholds are more in line with those used by adjacent jurisdictions and more appropriately evaluate the traffic impacts of new development projects.

Section 2. The revised traffic thresholds change the City's existing guidelines for analysis of the traffic impacts caused by new development. The revised thresholds are a means to evaluate impacts during the environmental review process required by CEQA and their adoption is not subject to environmental review by CEQA.

Section 3. The Planning Commission hereby adopts the revised Traffic Thresholds of Significance for the City of Beverly Hills, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

Section 4. The Secretary of the Planning Commission shall certify to the passage, approval, and adoption of this resolution, and shall cause this resolution and his certification to be entered in the Book of Resolutions of the Planning Commission of this City and a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the City Council.

BEV-2 Cont.

Adopted: October 14, 2010

Lili Bosse
Chair of the Planning Commission of the
City of Beverly Hills, California

Attest:

Secretary

Approved as to form:

David M. Snow
Assistant City Attorney

Approved as to content:

Susan Healy Keene, AICP
Director of Community Development

2

EXHIBIT A

Traffic Thresholds of Significance

BEV-2
Cont.

3

CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS
EXHIBIT "A"

Beverly Hills Traffic Thresholds of Significance

The following is the recommended traffic thresholds of significant impact for 4 different scenarios:

1. **Threshold of Impacts at Signalized Intersections:**

Calculation Methodology: Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU), using criterion similar to Congestion Management Program (CMP). Selected lane capacity of 1,600 vehicles per hour.

An impact will be considered significant if traffic generated by a project causes an increase of:

- 0.020 or more on V/C at the final LOS "F"
- 0.020 or more on V/C at the final LOS "E"
- 0.030 or more on V/c at the final LOS "D" or better

2. **Threshold of Impacts at Unsignalized (all-way stop) Intersections:**

Calculation Methodology: Based on the most current edition of Highway Capacity Manual.

An impact will be considered significant if the following increase of average total delay per vehicle results in:

- 3.0 seconds or more average total delay at the final LOS "F"
- 3.0 seconds or more average total delay at the final LOS "E"
- 4.0 seconds or more average total delay at the final LOS "D"

BEV-2 Cont.

3. Threshold of Impacts at Unsignalized (2-way stop) Intersections:

Calculation methodology: Highway Capacity Manual (latest edition):

Significant Impact: A Change in level of service (comparison of cumulative plus without project, to cumulative plus with project) on any direction of travel:

- LOS D or better to LOS E or worse
- LOS E to LOS F
- LOS F to LOS F (resulting in increase of 10 or more average total delay (sec/veh) on any direction.

4. Threshold of Impacts at Residential (Local) Streets:

BEV-2 Cont.

Significant Impact:

I. ADT less than 2,000 volume per day (vpd): project increases ADT by 16%, or increases peak hour by 16% or both.

II. ADT greater than 2,001 but less than 4,000 vpd: project increases ADT by 12% or more, or increases peak hour by 12% or more or both.

III. ADT greater than 4,001 but less than 6,750 vpd: project increases ADT by 8% or more, or increases peak hour by 8% or more or both

IV. ADT greater than 6,750 vpd: project increases ADT by 6.25% or more, or increases peak hour by 6.25% or more or both

2 of 2 06/16/10

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES) SS.

CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS)

I, JONATHAN LAIT, Secretary of the Planning Commission and City Planner of the City of Beverly Hills, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution No. 1586 duly passed, approved and adopted by the Planning Commission of said City at a meeting of said Commission on October 14, 2010, and thereafter duly signed by the Secretary of the Planning Commission, as indicated; and that the Planning Commission of the City consists of five (5) members and said Resolution was passed by the following vote of said Commission, to wit:

BEV-2 Cont.

AYES: Commissioners Cole, Corman, Furie, Vice Chair Yukelson, and Chair Bosse.

NOES: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

ABSENT: None.

JONATHAN LAIT, AICP
Secretary of the Planning Commission / City Planner
City of Beverly Hills, California

Responses to City of Beverly Hills (BEV), 10/11/2012

BEV-1 This comment is provided by the City of Beverly Hills which surrounds the County-owned and operated project site, the Virginia Robinson Gardens. The City encourages the County to prepare a street segment analysis for the Elden Way cul-de-sac, from the property limits to the intersection with North Crescent Drive, using the City's traffic thresholds of significance (which are provided as part of the comment letter). Per the Thresholds of Significance provided in Comment BEV-2, particularly "4. Threshold of

Impacts at Residential (Local) Streets," Elden Way would be characterized as per 4.I, with ADT less than 2,000 volume per day. As stated in the Draft SEIR, the proposed project would not result in a net increase of visitors daily. As the proposed project will not change operations substantially during weekdays, the increase in traffic volumes along Elden Way during weekday operation would not be substantial and would not result in an increase that would exceed the City's Local street threshold. However, the proposed project would introduce visitors to the project site on Saturdays. Due to the existing low ADT along Elden Way and the introduction of new visitors to the project site on Saturday, the proposed project would result in an approximately 26 percent increase in ADT, above the 16 percent threshold, resulting in a significant impact (by percentage) on Saturdays only. It should be noted that this increase/threshold exceedance would not result in a change in functionality along Elden Way or the surrounding intersections.

In order to reduce this potential impact, project-related trip volumes on Saturdays would have to be reduced below 40 ADT, which would be impractical, operationally infeasible and would preclude the proposed project from meeting the identified Project Objectives. As such, an analysis of off-site parking opportunities was completed to address the feasibility of reducing the number vehicular trips to the project site on Saturday below 40 to conform to the City's Local street threshold (Appendix G of this FSEIR). This analysis included an in-depth study of the potential use of five local parking alternatives including Greystone Mansion and Park, the Beverly Hills Women's Club, City of Beverly Hills parking structures (two), and the use of the Cove Way parking area. In summary, this analysis determined that the use of off-site parking opportunities was not feasible. As such, the proposed project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact due to the exceedance of the City of Beverly Hill's Local Street threshold. It should again be noted that this impact would not create an operational impact along Elden Way or the surrounding intersections.

Therefore, in accordance with the City's Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines, the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact to traffic conditions and intersection functionality and a significant impact due to the exceedance of the City of Beverly Hills Local Street threshold for traffic on Saturdays.

As is currently the situation in the residential neighborhood surrounding Virginia Robinson Gardens, special events would be attended to by valet parking which would reduce any potential impacts along Elden Way; further, these events would be restricted to four each year, would fall outside the general operating regulations of the site, and would continue to voluntarily comply with all regulations put forth by the City regarding special events. Additionally, as discussed in Draft SEIR Section XVI (Transportation/Traffic), beginning on page 114, a traffic analysis was prepared to address impacts of the proposed project. As such, no further analysis is required. However, all comments will be forwarded to decision-makers prior to consideration of project approval.

BEV-2 This comment is an attachment to the letter submitted by the City of Beverly Hills in Comment BEV-1 and provides the Thresholds of Significance for traffic impacts within the City. No response is required.

Individuals

Charles Alpert (ALP), 10/8/2012

Comments

ALP

October 8, 2012

Sent via email to jrupert@parks.county.gov

Joan Rupert
County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation
510 South Vermont Avenue, Room 201
Los Angeles, CA 90020

Re: Proposed Operational Changes to the Virginia Robinson Gardens
Comments to Draft Supplemental EIR

Dear Ms. Rupert:

Having lived in the neighborhood adjacent to the Virginia Robinson Gardens for more than fifteen years, I have been fortunate to appreciate its beauty and historic significance. Despite my appreciation for the Gardens, I believe the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report dated September 2012 ("DEIR" or "SDEIR") remains fundamentally flawed. My comments in this communication address those material defects. ALP-1

As an overview, I am especially opposed to the "commercialization" of the Garden under the guise of affording greater public access. The neighborhood's tax dollars supports the Garden as much as any other county taxpayer. Our neighborhood deserves equal respect to the push for expanded public access. Indeed, the original EIR balanced those interests. This Supplemental DEIR effectively ignores that balance. ALP-2

The bias of the DEIR reflects an obvious one. The document at every crucial point ignores the 1980 mitigation which by implication implies the prior analysis to be incorrect. This omission represents an improper editorial prejudice throughout the document. Indeed, the Supplemental EIR, aside from a mention in the history section, never incorporates the analysis and mitigation of the original EIR. CEQA does not allow for erasing of impact analysis and mitigation. ALP-3

A related fundamental legal flaw exists. The original EIR contained appropriate mitigation for the environmental impacts in 1980. Common sense alone supports the view that those impacts have not diminished 30 plus years later. Just try to turn right or left on Beverly Drive from Laurel Way during the rush hour on any given day. More cars traverse the neighborhood; more homes exist in the neighborhood. Noise has increased. The threshold for nuisance conditions has sharply risen in thirty years. Few can argue today that environmentally and socially the neighborhood is better off today than 30 years ago. A fair analysis will not suggest a different result. Yet, the DEIR does not seek to compare the impacts in 1980 to today's impact. The DEIR ignores the thirty year change in conditions and increase in background impacts as of 1980. If anything, the restrictions on the Gardens based on relative environmental impacts should justify more restrictive conditions than those imposed in 1980. ALP-4

The Supplement DIR acts as if everything starts fresh because the County wants a broader use for the Gardens. CEQA does not countenance this rule. You cannot treat environmental values in a vacuum. Stated otherwise, a supplemental environmental impact report cannot ignore the findings of the original ALP-5

EIR. CEQA protects against this form of analytical hocus pocus. CEQA stands for a full and fair evaluation. Legally, the Supplemental EIR will fall to a legal challenge on these policy grounds alone. ALP-5 Cont.

Still another inherent flaw in the DEIR contaminates the documents. The DEIR analysis reflects a wholly incomplete examination. The document fails to fully explore alternatives. Indeed, the DEIR explores no alternatives. An exploration of alternatives remains a critical underpinning of CEQA. I am including the table below to establish this critical failing:

Limitation	Alternatives Not Discussed
No Changes	It is a fundamental flaw not to discuss the status quo as an alternative. In this case the status quo should reflect the analysis reflect the 1980 analysis which concluded the existing restrictions/mitigations were proper. The discussion of impacts should related to the 1980 impacts.
Days Open To Public	• Why not Mon.-Friday, not Saturday? Students can visit on Mondays as well as Saturdays. • Why not a continued ban on all holidays? • Why not 5 days a week, just one week a month? • Why not summer hours/winter hours?
Hours For Public Use	• Why not 9:30 to 4 PM or 5 PM? • Why not the current schedule?
Number of Patrons	• Why not a combined total of 75 patrons? Environmental impacts have increased in 30 years.
Types of Events	• Why not continue the existing limitation to events related to the inherent nature of the gardens? • How can you weigh the impact of events when it is at the subject of the discretion of the Superintendent?
Commercial Filming	• Why not limit such events consistent with Beverly Hills ordinances?
Special Uses	• Why not conduct additional funding at outside venues capable of supporting large crowds? Many charities raise money at hotels and other public venues located in commercial areas. Some non-profits raise money without venues through raffles and other means. • No discussion is included on how additional or extended Garden promotional events would appreciably increase revenues. In fact, increased events may lead to reduced revenues as only so much money realistically can be raised. The number of events only adds costs, not necessarily increased revenues.
Parking	• Why not limit parking entirely to off site location with transport to Gardens? • Why make arrangements with the hotel for parking? • Why not continue ban on walk-up patrons?

ALP-6

I would also like to point out the following additional failings of the DEIR:

- "Currently the types or topics of daily events are restricted to educational programs or tours of the grounds for biology, botany and horticulture groups, with related classes and seminars." (Page 10). ALP-7

This is an inaccurate statement. The Garden Website states as follows: "Please join us for a guided tour of the Robinson estate! The tour includes a walkthrough of the famous mansion, but is largely composed of viewing the historical garden paradise."

The Garden is currently open to the public with an advance reservation plus fee. Thus the representation that the Garden has only a limited educational use restriction justifying a broader expansion of its use represents a fundamental flaw in the document. ALP-7 Cont.

- Site Access (Page 6)

The Draft Supplement EIR ignores the fundamental fact that the Garden has very limited accommodation for public visitors. To suggest various, parking or valet arrangements can substitute for this short-coming represents a fundamental flaw. The Supplemental EIR fails to address the fact that the Garden is essential a private home not suitable for accommodation of a large public influx. ALP-8

- Project Objectives (Page 8)

The Garden was never intended for use as a major tourist attraction. The document fails to distinguish between limited public use and benefits as against a money or revenue generating tourist attraction. ALP-9

- " Daily events could include music in the garden, piano recitals in the Main Residence, theatre in the Garden, poetry readings, author book signings, bird watching, donor receptions or temporary exhibits ..." (Page 10)

Many of these events are environmentally incompatible to the numerous residences surrounding the Gardens. Public auditoriums and museums exist in commercial areas to serve these purposes. The Draft Supplemental EIR fails to account for these alternative venues. More importantly, the SDEIR neglects to account for the nuisance and environmental impacts of these events to neighboring homes. ALP-10

- Neighborhood Noise. (General)

The document fails to account for the travel of sound in the area. Due to the rolling hill nature of the topography, sounds carry considerable distance. It is possible to be right next door to an event and not hear the event, but another home blocks away will hear the sound as if the event was next door. The DEIR has conducted no investigation of the impact of the phenomenon. Noise monitors will inherently fail to account for this natural phenomenon. ALP-11

- Commercial Filming (General)

Beverly Hills has an ordinance restricting commercial filming. Neighbors must approve. The number of commercial events has an annual limit per residence. Moreover, commercial filming in the area is highly disruptive. The DEIR fails to address these impacts or explain why the city limits should not apply. ALP-12

- "Additionally, this change [Saturday Operations] would enable more working families to enjoy the facility on Saturdays." (Page 9)

What about allowing the working families living in the neighborhood to enjoy their homes on the weekend and holidays? The DEIR fails to address this fundamental concern related to the ALP-13

surrounding residential area. Families fully surround around the Gardens. Saturday and Holiday operations have not been reasonably justified in any way. The DEIR fails to respond to notion that Saturday operations amounts to a de facto zoning change of the area to the detriment of the area. Per City code, none of the homes in the area can operate an open public business from their residence on Mon-Fri let alone on a Saturday or Holidays. ALP-13 Cont.

- DEIR fails to mention increased nuisance and traffic issues triggered by influx of tour buses in the neighborhood. Tour buses have become a constant on the streets in the area causing traffic congestion and aesthetic nuisance. ALP-14

- DEIR fails to account for the heavy rush hour traffic on Beverly Drive, Cold Water Canyon, Lexington and Sunset. Traffic studies fail to take into account peak conditions and weekend conditions. Every neighbor can testify to the difficulty of turning onto Beverly Drive. A limited-time traffic count does not do justice to extraordinary traffic increases due to accidents on the I-405. ALP-15

- DEIR fails to detail increased need for police and fire protection. How will the county provide such protection with increased hours, events and attendance? What are the impacts on the county safety agencies? Sheriff patrols are a non-existent sight currently in the neighborhood. If Beverly Hills has to supply these services, a separate analysis is necessary. ALP-16

- DEIR fails to mention how the proposal will deviate from Beverly Hills ordinances? I have previously noted the filming ordinance. The City has restrictions on workers doing construction on weekends and weekdays after certain hours. Valet ordinances, parking restrictions and other applicable ordinances should be discussed. Businesses cannot operate in this residential area like the Garden proposes. ALP-17

- The potential impact of a seismic or fire event with the Garden hosting an event has not been discussed. In the recent past, homes have been destroyed by wildfires as near as a quarter mile or so from the Gardens. Moreover, the reservoir near the fire station represents a distinct hazard in a seismic event. None of these situations has been adequately addressed. The City does not have the public safety apparatus to support the Garden's commercial venture with large numbers of visitors in a residential neighborhood which has limited access. ALP-18

- The potential impact to the vegetation and trees in the Garden caused by increased tours and attendance has not been discussed in the draft DEIR. The Garden could be significantly degraded by such increases in the short and long terms. The Gardens effectively reflect a donated residential estate, not a public museum or a botanical garden. Allowing a significant increase of attendance could threaten its existing natural beauty. Even national parks impose attendance limits. The DEIR fails to adequately address these concerns. ALP-19

I recognize the standard way of approaching comments, such as those included in this letter, will be to reply with an addendum dismissing most of the criticisms by either reference to DEIR which do not directly reply to concerns or outright dismissing the concern. Such an approach will do an enormous disservice to the Gardens, the neighborhood, the County and the legal requirements of CEQA. Hastily approving the Supplemental DEIR could well lead to a legal challenge and the certainty of an ill-conceived plan. ALP-20

My considered opinion indicates that the County has material vulnerability due its failed analysis and due to the inconsistency of the document's findings with the original EIR report. Those original findings and mitigation cannot be erased arbitrarily.

The voices of the supporters of the Garden are many. I too support the Gardens, but not the change to the existing restrictions. Numbers alone should not count when it comes to CEQA – else many of our environmental treasures and open spaces would be amusement parks and shopping centers. Too many fatal flaws exist for this DEIR. The original mitigation of the 1980 EIR merits the County's full support with perhaps a minor adjustment or two – nothing as drastic as proposed. The Gardens can survive and thrive only if the current balance survives intact. I urge you to reject the SDEIR as inadequate. This may be an unpopular decision, but the only wise one in the interests of the Gardens and the county residents. ALP-21

Respectfully,

Charles Alpert
calpert@hotmail.com

Beverly Hills Resident and Neighbor to the Garden

Responses to Charles Alpert (ALP), 10/8/2012

ALP-1 This comment provides introductory material from the commenter, including the fact that they have been a fifteen year neighbor to the project site. No further response is required.

ALP-2 The commenter expresses opposition to "… commercialization of the Garden under the guise of affording greater public access." Further, the commenter suggests that the "original EIR" balanced the interests of the neighborhood with perceived impacts of the operation of Virginia Robinson Gardens; concluding that the Draft SEIR effectively ignores a balance. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. Further, contrary to the commenter's suggestion, commercialization of the Virginia Robinson Garden is not proposed under the project; rather, the project proposes the continuation of existing uses at the project site while making minor operational changes. All comments will be forwarded to decision-makers prior to consideration of project approval.

ALP-3 The commenter suggests that the analysis provided Draft SEIR is biased. The commenter goes on to suggest that the Draft SEIR "ignores the 1980 mitigation which by implication implies the prior analysis to be incorrect … never incorporates the analysis and mitigation of the original EIR. CEQA does not allow for the erasing or impact analysis and mitigation." This statement is factually incorrect. In fact, as

discussed in the Introduction of the Draft SEIR, beginning on page 2, the 1980 EIR established a detailed schedule, limiting the hours of operation and number of daily visitors allowed at the project site for guided tours, classes and seminars, and special events, as well as number of employees at the project site which were discussed in great detail in Table 1 (Comparison of Existing and Proposed Operations) on Draft SEIR page 4. Further, Draft SEIR page 2 states that the 1980 EIR effectively codified operational regulations for the future use of the project site and has served as the governing land use document since that time. As such, the analysis, findings and mitigation measures included in the 1980 EIR provide the background for the Draft SEIR prepared for the proposed project as clearly identified throughout the Draft SEIR; in no way was that document ignored or the Draft SEIR prepared in a "vacuum", independent of the 1980 EIR.

Finally, Draft SEIR page 9 clearly states, "By way of discretionary action, the County Board of Supervisors will consider an amendment to the existing Agreement between the County and The Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens. Formally, this amendment will consist of rewriting Section 4.05 of the Agreement to reflect the proposed changes to the days and hours of operation of Virginia Robinson Gardens." This statement clearly identifies the intent of the County to amend the agreement that was approved based on the analysis prepared in the 1980 EIR. As such, the commenter is incorrect in their statement that the 1980 EIR, the analysis contained therein, or the intent of said document and associated agreements were ignored in the Draft SEIR.

However, in an effort to address the concerns of the commenter regarding the incorporation of previously identified mitigation measures, it is worth noting that the mitigation measures identified in the 1980 EIR are either incorporated by reference, not applicable, or have already been implemented and, therefore, may not apply to the current project. Page 39 of the 1980 EIR, Section III, C. Mitigation Measures Proposed to Minimize Significant Effects, outlines the mitigation measures alluded to by the commenter. Each mitigation measure is reproduced below and the applicability of each mitigation measure to the proposed project is discussed:

1. The proposed Virginia Robinson Gardens will be open for public visitation Monday through Saturday between the hours of 9:30 AM and 4:00 PM. This restriction should help ease the impact of the expected increase in traffic on Elden Way and Crescent Drive by limiting it to daylight hours.

   Discussion: This operating information was incorporated into the agreement approved by the County Board of Supervisors and The Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens. A request to deviate from this is clearly articulated on Draft SEIR page 9 and reproduced above. Further, traffic related to public visitation will continue to be substantially limited to daylight hours.

2. The Robinson Gardens will be operated on a group reservation system whereby a maximum of two reserved tours lasting approximately 2 hours each will be

permitted daily. Traffic generated by each tour will arrive and leave the proposed gardens over a short period of time. Traffic, and the corresponding traffic-generated noise, will occur Monday through Saturday during four approximately one-half-hour periods: 9:30 to 10:00 AM and 12:30 to 1:00 PM, when visitors are arriving for the tours, and 12:00 to 12:30 PM and 3:30 to 4:00 PM, when visitors are departing. During the tours no traffic will be generated by the project. By limiting daily visitation to acceptable levels, these restrictions will prevent parking and circulation problems and help mitigate such problems as privacy loss, precipitated by the change in land use from residential to public open space.

Discussion: As clearly articulated in the Introduction of the Draft SEIR and detailed in Table 1 on Draft SEIR page 4, all visitation to Virginia Robinson Gardens will still be maintained on a reservation-only system. Further, the number of visitors allowed each day will remain the same. The only deviation from the restriction on visitors is the request that any combination of tour, class or commercial filming visitors be allowed during daytime visiting hours, rather than segregating patrons of tours and classes from a daytime maximum visitors. However, the intent of this mitigation measure, to provide "pockets" of the day during which vehicles will access the site is not changing. Parking for tours, classes, and commercial filming will all still be required on site and parking along Elden Way by visitors will be prohibited.

3. The special evening events will not conflict with the daytime tours, will be limited to a maximum of two events annually and all parking will be on-site.

Discussion: Evening events will continue to be scheduled in such a manner that they do not conflict with daytime tours. The number of annual events is clearly articulated in the Draft SEIR as six (which has been reduced as part of this Final SEIR to four). As discussed on Draft SEIR pages 10 and 11:

> … Although located in the City of Beverly Hills, the project site is owned by Los Angeles County. When the County is performing a public function on a County-owned property, the County is not subject to the requirements of the City, but nevertheless can choose to comply with those regulations. For the proposed project, the County would comply with City regulations to ensure consistency with the surrounding neighborhood. While there are no restrictions on these events, especially with respect to the number of attendees, in compliance with the City's Municipal Code, all events would comply with City of Beverly Hills requirements and ordinances, including the prohibition of amplified sound after 10:00 PM. Special events or uses typically require valet parking and staff, and the County will obtain a permit from the City to avoid overlapping with events held by adjacent/nearby neighbors. When valet is not used, shuttle buses are provided from various points in the surrounding neighborhoods to transport attendees to the Virginia Robinson Gardens. For the daytime events, attendees from the local neighborhood often arrive by foot, even though this is technically

restricted. This is consistent with events typically held throughout Beverly Hills and the adjacent neighborhood.

4. Additional noise associated with the project will be mitigated by: the reduction in number of employees from that during Mrs. Robinson's residence; the distance from the tour groups to the neighboring properties, since the tours will be prohibited from much of the Estate's perimeter; and except for the tours, the fewer number of social events during Mrs. Robinson's residence.

   Discussion: All components of this mitigation measure have been implemented at the project site and will continue to be under the proposed project.

5. Where neighboring uses are extremely close to the property lines, plants have been located to grow on existing fences to help protect the privacy of the neighbors; also, in areas where neighbors' privacy may be impaired, tour groups will be prohibited (see figure 3). Garden tours can be rerouted or prohibited from other areas in the future if they prove to interfere with neighbors' privacy.

   Interference with the neighbors' privacy will also be mitigated by the requirement that a tour guide be with guests at all times on tours of the Estate; guests will not be allowed to tour the grounds unescorted.

   Discussion: All components of this mitigation measure have been implemented at the project site and will continue to be under the proposed project.

6. The increase in noise and traffic during construction will be mitigated by: requiring the contractor to adhere to a comprehensive noise abatement program; the limitation on vehicle size due to the size of the porte-cochere on the site; and the limited amount of proposed construction which will consist primarily of driveway and sidewalk paving, parking area with retaining wall, fire hydrant, interior maintenance and repairs and future modifications to convert the tennis court to parking area. There will be no building construction. Visual disturbances and intrusion on neighbors' privacy during construction will also be mitigated by the size of the Estate, which will screen many of the construction activities, the existing vegetation and the recent landscaping installed along the property lines.

   Discussion: As clearly articulated throughout the Draft SEIR, the proposed project does not include any construction. As such, the components of this mitigation measure are not applicable.

Finally, as per CEQA, a Supplemental EIR does not negate the analysis, findings, or mitigation measures as suggested by the commenter. Rather, the initial EIR and the Supplemental EIR become the whole of the record for consideration of a proposed project. This is clearly stated on Draft SEIR page 14.

Therefore, in summary, the proposed project and the analysis provided in the Draft SEIR do not ignore the balance of the neighborhood interests and perceived significant impacts; nor do they ignore the analysis, findings or mitigation measures included in the 1980 EIR.

ALP-4 The commenter suggests that a legal flaw exists because the Draft SEIR does not compare the impacts of the 1980 EIR to the impacts of the proposed project. Second, the commenter suggests that conditions in the neighborhood with respect to such issues as traffic and noise have increased in the 30 years since the 1980 EIR was prepared.

First, with respect to the comparison of impacts to the 1980 EIR, the commenter is correct – the Draft SEIR does not compare the impacts of the proposed project to those identified in the 1980 EIR. The CEQA Guidelines require that the environmental document prepared for a proposed project identify the baseline or existing conditions at the time that the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is published for a proposed project. "With-project" conditions are then compared to the existing conditions (or "without project" conditions) to determine the potential impacts of a proposed project. This is the analysis prepared in the Draft SEIR – the existing/baseline conditions are clearly disclosed in the Introduction Section of the Draft SEIR as well as within each of the 17 issue area discussions. Impacts of the proposed project are then defined against these existing conditions utilizing the CEQA thresholds. This provides the most accurate analysis. If the impacts of a project were determined from baseline conditions of, for example, 30 years ago, the analysis would be substantially skewed. Further, a comparison of the current impacts to those of a project some 30 years ago is not relevant (nor required) under CEQA.

As discussed on Draft SEIR page 13, the Draft SEIR is intended to provide decision-makers and the public with information that enables them to consider the environmental consequences of the proposed project … In a practical sense, EIRs function as a technique for fact-finding, allowing an applicant, concerned citizens, and agency staff an opportunity to collectively review and evaluate baseline conditions and project impacts through a process of full disclosure.

To the commenter's second point that conditions have changed within the last 30 years around the project site, he is correct. Accordingly, as discussed above and required by CEQA, 2012 baseline or existing conditions were utilized to determine the impacts resulting from the proposed project. Significant impacts to traffic were not identified. As such, no further response is required.

Refer also to Response ALP-3.

ALP-5 The commenter erroneously suggests that the Supplemental EIR "… acts as if everything starts fresh because the County wants a broader use for the Gardens." However, on a more analytical point, the commenter correctly suggests that the current project and environmental analysis cannot ignore the findings of the previous EIR

(presumably the 1980 EIR in this case). Refer to Response ALP-3 and Response ALP-4.

ALP-6 This comment states that the D[S]EIR reflects a "wholly incomplete examination". However, the commenter does not raise a specific environmental issue; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

The commenter goes on to suggest that the Draft SEIR needed to include an analysis or exploration of project alternatives to meet the requirements of CEQA. However, this is not the case.

Presumably, the reference to CEQA that the commenter is making is to the fact that as part of preparation of an EIR, analysis of alternatives to the proposed project to reduce identified project-related impacts should be undertaken. Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the discussion of alternatives must focus on alternatives capable of either avoiding or substantially lessening any significant environmental effects of the project, even if the alternative would impede, to some degree, the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly. The alternatives discussion should not consider alternatives whose implementation is remote or speculative, and the analysis need not be presented in the same level of detail as the assessment of the project. As the proposed project was found to result in no potentially significant impacts and would not require the implementation of mitigation measures, analysis of project alternatives is not necessary; this includes the analysis of the "status quo" as suggested by the commenter. Analysis of the "No Project" Alternative would result in the same findings as the analysis of the proposed project. The intent of CEQA is not to unduly burden a project applicant with environmental analysis but rather to act as a process of full disclosure; as such, analysis of the No Project Alternative would be redundant and would not provide unique or helpful information for decision makers or the public. Again, analysis of alternatives would not be necessary.

As discussed in Response ALP-3 and in the Draft SEIR, the whole of the record, especially with respect to CEQA, includes the 1980 EIR in combination with the Supplemental EIR. Accordingly, alternatives to the proposed project analyzed in the 1980 EIR were analyzed which propagates the record for the required Alternatives analysis. As discussed in Response ALP-3 and ALP-4, the analysis, findings, and mitigation measures of the 1980 EIR inherently (and by reference) provide the baseline for the existing analysis as the requirements of the 1980 EIR were codified into an agreement between the Los Angeles County and Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens to create operational limitations of the Garden. The proposed project is a minor modification to this agreement, as disclosed in the Draft SEIR and discussed in Response ALP-3. No additional analysis of Alternatives is required by CEQA.

As part of Comment ALP-6, the commenter includes a variety of "alternative" scenarios to the proposed project. However, these are opinions of the commenter as to alternate operational scenarios that may or may not result in similar or more

significant impacts than identified for the proposed project. As discussed above, in the event that analysis of alternatives was required, CEQA requires only that a reasonable range of alternatives be analyzed, which does not include all of those identified by the commenter. Further, as discussed above, alternatives to the proposed project would not be required to be analyzed because the proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts. Finally, the intent of the alternatives analysis is to reduce project-related impacts; the commenter does not identify what issue area they believe the proposed project would generate a perceived impact. As such, it is not possible, nor prudent, to undertake analysis of any of the scenarios provided. No further response is required.

ALP-7 The commenter opines that information provided on the website for the Virginia Robinson Gardens identifies a sufficiently wide range of tour topics (i.e., a tour of the residence and garden) thereby negating the need for a request to broaden the topics of daily events. This comment does not raise a specific environmental issue; accordingly, it is difficult to respond in a technical, CEQA-based manner. However, it should be noted that it is within the prevue of the County of Los Angeles to make a request to change the operational characteristics of the Virginia Robinson Gardens, which is the issue at hand. To do so, as discussed in Response ALP-3, the County is requesting a discretionary action—an amendment to the existing operating agreement between the County and Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens. All comments will be provided to decision makers prior to consideration of the proposed project.

ALP-8 The commenter suggests that the Draft SEIR "ignores" the fact that the Virginia Robinson Gardens "… has very limited accommodation for public visitors", representing a fatal flaw in the document. Contrary to the commenter's opinion, as stated on Draft SEIR page 6, parking at the Virginia Robinson Gardens is limited to the 20-space visitor parking lot and the three parking spaces located along the driveway. Further, the Draft SEIR acknowledges that all patronage of the Virginia Robinson Gardens requires a reservation, a process by which staff can manage all parking-related issues. Further, as discussed on Draft SEIR page 6, only for special uses/events at the site would a valet parking arrangement be utilized. This is consistent with events in the city of Beverly Hills and all functions would be held in compliance with Beverly Hills regulations.

Finally, the commenter opines that the Virginia Robinson Gardens is essentially a private home and cannot accommodate large, public influxes. It is important to note that the request at hand is to make minor changes to the existing operational characteristics of the Virginia Robinson Gardens which is a public facility owned and operated by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. While the County makes every attempt to be a good neighbor to the surrounding residential uses and to maintain the essence of the single-family residential character/estate that was the Robinson Estate, the allowable land use was changed from single-family residential to public open space and garden in 1980, as disclosed on Draft SEIR page 2. As such,

the opinion of the commenter that the project site cannot be utilized for public purposes is inaccurate and no further response is required.

ALP-9 The commenter opines that the project site was never meant to be a "major tourist attraction", suggesting that limited public use is acceptable. Contrary to the suggestion of the commenter that the project site would be a "major tourist attraction", Draft SEIR page 2, the project site was "… established as a facility for testing, planting, and demonstrating the natural growth of plants that cannot be grown at other arboretum facilities in the County, allowing for educational programs and special tours of the grounds for biology, botany, and horticulture groups with related classes and seminars. The [1980] EIR established a detailed schedule, limiting the hours of operation and number of daily visitors allowed at the project site for guided tours, classes and seminars, and special events, as well as number of employees at the project site (discussed in greater detail in Table 1 [Comparison of Existing and Proposed Operations])." This does not state or allude to the fact that the project site is open for massive public influx, rather, an ordered, reservation-only garden environment. The proposed project includes a request for minor operational changes to this established protocol and would allow for the same daily maximum attendance at the site (either daily or during special uses/events) and does not suggest that a "major tourist attraction" would be created as purported by the commenter.

Finally, this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue; no further response is required.

ALP-10 The commenter suggests that the Draft SEIR does not account for impacts of the proposed project caused by such uses as "… music in the garden, piano recitals in the Main Residence, theatre in the garden, poetry reading, author book signings, bird watching, donor receptions or temporary exhibits …". However, this statement is flawed by the fact that the commenter reproduces a portion of the project description (Draft SEIR page 11) that is analyzed, in its entirety, in the Draft SEIR. Impacts to neighboring homes (as identified by the commenter) are analyzed in each of the 17 CEQA issue areas, as appropriate.

Further, the commenter suggests that these uses should take place at existing museums and auditoriums that are located in commercial areas. However, these uses are generally compatible with the single-family residential nature of the area as well as events held in the Beverly Hills community. While it may be the opinion of the commenter that these uses would be better-provided at existing museums and auditoriums, the provisions of these activities at the project site has been sufficiently analyzed in the Draft SEIR and no significant and unavoidable impacts were identified. Finally, the commenter does not provide a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue where he believes that these uses would create an impact not identified in the Draft SEIR; no further response is required.

ALP-11 This comment states that the Draft SEIR fails to account for the travel of sound, suggesting that noise monitoring cannot account for the travel of sound over the rolling hill nature of the area. As discussed beginning on Draft SEIR page 97, the topography and nature of sound at the site was accounted for and monitoring was conducted to respect this phenomena. Atkins staff monitored eight locations surrounding the project site, including those downgrade from the project site (thereby increasing the potential impact for sound nuisance). The analysis determined that the primary source for noise was vehicular in nature which would "trump" operational noise impacts of the proposed project. Contrary to the commenter's statement, the analysis included in the Draft SEIR did account for the noise sources in the project area specifically, and is based on analysis of the area in particular, therefore accounting for inconsistencies in topography.

ALP-12 The commenter suggests that commercial filming is sufficiently restricted within the city of Beverly Hills. However, it appears that the commenter is considering commercial ***video*** shoots, rather than the commercial, ***still*** filming shoots that are requested under the proposed project, as a continuation of the approved uses in the 1980 land use agreement and associated 1980 EIR. All parking and noise impacts would occur on-site, and would not reach off-site sources, as identified by the Draft SEIR. No further response is required.

ALP-13 The commenter suggests that patrons should be able to enjoy the Virginia Robinson Garden during the weekdays, thereby allowing residential neighbors to enjoy their homes on weekends. Further, the commenter states that the D[S]EIR fails to address the concerns of the surrounding neighborhood. Contrary to the commenters statement, the Draft SEIR analyzes exactly the change the commenter suggests – that of opening the project site for public use/visitation on a weekend day (specifically Saturday). While use/opening of the project site on a Saturday may not be "justified" (as opined by the commenter) as a land use decision, this is different than the issue of whether or not the environmental impacts have been analyzed under CEQA. Per the analysis provided throughout the Draft SEIR, operation of the project site on Saturdays would not result in significant and unavoidable impacts. As such, no further response is required.

The commenter goes on to state that the "… D[S]EIR fails to respond to notion [sic] that Saturday operations amounts to a de facto zoning change of the area to the detriment of the area. Per City code, none of the homes in the area can operate an open public business from their residence on Mon-Fri let alone on a Saturday or Holidays." To address the first point regarding a "de facto zone change", the commenter is in error that the Draft SEIR did not address this issue. As discussed on Draft SEIR page 2 and in Response ALP-3, the 1980 EIR effectively codified operational regulations for the future use of the project site and has served as the governing land use document since that time. Further, as disclosed on Draft SEIR page 9, "By way of discretionary action, the County Board of Supervisors will consider an amendment to the existing Agreement between the County and The Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens.

Formally, this amendment will consist of rewriting Section 4.05 of the Agreement to reflect the proposed changes to the days and hours of operation of Virginia Robinson Gardens." This statement clearly identifies the intent of the County to amend the agreement [the de facto zone change the commenter is looking for] that acts as the underlying land use.

Finally, to address the point regarding operation of a business in a private home, as discussed in Response ALP-8, the allowable land use at the project site was changed from single-family residential to public open space and garden in 1980, thereby allowing the existing and proposed uses.

All comments will be forwarded to decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval. No further response is required.

ALP-14 The commenter states that the D[S]EIR fails to address the influx of tour buses in the neighborhood which in his opinion cause traffic congestion and aesthetic nuisances. Contrary to this comment, a traffic study for the project area was prepared to address traffic impacts of the proposed project. This study incorporated *all* current traffic on nearby roadways which includes tour buses. As such, tour buses were included in the existing (or baseline) conditions against which project traffic impacts were measured. Further, tour buses do not frequently make their way up the Elden Way cul-de-sac and would not directly conflict with project traffic and project site access. With respect to aesthetics, as discussed above, as tour buses do not frequently make their way up the Elden Way cul-de-sac and near enough to the project site that they could be seen by patrons, impacts to aesthetics as a result of tour buses would be less than significant. The proposed project would not result in the daily use of tour buses and would therefore not regularly increase the number of tour buses in the neighborhood. Any use of buses for special uses/events (in the event that valet parking cannot be accommodated, as discussed in Response ALP-3) would be intermittent and temporary in nature. As such, impacts to aesthetics due to tour buses would be less than significant. No further response is required.

ALP-15 The commenter states that the D[S]EIR fails to account for rush hour and peak traffic conditions, as well as weekend conditions, on nearby streets. Contrary to this statement, the traffic study did exactly this. Further, as discussed on page 6 of Appendix F (Traffic Impact Analysis), the traffic analysis went as far as determining the peak hour travel time for Elden Way and the project site which turned out to be slightly different than the typical peak hours. Contrary also to what the commenter stated, 24-hour traffic counts were taken from Tuesday to Sunday to understand traffic patterns and quantities on the neighborhood streets surrounding the project site.

The commenter also states that the traffic study does not account for pressures on surface streets when there is congestion on the I-405 Freeway. Due to the distance between the project site and the I-405 Freeway, as well as the low volume of traffic generated by the project site, an analysis of impacts to the mainline freeway or

interchanges was not warranted (per Caltrans and City of Beverly Hills standards). As such, no analysis is necessary. No further response is required.

ALP-16 The commenter states that the D[S]EIR does not analyze potential impacts to police and fire protection. The commenter also states that if the City of Beverly Hills will provide these services, a separate analysis needs to be provided. To address the second point first, the City of Beverly Hills would continue to provide fire and police protection services to the project area, including the project site. As such, to address the second point, Section XIV (Public Services) of the Draft SEIR analyzed impacts to Beverly Hills police and fire protection services. Beginning on Draft SEIR page 111, the analysis determined that all impacts would be less than significant. As such, the analysis requested by the commenter has been provided in the Draft SEIR (as noted above) and no further response is required.

ALP-17 The commenter states that the D[S]EIR does not discuss how the proposed project will deviate from Beverly Hills ordinances. Generally, the reason for this is that the proposed project will not require deviation from existing ordinances. Further, as discussed throughout the Draft SEIR. For example, Draft SEIR Section XII (Noise) analyzes the potential impacts of the project against the City's Noise Ordinance. Further, the Introduction Section discusses how the proposed project, although unnecessary due to the operational jurisdiction of the County, will obtain necessary City of Beverly Hills permits for such actions as valet parking. The proposed project is a continuation of existing uses at the Virginia Robinson Gardens, including commercial filming, and involves only minor changes to the operational characteristics. Refer to Response ALP-12 and Response ALP-13.

The commenter states that the City has restrictions regarding construction, both day and time. However, as discussed throughout the Draft SEIR, the project does not propose any construction activities; rather, it is a change in the operational characteristics of the Virginia Robinson Gardens. As such, the commenter's assertion that the Draft SEIR failed to discuss this is inaccurate.

Finally, the commenter again states that businesses cannot operate in a residential area such as is proposed. As discussed above, the proposed project is a continuation of existing uses at the Virginia Robinson Gardens and involves only minor changes to the operational characteristics. Refer to Response ALP-13.

ALP-18 This comment suggests that the impacts of seismic or fire events while a special use/event is being hosted at the project site have not been addressed. In response, refer to Draft SEIR Section VI (Geology and Soils) (a)(i) through (a)(iii), where, beginning on Draft SEIR page 69 the impacts due to seismic events are analyzed in full (including during a special use/event). All impacts were determined to be less than significant.

With respect to a "fire event", refer to Draft SEIR Section VIII (Hazards/Hazardous Materials) (g) and (h), on Draft SEIR pages 81 and 82, where the impacts due to wildland fires are analyzed in full. All impacts were determined to be less than

significant, including whether or not the proposed project would impair an emergency response plan.

Finally, the commenter suggests that the proposed project is a "commercial venture". Refer to Response ALP-13 regarding the continuation of existing uses at the project site and how the proposed project is not a business or commercial venture. As such, the analysis requested by the commenter has been provided in the Draft SEIR (as noted above) and no further response is required.

ALP-19 This comment states that the impact to the gardens (as a whole) based on an increase in visitors has not be analyzed. Contrary to this, and in response to the commenters specific reference to vegetation and trees, refer to Draft SEIR Section IV (Biological Resources) on Draft SEIR page 58, the impact to biological resources (which include such on-site resources as trees, vegetation, flora/fauna) is considered less than significant. This includes analysis of additional patrons each day, additional days of operation each week (including the potential for Saturdays), holidays, and four additional special events. All impacts were determined to be less than significant. Further, it is important to note that the number of patrons allowed on-site daily would not exceed the current daily maximum (100 patrons); the number of patrons on-site for a special use/event would remain substantially close to what occurs currently (700 patrons). As such, the proposed change would not be considered unreasonable on a daily or annual basis. This level of patronage does not begin to reach levels of museum or national park as asserted by the commenter. As such, the analysis requested by the commenter has been provided in the Draft SEIR (as noted above) and no further response is required.

ALP-20 This comment expresses the opinion of the commenter, including that approval of the SEIR could lead to a legal challenge and "… the certainty of an ill-conceived plan." As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

ALP-21 Similar to Comment ALP-4, the commenter states that it is his opinion that the County has failed in preparing the appropriate analysis, primarily due to the lack of inclusion of the findings and mitigation measures of the 1980 EIR. Further, the commenter suggests that the County should "reject" the Draft SEIR as inadequate. Refer to Response ALP-4.

As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Nancy Blumenfeld (BLU), 9/27/2012

Comments

BLU

From: NANCY Blumenfeld [mailto:ke6fmx@me.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 10:32 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: ROBINSON GARDEN

TO :J RUPERT.
FROM: NANCY BLUMENFELD.
SUBJECT: ALLOWING MORE ACCESS TO ROBINSON GARDEN.

AS A LONG TIME BEVERLY HILLS RESIDENT I BELIEVE THAT ROBINSON GARDEN SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO MORE PEOPLE. IT'S A TRAGEDY THAT MORE PEOPLE AREN'T ABLE TO ENJOY THE GARDEN.

THE BOARD MEMBERS WHO RUN THE GARDEN ARE DEDICATED TO MAKING THIS HISTORICAL, GORGEOUS PARK THE KEYSTONE OF ALL OUR PARKS. THEY ARE CONSIDERATE NEIGHBORS BUT HAVE BEEN UNDULY RESTRICTED BY OUT OF DATE EIR'S.

I HAVE REVIEW THEIR REQUEST AND INDEPENDENT STUDY AND THERE SEEMS TO BE NO IMPACT TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD WITH THESE CHANGES.

BLU-1

KIND REGARDS,
NANCY BLUMENFELD

Responses to Nancy Blumenfeld (BLU), 9/27/2012

BLU-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Ellisa Bregman (BRE), 9/22/2012

Comments

BRE

From: Ellisa Bregman [mailto:elanbre@aol.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 22, 2012 9:32 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Virginia Robinson Garedens

I have been a member of the VRG as we call it since 1994. I went on to become one of the many presidents of The Friends of Robinson Gardens in 1998.

My first visit to the Gardens was with Joan Selwyn the founder of The Friends of Robinson Gardens for the annual Children's Holiday Party. I was so impressed I became a member.

This year I am now co-chairing the Children's Holiday Party which is such a rewarding event for children who are from families who are underprivileged, children who are abused and children who are temporarily placed in homes until their family situations are remedied . Each year is so rewarding to see the wonderment of the Gardens through their eyes. BRE-1

The Gardens is a place where people can come to find peace, get in touch with the simple beauty and understanding of nature along with a sense of well being and security. It is hard to explain unless you have been there.

This is the reason we as the Friends of Robinson Gardens would like the public to have more access to the Gardens. In this very busy world there are few places one can go to simply enjoy an afternoon in the Gardens , attend one of our tours or educational programs.

Please consider our requests and let us be allowed to be Friends to more of our community.

Sincerely yours,
Ellisa L. Bregman

Responses to Ellisa Bregman (BRE), 9/22/2012

BRE-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Alan Buster (BUS), 9/26/2012

Comments

BUS

From: Alan Buster [mailto:alanbuster@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 26, 2012 11:57 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Proposed Changes at Robinson Gardens

Dear Ms. Rupert,

I have just reviewed the Draft Supplemental EIR. In my view, the proposed changes are modest and sensible. I think they would enable the Gardens to better serve the community without adverse impact on the neighborhood. BUS-1

Alan Buster
Santa Monica, CA

Responses to Alan Buster (BUS), 9/26/2012

BUS-1 This comment is generally in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Marion Buxton (BUX), 9/19/2012

Comments

BUX

From: mwbuxton@roadrunner.com
Sent: Wednesday, September 19, 2012 1:33 PM
To: rupert@parks.lacounty.gov
Subject: voice in support of operational changes for Virginia Robinson Gardens

Having read the report and proposal, I completely support the operational changes proposed For virginia Robinson Gardens, thus allowing more public access to a true gem.

Additionally, any activity led by Mr. Tim Lindsay will be totally executed with class, grace and fairness.

BUX-1

Blessings,
Marion Buxton

Responses to Marion Buxton (BUX), 9/19/2012

BUX-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Angela Cohan (COH), 9/27/2012

Comments

COH

From: Angela Cohan [mailto:cohan8@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 7:27 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: thank you

Dear Ms. Rupert,

I am very excited about the changes to the availability of the Virginia Robinson Gardens to the public. COH-1

thank you,

Angela Cohan

Responses to Angela Cohan (COH), 9/27/2012

COH-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Cynthia Comsky (COM), 10/4/2012

Comments

COM

From: CYNTHIA COMSKY [mailto:cyncom@me.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 04, 2012 5:41 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Virginia Robinson Gardens

Dear Joan,

I am a long time resident of Beverly Hills and I live across the street from The Gardens on Cove Way.

The Board Members and the dedicated garden staff have maintained the "jewel park" in every way and it should be made available for more people to see and enjoy. It is a choice piece of Beverly Hills history to be used and appreciated. I know Mrs. Robinson always welcomed people to her home and she loved to entertain. My parents told stories of her wonderful gatherings and the tennis events.

The outdated EIR restricts the amount of visitor activity in The Gardens. Tim Lindsay has always mandated that staff and guests to "The Gardens" be courteous to surrounding neighbors. The independent study and proposed request doesn't appear pose any effect or impact to the neighborhood.

I have reviewed the Impact Report for the proposed operational changes and I am in favor of the project.

COM-1

Best regards,

Cynthia Comsky

Responses to Cynthia Comsky (COM), 10/4/2012

COM-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project, from an adjacent neighbor. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Mary deKernion (DEK), 9/26/2012

Comments

DEK

From: Mary Dekernion [mailto:mdekernion@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 26, 2012 11:44 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Robinson Gardens

I would be a lovely thing if the regulations could be expanded for the use of the gardens by the public. DEK-1

I would like to see it pass.

Thanks,
Mary K. deKernion

Responses to Mary deKernion (DEK), 9/26/2012

DEK-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Claudia Deutsch (DEU), 10/5/2012

Comments

DEU

From: artspacewarehouse@gmail.com [mailto:artspacewarehouse@gmail.com] **On Behalf Of** Claudia Deutsch | Artspace Warehouse
Sent: Friday, October 05, 2012 10:25 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Robinson Gardens

Dear Ms. Rupert,

The proposed changes to the SEIR for Robinson Gardens have no significant impact. The SEIR states: "Traffic would increase, but only incrementally, and would not degrade the current character of the surrounding neighborhood." The neighbors should be happy about the potential advantages of the changes and not fight them. DEU-1

I strongly recommend the approval of this SEIR.

Sincerely,

Claudia Deutsch

--
Claudia Deutsch
Artspace Warehouse | HOT art at COOL prices.
claudia@artspacewarehouse.com | www.artspacewarehouse.com
7354 Beverly Blvd | Los Angeles CA | 90036
t. 323.936.7020 | f. 323.936.7454
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*Artspace Warehouse is one of the world's **leading galleries for savvy contemporary art collectors**. Founded in Basel, and now with galleries in Cologne, Zurich and Los Angeles, Artspace Warehouse specializes in guilt-free international urban, pop, graffiti and abstract art. The gallery is unintimidating and gives a new meaning to shopping for museum quality art within one's budget.*

Responses to Claudia Deutsch (DEU), 10/5/2012

DEU-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Cynthia Fields (FIE), 9/19/2012

Comments

FIE

From: cindy fields [mailto:cf5150@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 19, 2012 7:38 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Virginia Robinson Gardens

As a long time volunteer I support the changes proposed in the SEIR so that we may better serve the city of Los Angeles and those that visit in making this beautiful property more accessible to all. FIE-1

Thank you,
Cynthia Fields
Board Member
Friends of Robinson Gardens

Responses to Cynthia Fields (FIE), 9/19/2012

FIE-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Teri Fox-Stayner (FOX), 9/18/2012

Comments

FOX

From: Teri Fox-Stayner [mailto:foxystory@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 18, 2012 11:04 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Please approve

Dear Ms. Rupert,

As a childrens' docent for the Virginia Robinson Gardens, I would very much hope the County Board of Supervisors will expand the Gardens' educational opportunities.

Please know that I ecourage their approval of the recommendations for more days and hours of operation for this wonderful County facility. FOX-1

Sincerely,
Teri Fox-Stayner
foxystory@aol.com

Responses to Teri Fox-Stayner (FOX), 9/18/2012

FOX-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Barbara Fries (FRI), 9/19/2012

Comments

FRI

From: BARBARA FRIES [mailto:bhfries@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 19, 2012 4:07 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Virginia Robinson Gardens Proposal

Anything that would increase availability of the beautiful grounds to the public would be a definite plus for all concerned!

It's such a shame that so few are aware of this jewel in the County Parks System! FRI-1

Barbara Fries
17302 Leslie Avenue
Cerritos, CA 90703

Responses to Barbara Fries (FRI), 9/19/2012

FRI-1 This is generally a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Suzanne Gilbert (GIL), 9/28/2012

Comments

GIL

From: Suzanne Gilbert [mailto:suzi.gilbert@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, September 28, 2012 11:14 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Robinson Gardens

All parks improve life, but Robinson Gardens is both beautiful and educational. Please approve changes to the use of the gardens. GIL-1

Thank you, Suzanne Gilbert

Sent from my iPad

Responses to Suzanne Gilbert (GIL), 9/28/2012

GIL-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Dorothy Kamins (KAM), 9/27/2012

Comments

KAM

From: Dorothy Kamins [mailto:dorothy@pkdkamins.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 9:18 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Cc: Friends of Robinson Gardens; Kerstin Royce
Subject: Virginia Robinson Gardens

Dear Ms. Rupert:

As a member of the Virginia Robinson Gardens, I fully support the recommendations that are proposed.

Under Tim Lindsey's direction and with the members of the "Robinson Gardens", the property is continually being improved. These improvements, past and future are done with the utmost care and consideration of the neighbors. As a result I can assure you that the proposals recommended will be handled with care and allow the "Robinson Gardens" to embrace and expose visitors to the value of maintaining and enhancing such a beautiful property. KAM-1

Regards,
Dorothy Kamins
Member of Virginia Robinson Gardens

Responses to Dorothy Kamins (KAM), 9/27/2012

KAM-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Iris and Dick Kite (KIT), 10/10/2012

Comments

KIT

From: Iris Kite [mailto:iris.kite@me.com]

Sent: Wednesday, October 10, 2012 11:11 AM

To: Joan Rupert

Subject: Re: Virginia Robinson Gardens Proposed operational changes

We are so thrilled to have you as neighbors....and that you and the powers that be are so responsive to our needs...that anything you need to do to preserve the gardens is fine with us. KIT-1

If people need to park on our street, as long as the trash is cleaned up...we are fine.

Thanks

Iris and Dick Kite

Iris Kite

1031 Cove Way

Beverly Hills, CA 90210

310-892-2791 (cell)

iris.kite@me.com

www.iriskite.com

Responses to Iris and Dick Kite (KIT), 10/10/2012

KIT-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project from an adjacent neighbor. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Julia Klein (KLE), 9/26/2012

Comments

KLE

From: Julia Klein [mailto:jklein1954@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 26, 2012 11:47 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Virginia Robinson Gardens

Dear Joan,

As a relatively new resident to Beverly Hills, I was amazed when I was taken to Virginia Robinson Gardens for the first time. I have become very involved in the Gardens, volunteering many hours to help with all aspects of the Garden's operations. I am always baffled when I ask people who have lived in the area if they have ever heard about this Garden, and they say, "no." Then, after visiting the gardens themselves, they are also amazed that this hidden gem has been "up the hill" from their homes and they never knew about it. I feel the reason for this is due to the very limited exposure and also limited availability to visit this special place.

The amount of restoration that has taken place since I have arrived is notable. It is through generous donations that the Gardens have been able to survive and flourish. But, with increased hours of visitation and usage, I am sure that other's will be so impressed by this very special and unique Garden that increased donations to maintain and restore the home and gardens will be obtained.

Please approve the Proposed Operational Changes for the Virginia Robinson Gardens so this property will continue to delight people of all ages for years to come.

KLE-1

Respectfully,
Julia Klein

Responses to Julia Klein (KLE), 9/26/2012

KLE-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Suz Landay (LAN), 9/26/2012

Comments

LAN

From: swldesign@aol.com [mailto:swldesign@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 26, 2012 2:19 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: The Virginia Robinson Gardens

As a native Los Angeleno I fully support richness of our heritage. There are so few remnants of our rich history left for us to enjoy that it is a shame that this facility has such limited access to the public.

I have been a volunteer docent at the gardens for over 10 years. During that period I have enjoyed sharing this beautiful site and presenting the long-lost lifestyle of the rich and famous of the early 1900s. Sadly, we are only able to accommodate guests on 4 week days- never on a weekend. This severely limits the public access.

In my experience the staff and guests to the gardens have all shown respect for the property and the neighborhood.

The volunteer group, Friends of Robinson Gardens is dedicated to preserving this unique property and it's heritage. They work diligently to authentically restore every facet of the site. This takes money. LAN-1

Without allowing more access to the site how can these funds be generated?

We have products from the gardens- marmalades made from our fruit, a beautiful book written by our membership, botanical art we produce through our educational programs and other items. With more access we would be able to promote more revenue so that the Friends of Robinson Gardens could contribute even more money to maintain and restore this estate as it was from 1912.

The gardens represent the vision of only 2 people- Virginia and Harry Robinson- no one else ever lived on the property or influenced it. This is rare that a property would remain pristine for over 100 years. Let's ensure it's fate for a hundred more years of enjoyment for the public.

Suz Landay
620 South Irving Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90005

Responses to Suz Landay (LAN), 9/26/2012

LAN-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Thelma Levin (LEV), 9/14/2012

Comments

LEV

From: Leslie [mailto:kavanaugh.leslie@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 8:27 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Virginia Robinson Gardens proposed EIR changes

VRG is a wonderful attribute to our city. I am in total agreement with their proposed changes. They have been unduly restricted by very old and antiquated rules and they need to have more accessibility to the public.

I have read their entire proposal and I feel that they are opening this facility for more use while maintaining respect and privacy for its neighbors. They have even living under undo and unfair restrictions and this needs to be changed.

LEV-1

Thank you,
Thelma Levin
Neighbor

Sent from my iPhone

Responses to Thelma Levin (LEV), 9/14/2012

LEV-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Kathleen Luckard (LUC), 9/18/2012

Comments

LUC

From: Kathleen Luckard [mailto:kathleen.luckard@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 18, 2012 4:38 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Robinson Gardens

Dear Ms. Rupert,

I am a proud docent at Robinson Gardens and happily lead tours of that beautiful place.

I wholeheartedly support all of the proposed changes to increase accessibility and operation of Robinson Gardens. The additional revenue from more tours (especially on Saturdays) and events will continue to assure this Beverly Hills/Los Angeles treasure will survive and thrive.

The additional number of people attending the tours and events will assure the treasure will become more widely known.

Please feel free to call on my for any additional support I can provide.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Luckard

LUC-1

Responses to Kathleen Luckard (LUC), 9/18/2012

LUC-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Mike Mc Alister (MCA), 10/12/2012

Comments

MCA

From: mike [mailto:mmmcalister@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 2:21 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Virginia Robinson's Gardens

Dear Ms. Rupert,

My name is Mike Mc Alister and I spoke to Tim Lindsay several months ago about the changes to the hours at VRG. He called me to explain what they wanted to do and why and to get my thoughts on the impact to my properties.

I own 1034 and 1036 Cove Way as well as 1055 Carolyn Way. These 3 properties back up to the entire Northwest corner of the VRG.

Upon speaking to Mr. Lindsay, I have absolutely no problem with the VRG extending their hours to include Saturdays. MCA-1

I have lived at 1036 Cove way since 2000 and have always found the people at VRG very respectful to the homeowners in the neighborhood and any parties or events held at the property have had little or no impact to the surrounding neighbors.

If you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call.

Thank You

Mike Mc Alister

Sent from my iPad

Responses to Mike Mc Alister (MCA), 10/12/2012

MCA-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project from an adjacent neighbor. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Worthy McCartney (MCC), 9/26/2012

Comments

MCC

From: MCCARTNEY Forrest Worthy (CAR-US) [mailto:worthy.mccartney@cartier.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 26, 2012 11:33 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: The Virginia Robinson's Gardens proposed changes

Dear Mr. Rupert,

This is a very viable part of Beverly Hills and I would like for you to approve the proposed changes...certainly these types of special places make Beverly Hills what it is and more access is important. MCC-1

Best regards,
Worthy

Worthy McCartney
Sales Director
Cartier Beverly Hills
370 North Rodeo Drive Beverly Hills, California 90210
P: +1 310-275-4272
C: +1 917-972-0287

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Responses to Worthy McCartney (MCC), 9/26/2012

MCC-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Nancy Miller (MIL), 9/28/2012

Comments

MIL

From: Nancy Miller [mailto:craftyscott@aol.com]
Sent: Friday, September 28, 2012 11:05 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Robinson Gardens Proposal

Dear Ms. Rupert,

I have been a member of Friends of Robinson Gardens for eight years and have fully participated in the many programs and fund raising activities offered by the group.

I am also a member of the board and editor of the newsletter. One of the major issues that the Board faces each year is public access. The estate and its magnificent gardens were left to Los Angeles County for the benefit of the community. In todays world, men and women work, and children are in school when the gardens are open. In addition, the programs and activities that are offered cannot be presented on the weekends when the community would have the opportunity to enjoy them.

The neighborhood surrounding the gardens is composed of large estates with staff and personnel coming and going seven days a week. These homes do not provide parking for all these individuals causing heavy street parking. Guests of Robinson Gardens are limited to the parking within the estate and therefore do not effect the neighbors. MIL-1

The "society" of the neighborhood also allows for several large parties a year. Friends of Robinson Gardens should be no exception. We should be allowed to have a few evening and weekend events. The restrictions imposed on the property in the 1970's do not serve the community and are not in keeping with the rights and privileges enjoyed by the other residents in the area.

I strongly urge Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation, the City of Beverly Hills, and all other interested parties to approve the proposal.

Respectfully,

Nancy Scott Miller
310 472-5051

Responses to Nancy Miller (MIL), 9/28/2012

MIL-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Carol Morava (MOR), 9/24/2012

Comments

MOR

From: Carol Morava [mailto:cmorava7@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, September 24, 2012 3:24 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Public accessibility to Virginia Robinson Gardens (VRG)

VRG is a very valuable historical asset for LA County and should be made available for visitors for the extended times as set forth in their proposal; I have volunteered for many years at VRG and know how diligent the staff is in abiding by public access rules to minimize disturbance to the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, the additional time(s) requested will not have an adverse effect on adjacent homeowners. But it will enable more people to enjoy this beautiful and well preserved garden. MOR-1

C. Morava

Responses to Carol Morava (MOR), 9/24/2012

MOR-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Tania Norris (NOR), 9/18/2012

Comments

NOR

From: Tania Norris [mailto:floyd1908@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 18, 2012 1:55 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Virginia Robinson Gardens - Proposed changes

To whom it may concern,

Knowing the Virginia Robinson Gardens for the last twenty years and wishing to bring friends and out of town visitors to view the Gardens on a Monday or Saturday, has been impossible and frustrating.

As the Gardens are a public Garden, I feel strongly that they should be made more user friendly both for visitors and volunteers.

With the financial condition of The County of Los Angeles, I feel they should be looking for ways to help provide funds for the support of their public properties apart from using taxpayers money. By allowing the Virginia Robinson Gardens to have extended hours and days, would enable the Garden to become more financially independent. NOR-1

The public would be more aware of the beautiful estate and the availability of the property for docent tours, educational classes, garden instruction and by extending the availability for school children, (perhaps in limited numbers to start) allow them to have an experience far different from their homes and an exposure to nature and beautiful surroundings.

I sincerely hope that the extended hours and conditions will be allowed and that the dream of Virginia Robinson in deeding the gardens to the County of Los Angeles, will be fulfilled to the utmost degree.

Yours truly,
Tania Norris
Believer in Virginia Robinson's Dream

Responses to Tania Norris (NOR), 9/18/2012

NOR-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Donald Philipp (PHI), 10/8/2012

Comments

PHI

October 8, 2012

Joan A. Rupert; Section Head, Environmental & Regulatory Permitting
L.A. County Dept of Parks & Recreation
510 South Vermont Ave, Room 201
Los Angeles, CA 90020

PLANNING DIVISION
OCT 15 2012 PM 3:44
RECEIVED

Joan A. Rupert:

I have been a docent at the Virginia Robinson Gardens for 10 years. Tim Lindsay, Superintendent of the Gardens, has recently informed the docents that they are still able to make written comments on the SEIR regarding proposed operational changes to the Gardens.

I would like to make my comments on two levels:
the significance of the Gardens as a regional or County-wide facility and
the specific operational changes stated in the SEIR.

PHI-1

By way of background, I was a Regional Planner for the L.A. County Dept of Regional Planning for 26 years between 1956-1983. In that capacity I was the prime author of the "Regional Recreation Areas Plan" adopted by the L.A. County Regional Planning Commission in December, 1959. This Plan was a joint study by both the departments of Regional Planning and Parks & Recreation. Although it was not approved or adopted by the L.A. County Board of Supervisors (it would subject the County to possibly fund facilities in incorporated cities), it does not invalidate these facilities as having County-wide recognition.

There are 24 identified Specialized Facilities under which the Gardens would qualify for 2 - Arboreta & Botanic Gardens and Historical Structures & Sites. The list specifically includes both the Arboretum and Descanso Gardens. Had the Gardens been in County ownership at that time, there is no doubt in my mind as lead author of the "Regional Recreation Areas Plan" that the Gardens would have been included in this list.

The Gardens internationally and prestigious address in Beverly Hills rather perversely downplays its recognition

PHI-2

2

as a County-wide historical structure and associated gardens. I would suspect that most individuals seeing the address would think of it as a local attraction in this moderate-sized city rather than its more regional significance. PHI-2 Cont.

Before I make comments about specific operational changes in the SEIR, let me briefly summarize my experiences as a Regional Planner in citizen input (both at community meetings as well as written communications). I was involved with a variety of community plans: West Hollywood (dense residential & commercial); La Habra Heights (semi-rural density); La Canada-Flintridge (moderate residential & commercial). All of these communities had to address the issue of non-conforming uses (similar to those at the Gardens) — such as churches, fire stations, utility infrastructure. This necessitated adopting regulations to ameliorate their impact on the adjoining residential areas. Most of the neighbors' concerns related to hours of operations, parking, and type of activities — precisely those concerns which are addressed in the SEIR. As I review these conditions they are very reasonable, particularly considering that vehicle access is limited to a short portion of the Elden cul-de-sac. More restrictive access would seriously limit the ability of the County to fulfill its role to accommodate visitors to enjoy this regionally significant historical site. PHI-3

You might be interested in a reverse situation where the adjoining neighbors to a non-conforming use were the "block heads". Following my retirement from the County, I was employed for 10 years in the Security Dept of the J. Paul Getty Museum / Malibu. This was a similar situation to the Gardens because you had a non-conforming use (the museum) surrounded by single family homes. PHI-4

The Museum's 65-acre property boundaries essentially follow the drainage divide of the small creek. It came to the attention of the Museum that several of the ridge-top, income-challenged (!!) residents were encroaching on Getty Property by appropriating downslope areas for barbecue PHI-5

3

pools, play area for kids, etc. It was not visually apparent because of dense vegetation on the slopes. As you know, this might trigger a "prescriptive rights" issue whereby after 7 years if the property owner doesn't exert his rights to deny access, he forfeits his rights to deny further access. PHI-5 Cont.

The Getty gave notice to the property owners that on a specific date the Getty would demolish any structures, landscaping, etc on its property. 2 and several other Security officers in the deployed to the underground parking structure where 2 police cars were parked to be able in case there was any confrontation. Fortunately, there was none. PHI-6

Sorry this letter seems to be rather lengthy but I thought you might be interested in a broader framework as you consider this SEIR for the Gardens. PHI-7

Sincerely,

Donald A. Philipp
6348 Boney Ave
Reseda, CA 91335

P.S. There are 2 copies the "Regional Recreation Area Plan" in the L.A. History section at the Huntington in San Marino

C.C: Lindsay

Responses to Donald Philipp (PHI), 10/8/2012

PHI-1 This comment provides introductory material. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required.

PHI-2 The commenter provides some information about his background and relationship with/to the project site. Generally, this is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the

Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required.

PHI-3 The commenter provides some information about his background and relationship with/to the project site. Generally, this is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required.

PHI-4 This comment provides background regarding the commenter and his experience in the Security Department for the Getty Villa in Malibu and relates the proposed project site to the Getty Villa in that they are both "non conforming uses". Refer to Response ALP-3 regarding the current zoning and allowable uses on the project site (i.e., the existing and proposed uses are not considered non-conforming). Further, as this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required.

PHI-5 This comment provides information on the non-conforming uses of the Getty Villa Malibu and the potential for prescriptive rights of adjacent neighbors. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR, no further response is required.

PHI-6 The commenter provides more information on the background of the Getty Villa Malibu. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required.

PHI-7 This comment provides conclusory remarks and is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR; nor does not raise a specific environmental issue. As such, no further response is required.

Susan Rifkin (RIF), 10/8/2012

Comments

RIF

From: Susan G. Rifkin [mailto:sgrca@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, October 08, 2012 11:57 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: VRG changes

I am in favor favor of extended hours and that VRG be open on Saturday, because this will provide greater access to the public. RIF-1

Susan

--
Susan G. Rifkin
sgrca@aol.com
310.247.1594 phone
310.502.6600 cell

Responses to Susan Rifkin (RIF), 10/8/2012

RIF-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Greer Saunders (SAU), 10/7/2012

Comments

SAU

From: Greer Saunders [mailto:greermail1@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, October 07, 2012 10:37 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Virigina Robinson Gardens

Dear Ms. Rupert,

I am writing to you in support of expanded hours and extra days for Virginia Robinson Gardens (VRG). Many of the residents of Beverly Hills don't know of this first estate in BH, because VRG hours of operation are such that people who work can't tour. If the hours were extended, then many more people could tour. If they were open on Sat., we could offer more tours as well as children's tours for the county! This historic site is a place of learning and beauty and must be enjoyed by the community. SAU-1

I hope you will consider this request.
Thank you,

Greer Saunders
School Tours/ VRG

Responses to Greer Saunders (SAU), 10/7/2012

SAU-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Debra Shaw (SHA), 10/7/2012

Comments

SHA

From: Debra Shaw [mailto:debshaw1@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, October 07, 2012 2:35 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Proposed operational changes to Virginia Robinson Gardens

October 7, 2012

Dear Ms. Rupert,

When reading over the proposed changes to the SEIR for this facility, I was interested to note how many of the areas of concern showed very little or no impact to the area around Virginia Robinson Gardens. The objections raised at the community hearing for the project concerned, virtually entirely, the envisioned results on the quality of life for the current residents of the cul de sac at the end of which this large and sequestered property is located. And these objections—raised primarily by the residents of one particular dwelling—turned out, when closely examined, to consist of anxiety about parking, or more specifically the ability of these residents to have access to parking on the entire street when and if they happened to be giving a party during the hours in which VRG would not be accessible to the public at all. In other words, this is an objection with little basis in reality. As the SEIR states: "Traffic would increase, but only incrementally, and would not degrade the current character of the surrounding neighborhood." SHA-1

Measured against the potential advantages of the proposed changes, which would permit the increased ability of students and others with restrictions on their weekday daytime hours to explore the site, and to benefit from the exposure to botany, wildlife, and an incredibly potent sense of a way of life dating from the very earliest days of Beverly Hills history, it seems to me that these objections might fade in significance even if they had more grounding. But the fact is that the expanded hours of operation sought by the VRG present almost no conflict at all with expressed concern of the neighbors, and what's more, the VRG has a record of excellent co-operation with the neighbors in question.

I applaud the conclusions reached in this SEIR, and would strongly recommend its approval.

Sincerely,
Debra Shaw
9131 Callejuela Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Responses to Debra Shaw (SHA), 10/7/2012

SHA-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Charles Tellalian (TEL), 9/28/2012

Comments

TEL

From: Charles Tellalian [mailto:sequoiaretir@earthlink.net]
Sent: Friday, September 28, 2012 4:23 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Virginia Robinson Gardens

Ms Rupert,

I am a resident who has owned and reside within a quarter mile of Robinson"s Gardens for over forty years. I would like to comment on the proposed changes to that location that you currently have under review.

Robinson"s Gardens has had both a positive cultural and environmental impact on our neighborhood. In addition it has been a "good neighbor" for as long as I have known of its existence.

The requested changes in their administration seem to be totally reasonable and should have a positive influence on the neighborhood and community in general. Even the environmental study seems to indicate not negative impact if the requested changes are approved.

The approval of the requested changes gives Los Angeles the opportunity to support the growth of historical preservation in the City and County. I support and urge the approval of the requested changes.

TEL-1

Sincerely,

Charles Tellalian
mailto:sequoiaretir@earthlink.net

Responses to Charles Tellalian (TEL), 9/28/2012

TEL-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Leslie Tillmann (TIL1), 10/6/2012

Comments

TIL1

From: Casentina@aol.com [mailto:Casentina@aol.com]
Sent: Saturday, October 06, 2012 1:22 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Robinson Gardens Proposal

Dear Ms. Rupert,

I support the proposed changes to increase public accessibility and operations of the Virginia Robinson Gardens. The expanded hours will be especially useful to broaden the educational opportunities for children and youth in our communities: one of the primary missions of the County of Los Angeles, Virginia Robinson Gardens and the Friends of Robinson Gardens.

Due to many financial cuts in schools, especially field trips and other extracurricular activities, this access is very important. Our children need to learn about the living and growing environment and this expanded time will allow for that, as school field trips are no longer available. Expanded afternoon hours will allow children from all over the County to visit Robinson Gardens after school with Girl or Boy Scouts, or will allow other youth groups to volunteer for community service hours. Saturdays will allow time for expanded time for education and service as well. TIL1-1

The estate buildings, which are being restored to a historic time in Mrs. Robinson's life, also represent a chance to educate both children and adults about the significance of this era for Los Angeles. When they are exposed to this rich history, all will share a respect for the built and living environment.

The staff and volunteers at Virginia Robinson Gardens all care deeply about the Gardens and will continue to give many hours of service while also continuing respectful concern for the neighborhood with this expanded usage.

Thank you,

Leslie Forester Tillmann
Architect
P.O. Box 968
Palos Verdes Estates
California 90274

Responses to Leslie Tillmann (TIL1), 10/6/2012

TIL1-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Rolf Tillmann (TIL2), 9/26/2012

Comments

TIL2

From: rolf@buildingthebest.com [mailto:rolf@buildingthebest.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 26, 2012 1:45 PM
To: Joan Rupert
Cc: tillcom@aol.com
Subject: Virginia Robinson Gardens

Ms. Rupert

I am in complete support of expanding the public's ability to enjoy Virginia Robinson Gardens. The value of having a magical place like this to provide a haven from the urban congestion of Los Angeles is exceptional. The addition of events will contribute more resources to preserve and continue the gardens in the way that Mrs. Robinson had envisioned when she graciously gave the property to the Los Angeles County. TIL2-1

I ask you to support this effort in the fullest possible way.

Thank you

Rolf Tillmann

The Marshall Group
31125 Via Colinas, Suite 908
Westlake Village, CA. 91362
Phone 818-652-6974
Email rolf@buildingthebest.com
WWW.BUILDINGTHEBEST.COM

Responses to Rolf Tillmann (TIL2), 9/26/2012

TIL2-1 This is a comment in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Jamie Wolf (WOL), 9/25/2012

Comments

WOL

From: Jamie Wolf [mailto:jrw@artnet.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 25, 2012 9:20 AM
To: Joan Rupert
Subject: Proposed operational changes to Virginia Robinson Gardens

September 25, 2012

Dear Ms. Rupert,

In glancing over the proposed changes to the SEIR for this facility, what's striking is the number of boxes checked either for "no significant impact" or "NO impact" (emphasis mine). The objections raised at the community hearing for the project concerned, virtually entirely, the envisioned results on the quality of life for the current residents of the cul de sac at the end of which this large and sequestered property is located. And these objections—raised primarily by the residents of one particular dwelling—turned out, when closely examined, to consist of anxiety about parking, or more specifically the ability of these residents to have access to parking on the entire street when and if they happened to be giving a party during the hours in which VRG would not be accessible to the public at all. In other words, this is an objection with little basis in reality. As the SEIR states: "Traffic would increase, but only incrementally, and would not degrade the current character of the surrounding neighborhood." WOL-1

Measured against the potential advantages of the proposed changes, which would permit the increased ability of students and others with restrictions on their weekday daytime hours to explore the site, and to benefit from the exposure to botany, wildlife, and an incredibly potent sense of a way of life dating from the very earliest days of Beverly Hills history, it seems to me that these objections might fade in significance even if they had more grounding.

But the fact is that the expanded hours of operation sought by the VRG present almost no conflict at all with expressed concern of the neighbors, and what's more, the VRG has a record of punctilious co-operation with the neighbors in question.

I applaud the conclusions reached in this SEIR, and would strongly recommend its approval. WOL-2

Sincerely,

Jamie R. Wolf
812 North Foothill Road
Beverly Hills, California 90210

Responses to Jamie Wolf (WOL), 9/25/2012

WOL-1 The commenter suggests that the objections of the community heard at the Public Meeting held for the proposed project were the voices of a very few and "… with little basis in reality." The commenter references portions of the Draft SEIR, summarizing that the analysis determined that the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to the environment. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR, no further response is required.

WOL-2 This is a comment generally in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Tony Yakimowich (YAK), 10/10/2012

Comments

YAK

-----Original Message-----

From: Tony Yakimowich [mailto:tonyyakimowich@yahoo.com]

Sent: Wednesday, October 10, 2012 5:26 PM

To: Joan Rupert

Subject: DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL EIR FOR THE VIRGINIA ROBINSON GARDENS

Hello Joan,

I reviewed the subject draft report for the operation of the Virginia Robinson Garden and fully support the proposed changes. After 30 years, these changes are long overdue and currently necessary for the financial viability of the facility.

My one suggestion is to clarify the section, "Number of patrons in attendance." The limitation of 100 visitors should specifically exclude "staff and security personnel." This will avoid any confusion later on. YAK-1

Best regards,

Tony Yakimowich

Sent from my iPad

This message has been checked for threats by Atkins IS

Responses to Tony Yakimowich (YAK), 10/10/2012

YAK-1 This is a comment generally in support of the proposed project. As this comment is not a direct comment on the content or adequacy of the Draft SEIR and does not raise a specific environmental issue, no further response is required. However, all comments will be provided to the decision makers prior to their consideration of project approval.

Per the commenter's suggestion, the following text change has been made, as identified in the Changes to the Draft Supplemental EIR Section (Text Changes) of this document.

> This change would not alter the existing maximum number of visitors on site daily (100) but would allow greater flexibility for the Virginia Robinson Gardens to provide programming that meets public interests while simultaneously meeting the goal of greater site accessibility. For example, under the proposed project, a 49-member class/seminar could be offered in the morning and a 51-person tour in the afternoon. However, under current operations, if both a tour and a class/seminar are offered in the same day, the total number of visitors is restricted to 50 people per tour at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM or 100 visitors per day, or if a seminar or luncheon is scheduled, visitation is restricted to 80 persons. All public visitations would continue to require advanced reservations and parking on site. <u>The maximum number of daily visitors (100) excludes any staff or security on site.</u>

Appendix F Traffic Impact Analysis [Revised]

Traffic Impact Analysis

Virginia Robinson Gardens Project

Beverly Hills, Los Angeles County, California

ATKINS
475 Sansome Street, Suite 2000
San Francisco, CA

October 2013

I. Introduction

This Traffic Impact Analysis provides an analysis of the traffic and circulation associated with the Virginia Robinson Gardens site located in Beverly Hills, California. The proposed project is located north of Santa Monica Boulevard (CA SR 2), east of Benedict Canyon Drive and west of Beverly Drive. The project site is located at 1008 Elden Way, north of Crescent Drive. The purpose of this report is to present existing and with-project traffic conditions associated with the proposed project and to meet the City of Beverly Hills traffic analysis requirements.

II. Site Description

The 6.5-acre project site is located in a residential neighborhood and functioned as an estate that served as the residence of Virginia and Harry Robinson from 1911 to 1977. Subsequently, the estate was transferred to the County of Los Angeles and is currently owned and operated by the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. The project site currently functions as an arboretum, botanic garden and a historic estate that contains a display garden, mansion and pool pavilion. The project site is open by appointment to the public and also serves as a site for charity and fundraising events twice every year. The location of the study area is shown in Figure 1 (Study Area).

III. Existing Conditions

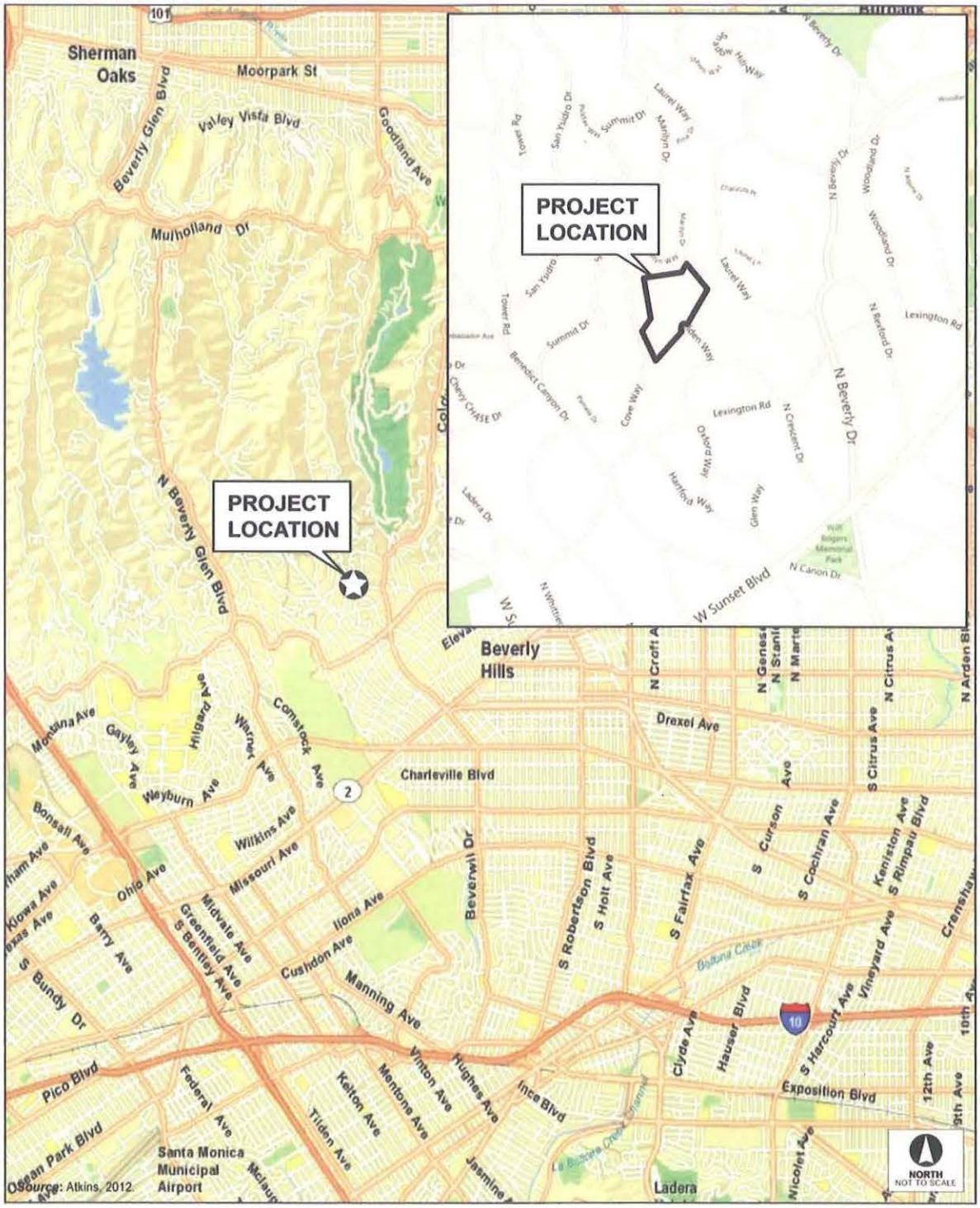
The operation of the approximately 6-acre facility is governed by an EIR that was prepared in 1980 to address the change in land use from a single family residence to its current land use as a public garden. The operating hours for the arboretum are by appointment-only and extend from 11:00 AM to 3:30 PM, Tuesday to Friday. Additionally, a maximum of 100 people and 20 cars are allowed on the site during the Tuesday to Friday operating hours. Mini-tour buses are allowed (as long as they can fit on site) and vehicles visiting the site must park on-site. In addition, two large fundraising events are held on-site annually. Parking for such events is accommodated through valet parking or shuttle buses from the surrounding neighborhood.

Adjacent Street System

The study site is located at the end of a cul-de-sac at 1008 Elden Way. Regional access would be provided by Interstate 405 (I-405). Figure 2 (Project Vicinity and Study Intersections) displays the existing roadway network in the vicinity of the project site, as well as the intersections studied in this traffic analysis.

Regional Access

I-405 is a ten-lane (four mixed flow plus one HOV) freeway providing the primary regional access to the project site. It is a major north / south highway west of Beverly Hills, extending from Santa Clara to Westminster. In the vicinity of the City of Beverly Hills, I-405 has an interchange with Sunset Boulevard, Wilshire Boulevard, and Santa Monica Boulevard which are located just south of the study area and provide access from the study site via Benedict Canyon Drive and Beverly Drive.



Source: Atkins, 2012

Figure 1 Study Area

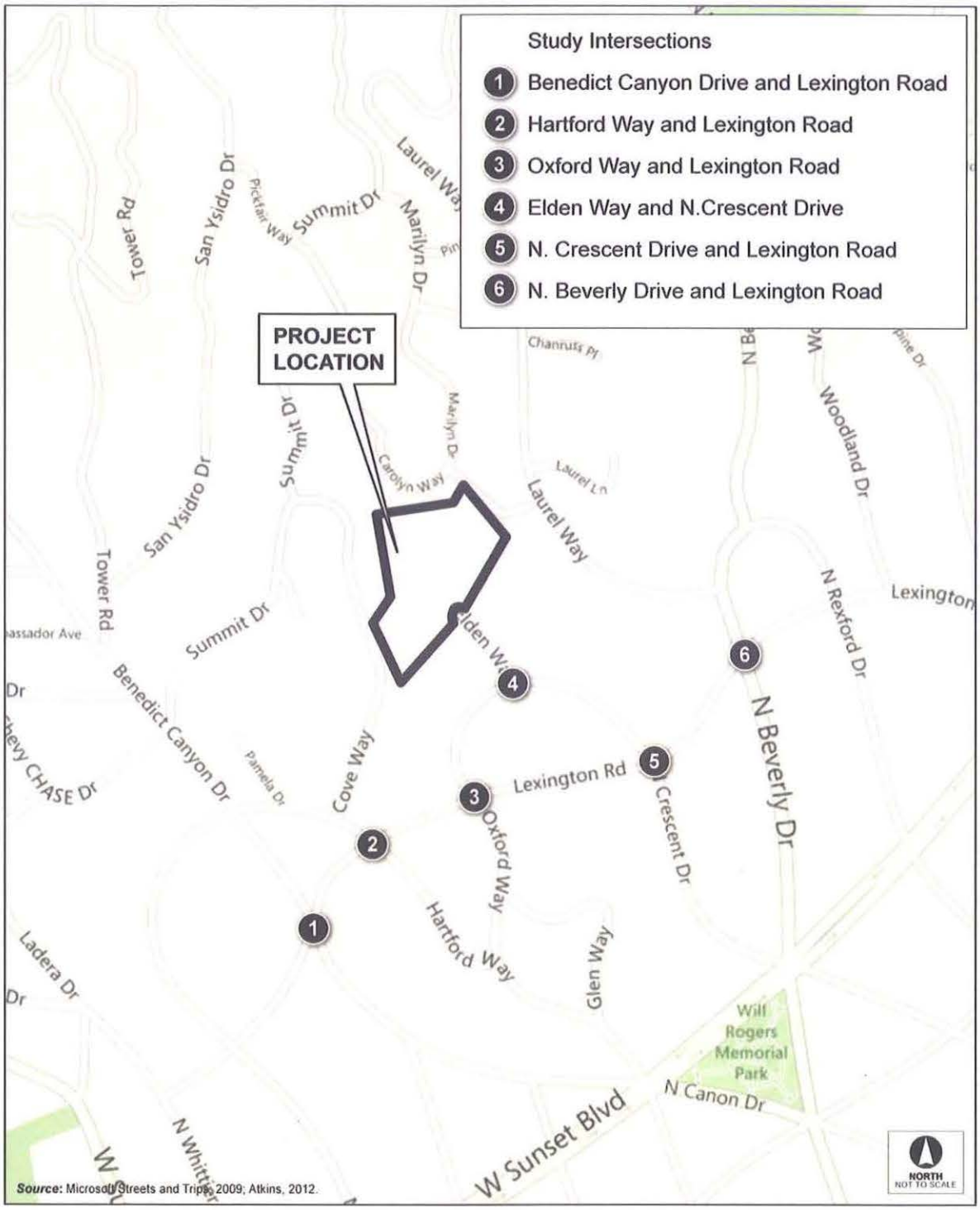


Figure 2 Project Vicinity and Study Intersections

Local Access

Benedict Canyon Drive is a two-lane north/south collector roadway in the vicinity of the study area that extends from Santa Monica Boulevard to Mulholland Drive, both of which interface with I-405 to the west via interchanges.

Beverly Drive, similar to Benedict Canyon Drive, is a two-lane north/south collector roadway in the vicinity of the study area. Beverly Drive extends from Santa Monica Boulevard in the south to Coldwater Canyon Drive to the north. Beverly Drive functions as a major roadway that provides critical north/south connectivity through the City of Beverly Hills.

Lexington Drive is a two-lane east/west arterial, south of the project site. The roadway extends from Whittier Drive on the west side and Beverly Drive to the east, terminating at Sunset Boulevard to the south.

Traffic Volumes

Exploratory machine counts were conducted on Crescent Drive and Elden Way from Tuesday to Sunday in June 2012. The goal of these counts was to determine the peaking characteristics of the site traffic and to determine the analysis periods for the project site. Review of the machine counts indicated that the roadway adjacent to the study area experienced peaks from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM in the morning and from 4:45 PM to 5:45 PM in the evening.

Review of temporal distribution of daily traffic indicates that the roadway experiences the highest traffic on Thursdays and the lowest traffic on Sundays. Traffic on Fridays is similar to daily traffic on Thursdays. Traffic volumes on Saturdays are lower than the weekday peak volumes and occur during the middle of the day as opposed to the PM peak for weekdays. Figure 3 (Existing [2012] Weekly Volume Variation) shows the weekly volume variations on Elden Way and Crescent Drive.

Review of daily traffic distribution indicates that the AM peak hour volume on Elden Way is less than 10 vehicles per hour and the PM peak hour is approximately 25 vehicles per hour. Elden Way accommodates higher volumes on weekdays as compared to weekends and experiences the highest volumes between 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Weekend volumes on other roadways are approximately half of weekday traffic. Daily volume variation on Elden Way is shown in Figure 4 (Existing [2012] Daily Volume Variation—Elden Way). Traffic related to construction activities in the neighborhood and parking overflow traffic from other streets in the entire area/neighborhood parks on Elden Way because it's the only street that has no parking restrictions. For example, Crescent Drive, Lexington Street and other local street all have 2-hour parking restriction which is absent on Elden Way. However, no volume reductions were performed to study counts and this yields a conservative analysis of operations.

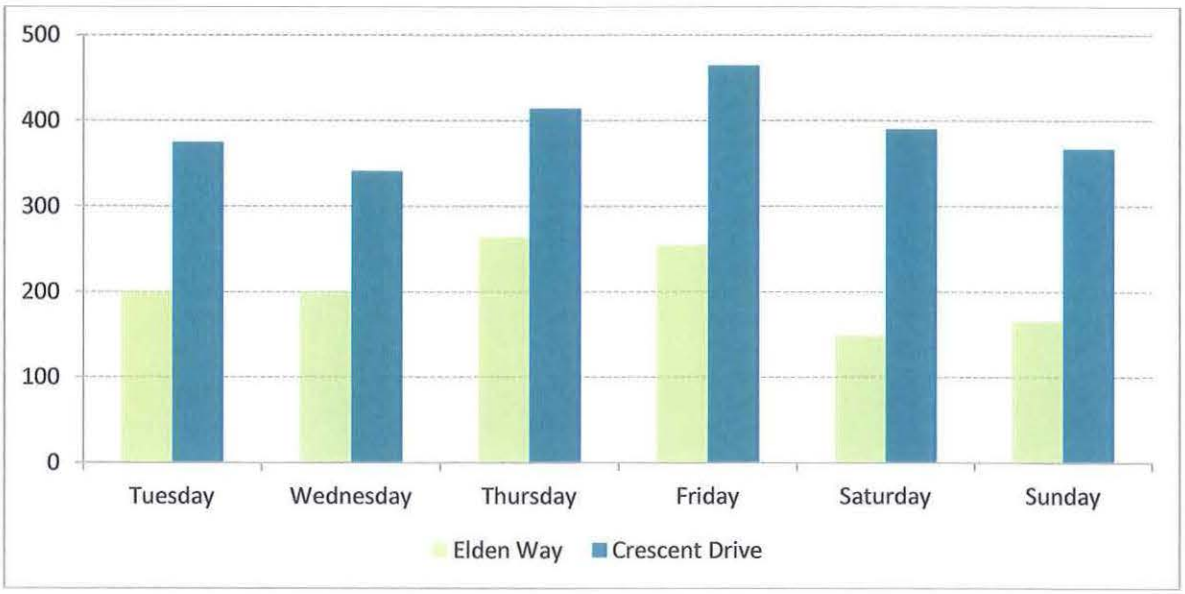


Figure 3 Existing (2012) Weekly Volume Variation

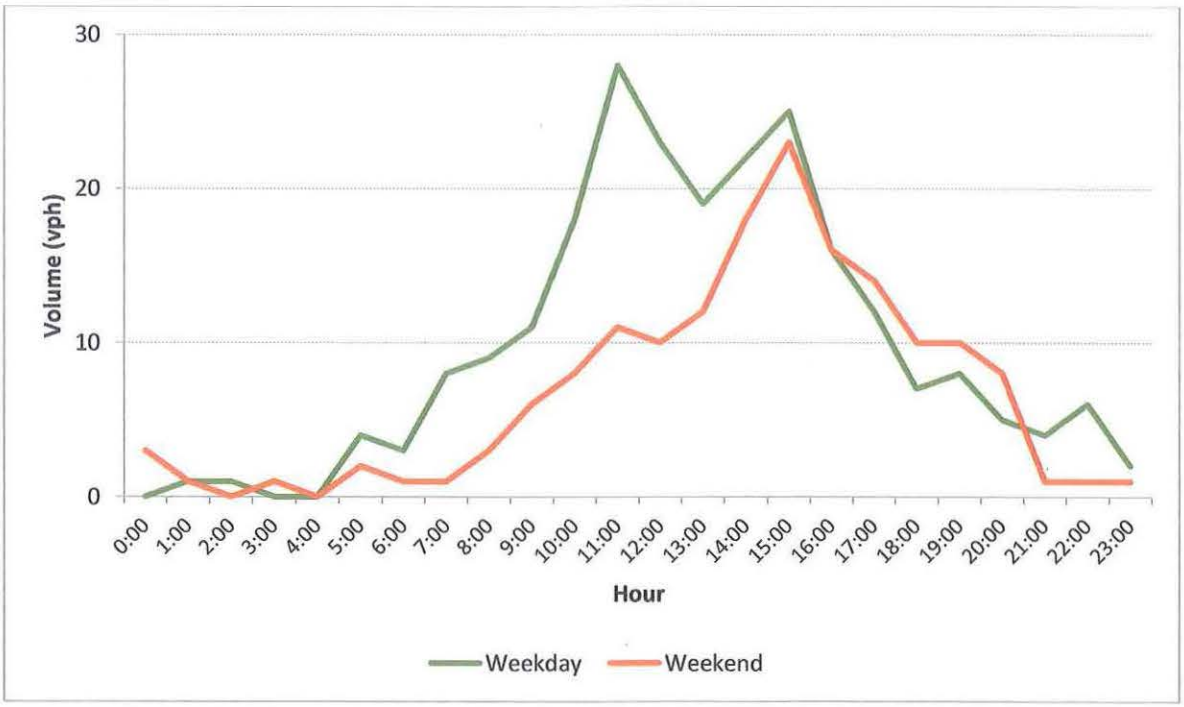


Figure 4 Existing (2012) Daily Volume Variation—Elden Way

The traffic counts also revealed that the project site did not experience any traffic during the morning peak and that the traffic intensity for the PM peak hour was much higher than that observed for the AM peak. Due to these observed patterns, the PM peak hour was determined to be 4:45 PM to 5:45 PM for the analysis. Existing year 2012 intersection operating conditions were evaluated for the evening (4:45 PM to 5:45 PM) peak periods. Detailed count sheets are provided in Appendix A. Intersection turning movement counts were collected at study intersections on two midweek days (Tuesday or Wednesday) in late June 2012. The following six study intersections were analyzed:

1. Benedict Canyon Drive and Lexington Road
2. Hartford Way and Lexington Road
3. Oxford Way and Lexington Road
4. Elden Way and N. Crescent Drive
5. N. Crescent Drive and Lexington Road
6. N. Beverly Drive and Lexington Road

All roadways in the study area are two-lane roadways with no turning lanes at intersections. The intersections of Benedict Canyon Drive and Lexington Road and N. Beverly Drive and Lexington Road are signalized intersections. The remaining intersections are side-street stop-controlled intersections. Existing PM peak hour volumes are shown in Figure 5 (Existing [2012] PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts).

Operational Analysis

To measure and describe the operating conditions of intersections, a rating system called Level of Service (LOS) is commonly used. The LOS is a qualitative description of the performance of an intersection based on the average delay per vehicle. Intersection levels of service range from LOS A, which indicates free flow or excellent conditions with short delays, to LOS F, which indicates congested or overloaded conditions with extremely long delays. LOS A through LOS D is considered excellent to satisfactory service levels, LOS E is undesirable, and LOS F conditions are representative of gridlock. The study intersections, both signalized and unsignalized, have been evaluated using the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 2010 methodology.

Signalized Intersections

For signalized intersections, HCM methodology determines the capacity of each lane group approaching the intersection. The LOS is then defined based on average delay (in seconds per vehicle) for the various movements at the intersection. A combined weighted average delay and LOS are presented for the intersection. In addition to HCM methodologies, Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU) methodologies were used to compute intersection LOS in accordance with the analysis procedures of the City of Beverly Hills. Table 1 (Level of Service Criteria—Signalized Intersections Average Seconds of Delay) presents the LOS criteria for the signalized intersections.

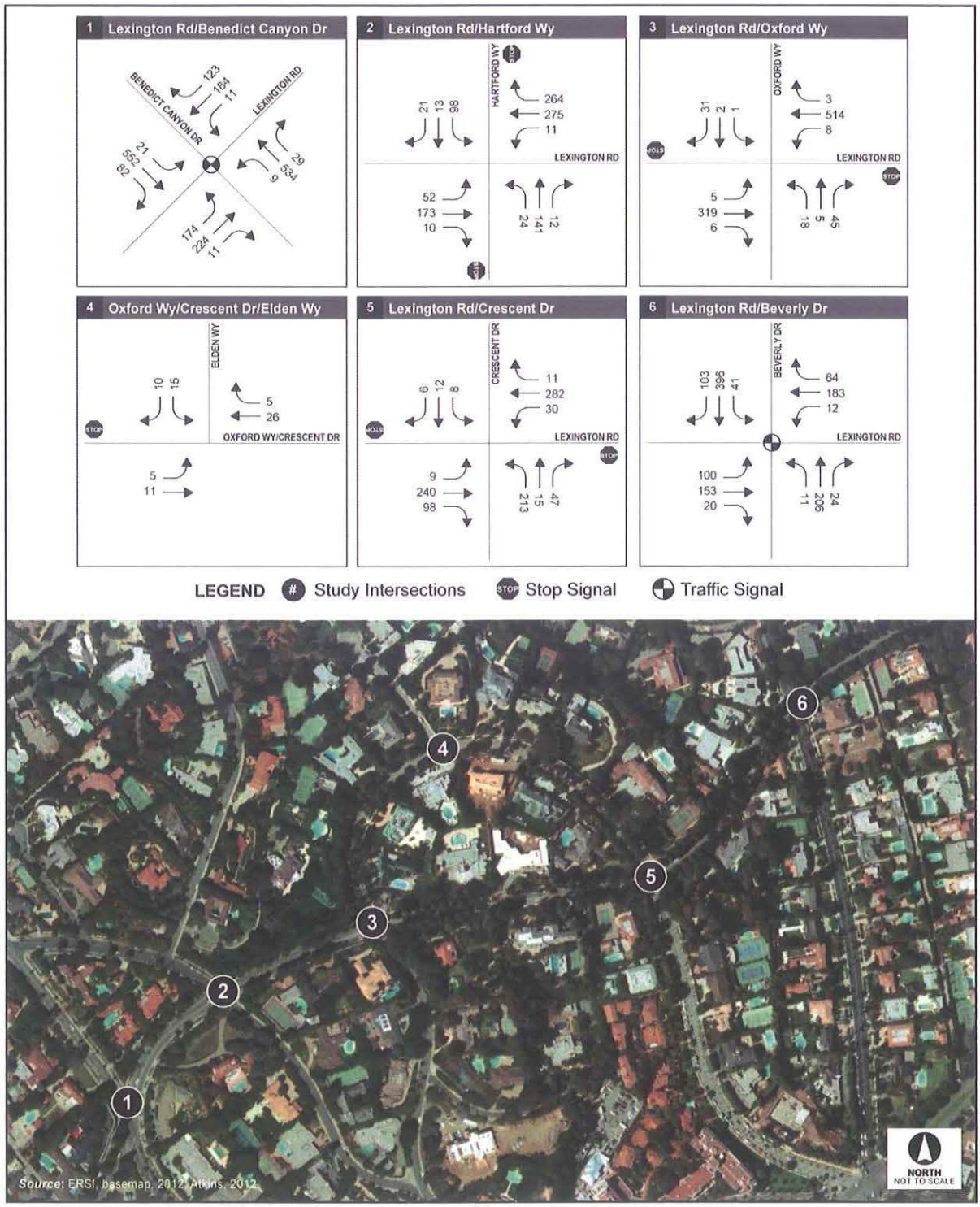


Figure 5 Existing (2012) PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts

Table 1
Level of Service Criteria—Signalized Intersections Average Seconds of Delay

Level of Service	HCM Signalized Intersection Delay (sec/veh)	ICU Thresholds
A	0.0–10.0	0–0.55
B	>10–20	>0.55–0.64
C	>20–35	>0.64–0.73
D	>35–55	>0.73–0.82
E	>55–80	>0.82–0.91
F	>80	>0.91

SOURCE: TRB, *Highway Capacity Manual*, Special Report 209 (2010).

Unsignalized Intersections

For unsignalized (all-way stop-controlled and side-street stop-controlled) intersections, the method outlined in Chapter 17 of the Transportation Research Board's 2010 HCM was used. This method estimates the worst-approach total delay (measured in seconds per vehicle) experienced by motorists traveling through an intersection. Total delay is defined as the amount of time required for a driver to stop at the back of the queue, move to the first-in-queue position, and depart from the queue into the intersection. Table 2 (Level of Service Criteria—Unsignalized Intersections Average Seconds of Delay) summarizes the relationship between the delay and LOS for unsignalized intersections. Synchro software was used to calculate HCM-based LOS for unsignalized intersections.

Table 2
Level of Service Criteria—Unsignalized Intersections Average Seconds of Delay

Level of Service	Signalized Intersection Delay (sec/veh)
A	0.0–10.0
B	>10–15
C	>15–25
D	>25–35
E	>35–50
F	>50

SOURCE: TRB, *Highway Capacity Manual*, Special Report 209 (2010).

Analysis of existing intersection operations indicate that three of the six intersections operate at LOS F and the remaining intersections operate at LOS D or better. Intersections of Hartford Way and Crescent Way with Lexington Drive are side-street stop controlled intersections and the delay reported represents higher wait time for side streets. The detailed intersection LOS calculation worksheets are presented in Appendix B.

Table 3
Intersection Operations for Existing (2012) Conditions

Intersection	LOS		Delay/Utilization		v/c	
	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU
Lexington Road/Benedict Canyon Road*	C	F	21.5	95.8%	0.88	0.96
Lexington Road /Hartford Way	F	—	95.8		0.87	
Lexington Road /Oxford Drive	C	—	15.9		0.18	
N. Crescent Drive/Elden Way	A	—	8.8		0.03	
Lexington Road /N. Crescent Way	F	—	51.6		0.84	
Lexington Road /N. Beverly Drive*	B	D	10.8	81.4%	0.65	0.81

* Signalized intersection, ICU values used for comparative analysis

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle facilities are generally divided into three categories:

- **Class I Bikeway (Bike Path)**—A completely separate facility designated for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with vehicle and pedestrian cross-flow minimized.
- **Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane)**—A striped lane designated for the use of bicycles on a street or highway. Vehicle parking and vehicle/pedestrian cross-flow are permitted at designated locations.
- **Class III Bikeway (Bike Route)**—A route designated by signs or pavement marking for bicyclists within the vehicular travel lane (i.e., shared use) of a roadway.

All study roadways operate as Class III bikeways and accommodate bicycle traffic alongside vehicular traffic. Bicycle counts conducted as a part of the traffic data collection task indicate little to no bicycle traffic in the study area during the peak hour. Beverly Drive at Lexington Road experienced the most bicyclists (2 to 3 per approach) on the north and east legs of the intersections. Similarly, minimal pedestrian activity was observed in the study area. Most intersection approaches experienced 1 or 2 pedestrians during the peak hour except for the Beverly Drive/Lexington Road intersection, which experienced between 3 and 7 pedestrians during the peak hour.

IV. Traffic Impact Analysis

The project site currently accommodates a maximum of 100 patrons and a maximum of 20 vehicles per day. The project generates approximately 40 total vehicle trips a day and approximately 25 round trips a day which translates to 50 total trips a day. Figure 6 (Daily Trip Contribution of the Project Site to Elden Way for Current Conditions) shows the daily contribution of the project site to Elden Way for current conditions (existing volumes—without the proposed project changes).

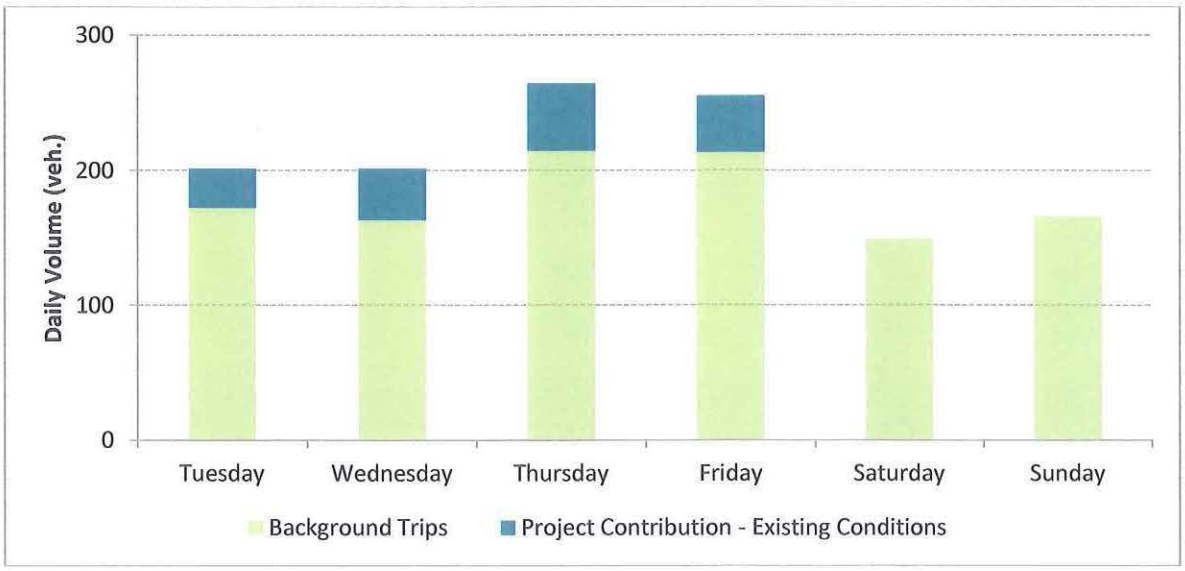


Figure 6 Daily Trip Contribution of the Project Site to Elden Way for Current Conditions

The County of Los Angeles is proposing changes to the hours and days of operation of the project site. The County is proposing to:

- Extending operating hours from 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM from March through November and from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM for the remaining months of the year. The current hours during which the project site is open extends from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM, while still limiting the number of visitors at a time to 100. For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that the site is open from 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM to allow for a conservative estimate of any potential impacts.
- A change from daily use of Tuesday–Friday to Monday–Friday (plus two Saturdays per month). The proposed opening on Saturdays will be conducted in a phased manner to help better assess and monitor the influence of weekend operations. The project site will be open on only two Saturdays every month for the first year after which the schedule will be reviewed by the District. However, for the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that the site is open on all Saturdays to allow for a conservative analysis.
- The number of special events would increase to four per year from the existing two events per year.

These changes are not projected to result in additional trips during weekdays but are anticipated to shift the departure time of trips from the project site. Currently, the project site adds no trips during the analysis peak hour since the visiting hours end at 3:30 PM. Extending the closing time of the project site to 5:30 PM is projected to add approximately 10 trips to the PM peak hour which extends from 4:45 PM to 5:45 PM. These trips also reflect potential employee or other residual visitor trips. Resultant daily trips for proposed conditions are shown in Figure 7 (Daily Trip Contribution of the Project Site to Elden Way for Proposed Conditions) and contribution of trips from the project site to peak hour volumes are shown in Figure 8 (Peak Hour Trip Contribution of the Project Site for Proposed Conditions). As can be seen from Figure 7, the proposed conditions do not result in any change to the total daily trips on Elden Way and result in approximately 20 round trips on Saturdays. However, since the adjacent roadway experiences low volumes on weekends, these additional weekend trips are anticipated to have little to no impact on intersection operations.

Changes proposed to special events (up to two additional events annually) will occur during non-peak hours and will be accompanied by valet parking and shuttle buses in the neighborhood which would negate any impacts to intersection operations or impacts due to parking issues for these events.

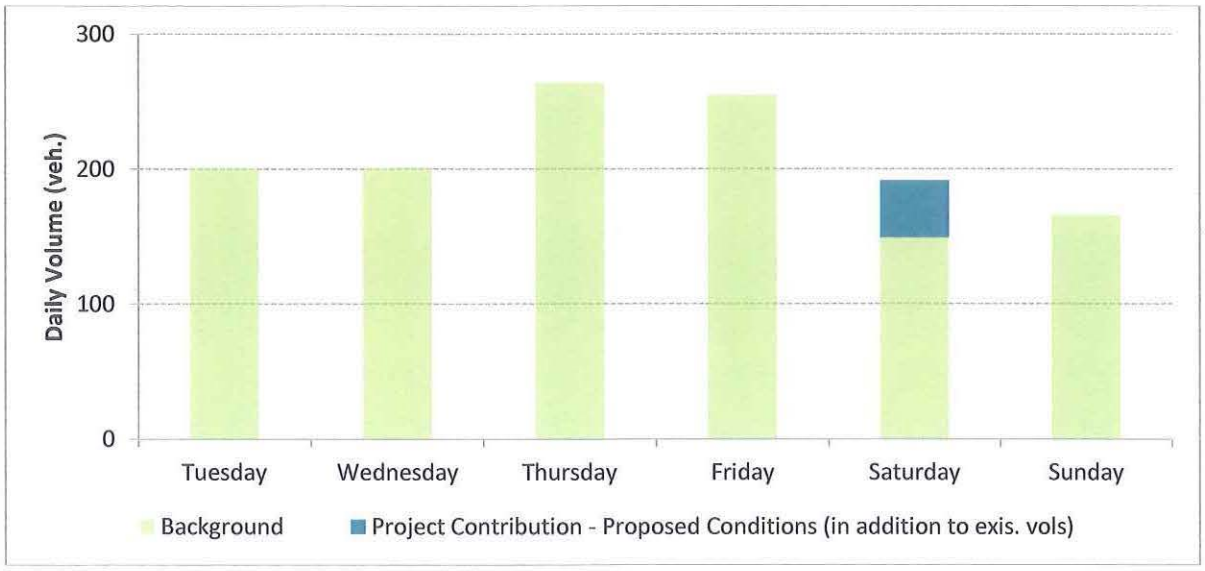
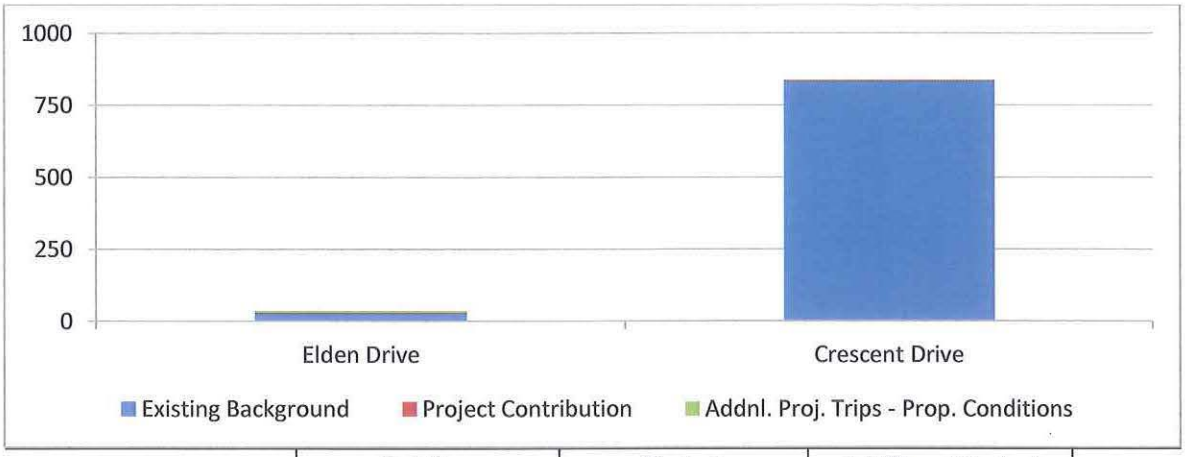


Figure 7 Daily Trip Contribution of the Project Site to Elden Way for Proposed Conditions



	Existing Background Volume	Project Contribution—Current Conditions	Additional Project Trips—Proposed Conditions	% change
Elden Way	25	5	7	19%
Crescent Drive	833	2	3	0.3%
Benedict Canyon Drive	1486	2	3	0.2%
Beverly Drive	910	3	4	0.4%

Figure 8 Peak Hour Trip Contribution of the Project Site for Proposed Conditions

As shown in Figure 8, the project adds approximately seven more trips to Elden Way during the PM peak hour. All of these project trips are egress trips that are bound towards Benedict Canyon Drive or Beverly Drive via Crescent Drive and Lexington Road. The project-generated additional trips were assigned to study roadways based on existing travel patterns from Elden Way. Resultant intersection volumes with project trip contributions are shown in Figure 9 (Existing Plus Project [2012] PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts). The project adds a miniscule amount of traffic to most surrounding roadways which does not impact intersection or roadway operations as evidenced by the intersection analysis for proposed conditions.

Significance Criteria

Criteria defining the significance of impact were obtained from the City of Beverly Hills' traffic study guidelines. In general, the following criteria were used to determine the presence or absence of project impact:

- A change in volume to capacity ratio of 0.040 or more if "plus project" condition LOS is D
- A change in volume to capacity ratio of 0.020 or more if "plus project" condition LOS is E or F

Existing Plus Project Conditions

Traffic generated by the proposed project was added to existing condition volumes to determine potential impacts. Table 4 (Intersection Operations for Existing [2012] Plus Project Conditions) shows the results of the intersection operations analysis for the weekday PM peak hours under Year 2012 plus proposed project traffic conditions.

Table 4
Intersection Operations for Existing (2012) Plus Project Conditions

	LOS		Delay/Utilization		v/c		
Intersection	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	Change in v/c
Lexington Road /Benedict Canyon Road*	C	F	21.7	95.8%	0.88	0.96	0
Lexington Road /Hartford Way	F	—	99		0.882		+0.012
Lexington Road /Oxford Drive	C	—	21.9		0.26		+0.08
N. Crescent Drive/Elden Way	A	—	8.8		0.04		+0.01
Lexington Road /N. Crescent Way	F	—	51.6		0.84		0
Lexington Road /N. Beverly Drive*	B	D	11	81.8%	0.65	0.82	+0.01

* Signalized intersection, ICU values used for comparative analysis

Similar to existing conditions without project, the intersection analysis for "with project" conditions indicates that three of the six analysis intersections operate at LOS F. However, the addition of project generated trips does not cause any of the intersections to exceed the significance criteria. Hence, the proposed project does not result in a significant impact to intersection operations.

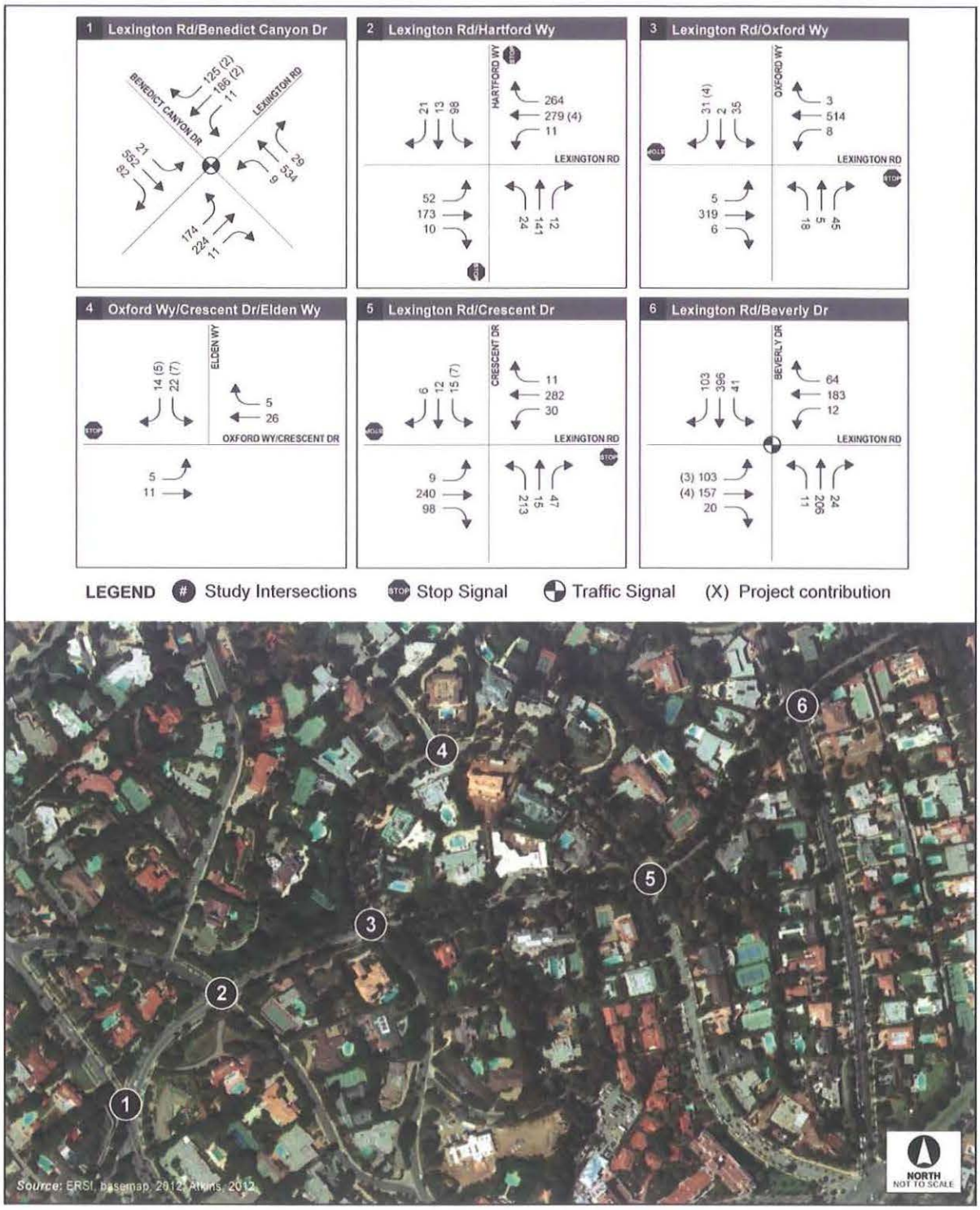


Figure 9 Existing Plus Project (2012) PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts

Opening Year Background Conditions

The changes proposed for the project site are anticipated to take effect by the fall of year 2013. However, opening year conditions were analyzed using year 2014 volumes to yield a conservative analysis. An annual growth rate of 1% was assumed for calculating ambient growth for the study area. This growth rate is a conservative estimate of traffic growth since the study area is built out with limited potential for significant changes to land use intensity.

Anticipated traffic growth between existing and opening year conditions is projected to result in minor increases to intersection delays as compared to existing conditions. The intersections of Lexington Road and Benedict Canyon Road, Lexington Road and Hartford Way and Lexington Road and N. Crescent Way are projected to function at LOS F as shown in Table 5 (Intersection Operations for Opening Year [2014] Conditions). In addition, the intersection of Lexington Drive and North Beverly Drive is projected to operate at LOS E for 2014 conditions as compared to LOS D under existing (2012) conditions. Intersection volumes for 2014 background conditions are shown in Figure 10 (Opening Year [2014] PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts).

Table 5
Intersection Operations for Opening Year (2014) Conditions

	LOS		Delay/Utilization		v/c	
Intersection	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU
Lexington Road /Benedict Canyon Road	C	F	23.2	97.2%	0.90	0.97
Lexington Road /Hartford Way	F	—	119.8		0.96	
Lexington Road /Oxford Drive	C	—	16.2		0.19	
N. Crescent Drive/Elden Way	A	—	8.8		0.03	
Lexington Road /N. Crescent Way	F	—	58.2		0.88	
Lexington Road /N. Beverly Drive	B	E	11.2	83%	0.66	0.83

Opening Year Plus Project Conditions

Traffic generated by the proposed project was added to opening year (2014) background condition volumes to determine potential impact of project generated trips. Table 6 (Intersection Operations for Opening Year [2014] Plus Project Conditions) shows the results of the intersection operation analysis for the weekday PM peak hours under Year 2014 plus proposed project traffic conditions. Intersection volumes for opening year (2014) plus project conditions are shown in Figure 11 (Opening Year [2014] Plus Project Conditions PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts).

Similar to opening year (2014) conditions without project trips, the intersection analysis for "with project" conditions indicates that three of the six analysis intersections operate at LOS F. However, the addition of project generated trips does not cause any of the intersections to exceed the significance criteria. Hence, the proposed project does not result in a significant impact to intersection operations.

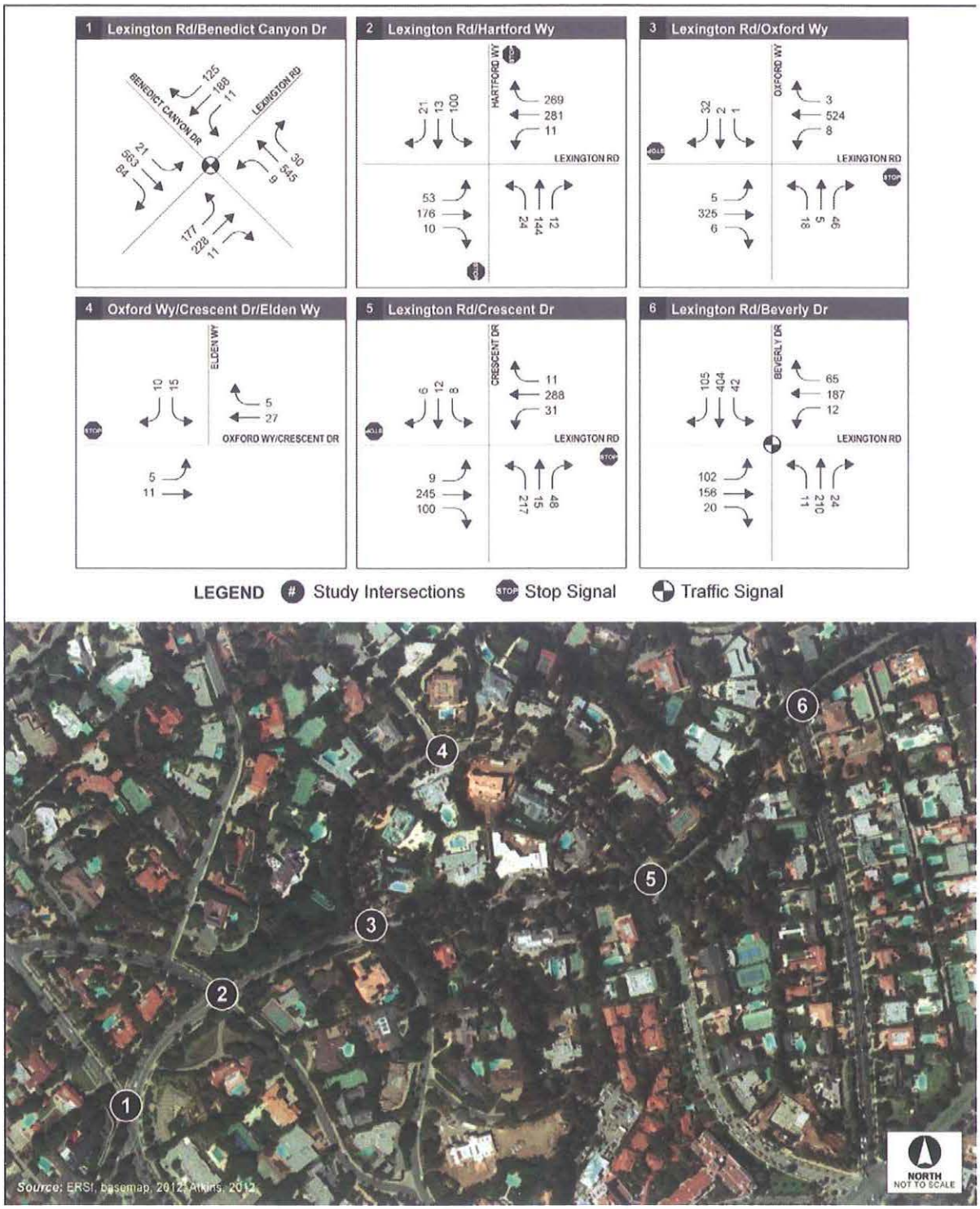


Figure 10 Opening Year (2014) PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts

Table 6
Intersection Operations for Opening Year (2014) Plus Project Conditions

	LOS		Delay/Utilization		v/c		
Intersection	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	Change in v/c
Lexington/Benedict Canyon Road	C	F	23.4	97.5%	0.9	0.97	0
Lexington/Hartford Way	F	—	124		0.97		+0.01
Lexington/Oxford Drive	C	—	16.3		0.19		0
N. Crescent Drive/Elden Way	A	—	8.8		0.04		+0.01
Lexington/N. Crescent Way	F	—	58.4		0.88		0
Lexington/N. Beverly Drive	B	E	11.3	83.4%	0.67	0.84	+0.01

V. Conclusion

The traffic analysis conducted in support of the proposed changes to operating hours for the Virginia Robinson Garden project site indicates the absence of any impacts due to these proposed changes. The proposed project would add approximately 20 round trips to the peak hour on Saturday during low traffic conditions which results in minimal changes to intersection operations. The proposed project does not add any new trips on weekdays and only results in a moderate shift of less than 15 trips during the peak hour. Analysis indicates that this shift in travel does not result in an impact to intersection operations. The proposed increase (up to two) in special events that would be held throughout the year will occur during non-peak hours and will be accompanied by valet parking which would negate any impacts to intersection operations or impacts due to parking issues for these events.

In summary, the proposed project does not result in significant impacts to traffic or parking operations in the study area.

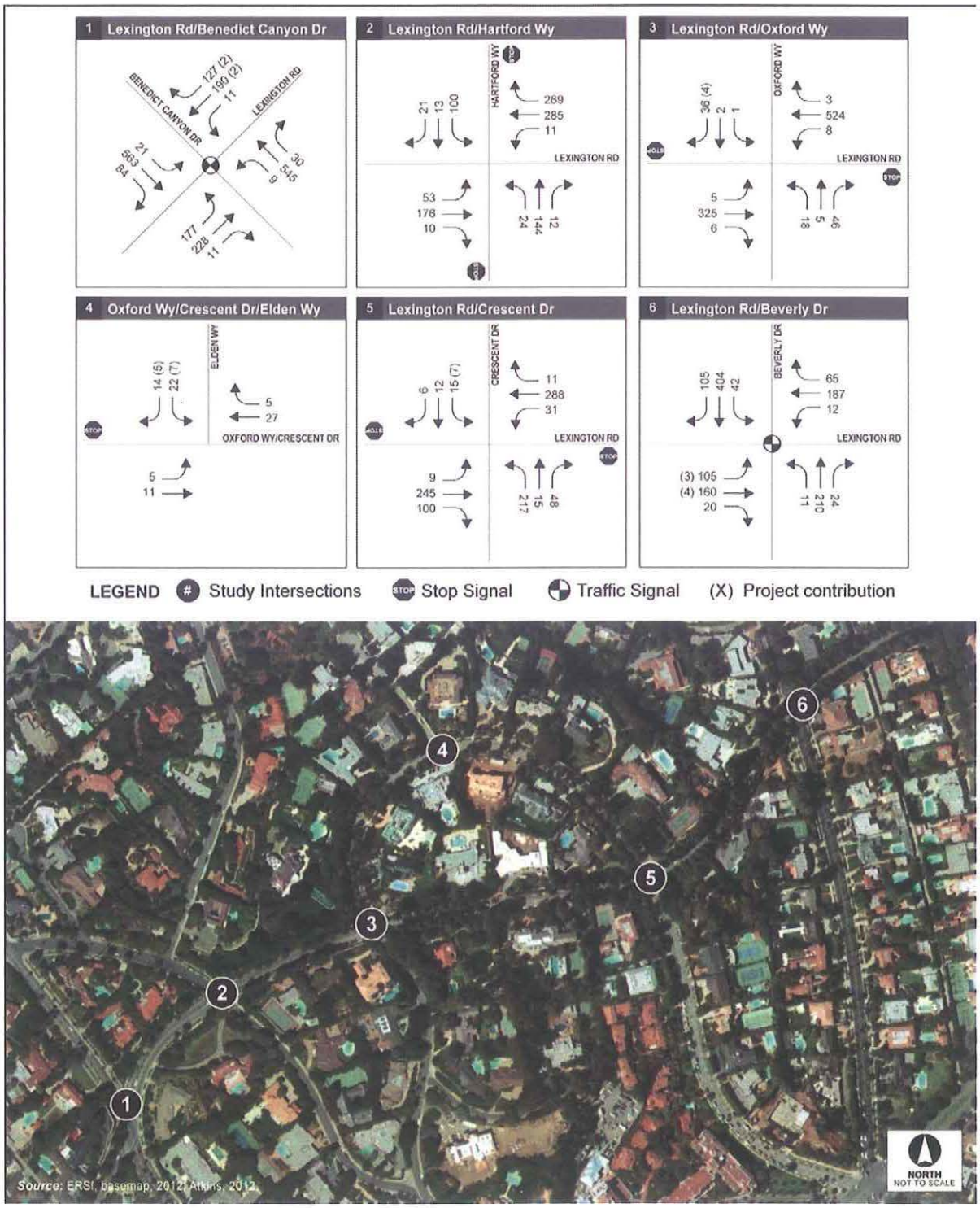


Figure 11 Opening Year (2014) Plus Project Conditions PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts

Appendix G Virginia Robinson Gardens Infeasibility Analysis of Traffic Mitigation Memo [New]

APPENDIX G

VIRGINIA ROBINSON GARDENS
INFEASIBILITY ANALYSIS OF TRAFFIC MITIGATION

This analysis addresses the feasibility of reducing the number of vehicle trips for the proposed operation of VRG on Saturdays (40 vehicle trips), to conform to the City standard of no more than a 16% increase in traffic to have a less than a significant impact (20 vehicle trips). The following determinations were made:

1. To make budget on various classes, such as botanical illustration or photography, the minimum number of students is 15. Although students are encouraged to carpool, they typically arrive in separate vehicles, which results in 30 vehicle trips.

2. Special programs held in the Pool Pavilion have a maximum capacity of 49 visitors. These events, now offered during the week, typically sell out. Even if guests would arrive two to a car, this would equal 50 vehicle trips.

3. Off-site parking and shuttle

   Greystone Mansion and Park
   905 Loma Vista Drive
   Beverly Hills, CA 90210

   Contact: City employee; Ms. Cindy Brynun, BH Recreation and Parks, Senior Recreation Service Supervisor

   Greystone parking lot holds 187 vehicles. The parking lot is commonly booked on Saturdays for revenue generating events, such as weddings, car shows and filming. There is a low probability from March to October that the parking lot would be available for VRG use. Whereas, the winter season, there is a higher probability that the parking lot would be available for use. However, the over-riding concern about use of the parking lot by a 3rd party is losing income from a last minute booking because Greystone reserved a date for VRG to use the parking lot. There is also concern about upsetting the neighbors of Greystone if the parking lot is used too often for parking vehicles not associated with attending a Greystone event.

Beverly Hills Women's Club
1700 Chevy Chase Dr.
Beverly Hills, CA 90120

Contact: Mumsey Nemeroff, Women's Club President

Beverly Hills Women's Club parking lot holds approximately 30 cars. The Women's club is busiest on weekends, therefore, Saturdays are typically not available for VRG off-site parking. Ms. Nemeroff indicated they cannot afford to give VRG any weekend reservation because it means they would give up potential revenues. Further concern was if they did give VRG a reservation they potentially would lose revenue from last minute bookings. More so, past president Ms. Claudia Deutsch indicated a city ordinance regulating the Women's club actually prohibits them from allowing 3rd party from using their parking lot.

City Parking Structures - Designated Pick-Up

Two City parking structures were visited to determine travel time to VRG, parking availability, and possible pick up locations. Parking would be on a first-come, first-serve basis and if permitted by the City, there would be a designated pick-up location. However, at best, this would provide for an additional 14 visitors to VRG because the largest vehicle that can fit through the VRG front gate is a 14 passenger vehicle. Assuming a van is provided, it is feasible for a shuttle to utilize four of the 20 vehicle trips but this would only assist in the increasing attendance rather than completely solving the problem of allowing the public reasonable access to the site.

The feasibility of making two sequential shuttle trips was researched as well. While this would be physically possible, for a 10:00 am program, the first group would need to be picked up at 9:00 am for a 9:20 am arrival at VRG. A 20 minute interval is needed to allow for a 5 minute grace period and up to 15 minutes to travel and disembark at VRG. The shuttle would return to the pick-up spot at 9:35 for the second group of visitors and arrive at VRG by 9:55 am. Meanwhile, the first group of visitors would need some type of low level program to occupy them while they wait in one area. Current policy is that no visitor walks the park unaccompanied. So because of the waiting period and the extra demand on docent time to monitor the first arrival group and last departure group, two sequential shuttle trips is infeasible.

Cove Way Parking Lot

The Cove Way parking will be limited to the most athletic staff/vendors, not carrying items to the event, such as food, wine, instruments, ice, a screen or projector. Support staff and/or vendors have items to carry in. For instance, musicians have instruments to carry and need a place to park close to the venue. If they park in the Cove Way parking lot or even on Cove Way which has no time limit on parking, they must climb 76 steps to get to the Great lawn and 5 more steps (total 81 steps) to get into the Pool Pavilion. As seen below, the first 68 feet are at a 40% grade.

The distance from Cove Way to the Great Lawn is approximately 300 feet, the length of a football field. Therefore, due to the topography and distance, utilizing the Cove Way parking lot is not feasible for most of the support staff.

Typical Programs

Listed below are examples of programs that could occur on Saturdays but cannot due to exceeding the City limit of 20 vehicle trips on Elden Way.

Art Classes – 58 vehicle trips for minimum enrollment of 15 people

- A minimum of 15 students is required to make budget. If no one carpools, this causes 32 vehicle trips including the instructor.
- On the last day of the program after the final class, a juried exhibit is organized for family and friends. This would be approximately 13 more visitors, generating another 26 vehicle trips

Lecture & Luncheon – 58 to 64 vehicle trips

- Assume 50 guests with some amount of carpooling = 40 vehicle trips
- Normally, tickets to this type of program costs approximately $60. However, with a 20 vehicle trip restriction, the cost of tickets will have to increase to cover the cost of the programming.
- Each special program requires some or all of the following support:
  - Music (string quartet, band, etc.): 8-12 vehicle trips
  - Catering service: 2-4 vehicle trips
  - Props: 2 vehicle trips
  - Linens: 2 vehicle trips
  - Ice Delivery: 2 vehicle trips
  - Florist: 2 vehicle trips

  TOTAL: 18-24 vehicle trips only for support

Saturday Events

- Various types of events are proposed for Saturdays, which include docent led tours and performing arts programs for adults and children.
- The price break for most of these events, which, for a non-profit must be 60/40 profit/expense, is not economically feasible unless attendance is at or close to 100 participants. This is especially true when we offer programs to working families with children at the lowest possible cost to encourage participation. Hence, the more participants the lower the cost of attendance.

Conclusion

If all Saturdays per month are approved, the public would best be served by scheduling multiple uses/programs to maximize their access to VRG. However, reducing the number of vehicle trips from 40 to 20 is infeasible due to the severe restriction it places on the public's ability to access the site and participate in programs.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

PROPOSED OPERATIONAL CHANGES TO THE VIRGINIA ROBINSON GARDENS

Draft Supplemental EIR

Prepared for
Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation
510 South Vermont Avenue, Room 201
Los Angeles, California 90020

Prepared by
Atkins
12301 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 430
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September 2012

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INTRODUCTION

1. Project title:

Proposed Operational Changes to the Virginia Robinson Gardens

2. Lead agency name and address:

Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation
510 South Vermont Avenue, Room 201
Los Angeles, California 90020

3. Contact person and phone number:

Joan Rupert, Section Head, Environmental and Regulatory Permitting
213.351.5126

4. Project location:

1008 Elden Way, Beverly Hills, California 90210

5. Project sponsor's name and address:

Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation
510 South Vermont Avenue, Room 201
Los Angeles, California 90020

6. General plan designation:

Single Family Residential, Low Density

7. Zoning:

R-1.X One-Family Residential Zone

8. Description of project:

The proposed project is located on County property at the existing Virginia Robinson Gardens in the City of Beverly Hills. The project site is developed with the Robinson Estate/Main Residence, Pool Pavilion, and extensive gardens. The proposed project would not include any demolition or construction on the property, but rather a change in the operating conditions previously allowed by the EIR prepared when the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors assumed ownership and operation of the property in approximately 1980, in accordance with the Robinson Will.

EXISTING PROJECT SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Project Location

The project site is located at 1008 Elden Way in the northern portion of the City of Beverly Hills, just north of the renowned Beverly Hills Hotel. The City of Beverly Hills is located in western Los Angeles

County and is bound by the City of Los Angeles in all directions. Interstate 10 (I-10) and I-405 provide regional access to the city and the proposed project. Figure 1 (Project Vicinity and Regional Location Map) illustrates the project site's regional location and vicinity. The project site is locally served by Sunset Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard (State Route [SR] 2), and Wilshire Boulevard. The immediate surrounding streets are North Crescent Drive, Lexington Road, and Oxford Drive.

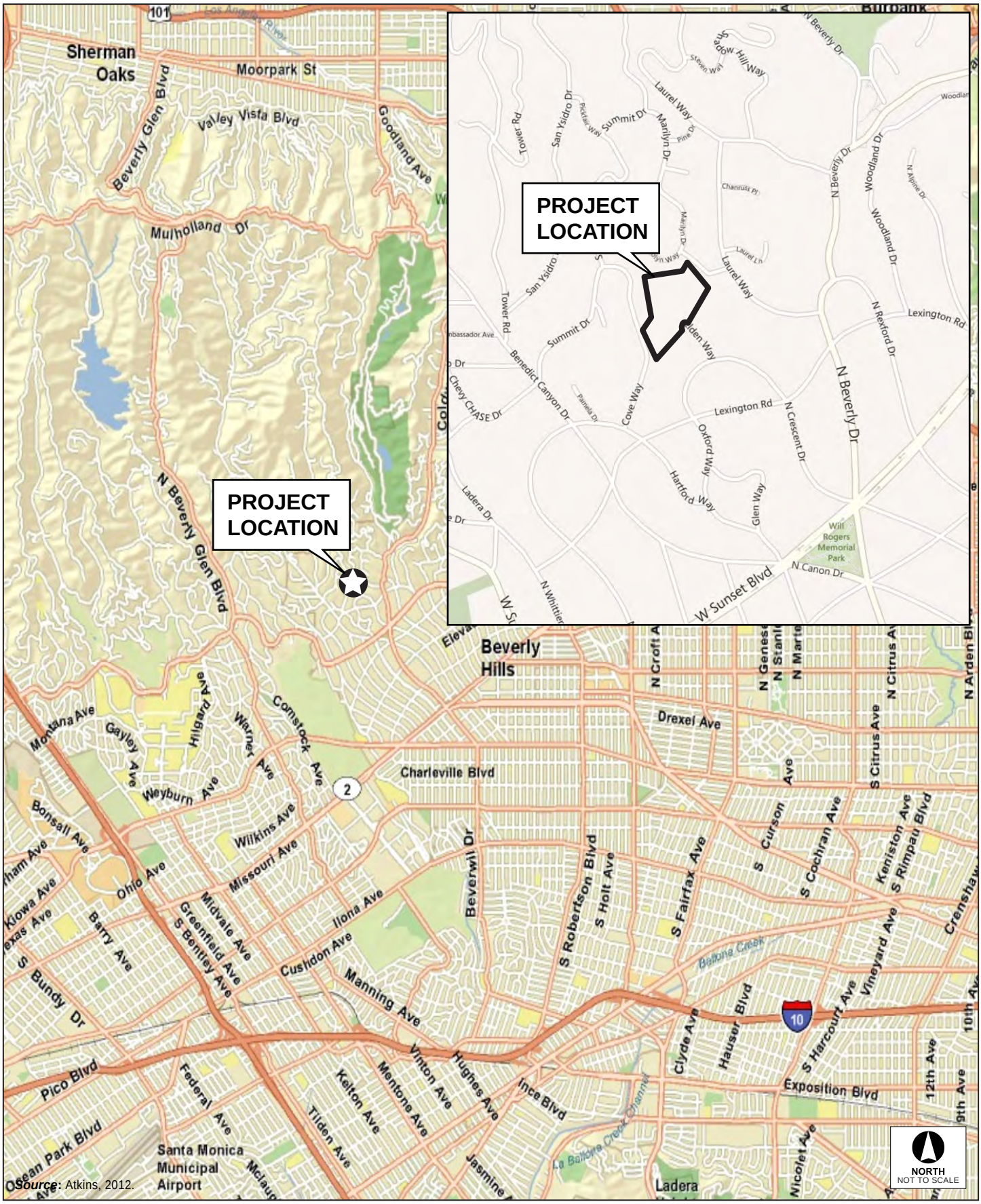
The approximately 6.2-acre project site is a terraced, irregularly shaped parcel generally bound by Elden Way on the south, Cove Way to the west, Carolyn Way to the north, and residential uses to the east. The site is located at the end of a cul-de-sac (Elden Way) in an established residential area of Beverly Hills developed with large lot, well landscaped and manicured, secured residential manors.

History

The project site was once the grand estate of Harry Winchester and Virginia Robinson and is known to be the first estate in the City of Beverly Hills. In her will, Mrs. Robinson left the estate, in a state of disrepair, to the County of Los Angeles (County) for the purpose of an arboretum or botanic garden "to be open and available for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public." On March 12, 1974, the County Board of Supervisors approved an agreement to assume possession of the Robinson Estate upon her death. Under this agreement, the County agreed to preserve the property and operate it as an arboretum or botanical garden. After Mrs. Robinson's death on August 5, 1977, the County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens assumed maintenance of the property. On June 10, 1980, the County Board of Supervisors certified an EIR to accompany the land use change from a single-family estate (residential purposes) to a public open space and garden. The 1980 EIR also established the project site as a facility for testing, planting, and demonstrating the natural growth of plants that cannot be grown at other arboretum facilities in the County. Additionally, the 1980 EIR identified an arboretum educational program that allowed for special tours of the grounds for biology, botany, and horticulture groups with related classes and seminars. The EIR established a detailed schedule, limiting the hours of operation and number of daily visitors allowed at the project site for guided tours, classes and seminars, and special events, as well as number of employees at the project site (discussed in greater detail in Table 1 [Comparison of Existing and Proposed Operations]). Finally, the 1980 EIR analyzed several construction activities necessary to bring the project site up to then current health and safety standards for public facilities. Effectively, the 1980 EIR codified operational regulations for the future use of the project site and has served as the governing land use document since that time.

Subsequent to the County acquisition of the project site, the Friends of Robinson Gardens was founded with the following mission statement:

> Friends of Robinson Gardens aid and ensure the mission of the Virginia Robinson Gardens, helping to preserve the rich cultural history of Los Angeles. Friends of Robinson Gardens also volunteer their time, financial resources, and expertise to provide ongoing community education. Friends of Robinson Gardens resolve to secure the necessary funding for these programs and to initiate new and innovative plans to maintain these gardens and estate for all future generations.



Source: Atkins, 2012.

100029141 | Virginia Robinson Gardens Supplemental EIR

Figure 1

Project Vicinity and Regional Location Map

ATKINS

Table 1 Comparison of Existing and Proposed Operations

Limitation	*Current Operating Schedule*	*Proposed Operating Schedule*
Days Open to the Public	■ Tuesday to Friday; 4 days per week ■ Closed on holidays	■ Tuesday to Saturday; 5 days per week ■ Open on holidays, with the exception of Christmas Day and New Years Day. Generally, operating hours would follow the County holiday schedule meaning, for example, that if a holiday falls on a Sunday and is observed on a Monday, Virginia Robinson Gardens would be closed on Sunday and open on Monday.
Hours for Public Use	■ 6 hours per day (9:30 AM to 3:30 PM)	■ 8 hours per day (9:30 AM to 5:30 PM)
Number of Patrons in Attendance	■ With advanced reservations: > 100 visitors per day for public tours; OR > 80 visitors per day for classes/seminar or commercial filming	■ With advanced reservations: > 100 visitors per day for docent tours, seminar/classes, or commercial filming (video only, no motion picture) or a combination of any of these activities
Types of Events	■ Educational programs to include special tours of the grounds for biology, botany, and horticulture groups, with related classes and seminars	■ Public programs to conform to new day/hours and number of participants allowed; however, subject matter for seminar/classes to be determined at the discretion of the Superintendent based on how well the classes interpret the historical collections at the facility. Also to include tours of the grounds for biology, botany, and horticulture groups
Commercial Filming	■ Allowed Tuesday–Friday between the hours of 9:30 AM and 3:30 PM (6 hours/day) when no tours or other events are scheduled	■ Commercial filming would conform to the restrictions listed above
Special Uses	Special uses are limited to two per year, currently consisting of: ■ Patron Party (7:00 PM to 12:00 AM) attended by approximately 250 guests for a sit-down dinner/dance ■ Garden Tour (10:00 AM to 4:00 PM) attended by approximately 675 guests, staggered throughout this time period For special uses, there are no restrictions on the number of guests or hours/day of operations; however, tickets are sold to regulate the number of visitors to assure safety and a quality experience. Additionally, the event must comply with city ordinances, which require no amplified music after 10:00 PM, and valet service must obtain city parking permits for use of public streets to avoid overlapping events with surrounding neighbors.	Special uses limited to six per year, with expanded themes to include, but not be limited to: ■ Extend Garden Tour to two consecutive days to allow greater overall attendance ■ Offer public tour in the evening with a meal served with or without tables ■ Offer public tours for donors during daylight hours featuring seasonal aspects of the garden or recent restoration projects ■ Offer performing arts in the garden, such as classical music, theatre, or poetry readings ■ Offer temporary exhibits to feature and interpret the many artifacts in the collections at Virginia Robinson Gardens For special uses, theme would be determined at the discretion of the Superintendent. Programs must continue to focus on the historical interpretation of the facility, such as the non-living and living collections housed at the facility, the gardens, etc.

Table 1 Comparison of Existing and Proposed Operations

Limitation	*Current Operating Schedule*	*Proposed Operating Schedule*
Parking	■ With advanced reservations: > Parking required on the property (20 spaces available) > No street parking is permitted > Even with advanced reservations visitors are not allowed to walk on public sidewalks to reach the garden or be dropped off at front gate	■ With advanced reservations: > Parking required on the property > No street parking permitted > With advanced reservation, allow visitors to walk to the gardens from nearby public streets pursuant to street signs; visitors could also walk to the gardens from public transportation (primarily buses, but also to include taxi) > With limited exceptions, allow visitors to be dropped off at the entrance of the gardens > With limited exception, allow street parking, if a vehicle does not fit through driveway gate or porte cochere ■ Overflow visitor parking (valet) and staff/volunteer parking allowed on the lower tennis court, accessed from Cove Way

SOURCE: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (2012).

The Friends of Robinson Gardens volunteer organization has raised enough money to begin crucial repairs to the Main Residence and Pool Pavilion; restore the substantial collections of rugs, furniture, and other antiquities that Mrs. Robinson maintained; establish docent programs; and begin educational seminars, consistent with uses outlined in the Robinson Will.

Existing Land Uses

The project site is located in a fully developed area of the City of Beverly Hills, but is nestled at the top of the hills above Sunset Boulevard. Uses in the area are residential in nature and include large lot, heavily landscaped and manicured properties with substantial fences and/or security. The project site is currently developed with the main Robinson Estate (including the Main Residence and previous male staff quarters), Pool Pavilion, swimming pool, upper tennis court, greenhouse/testing arboretum and garden, and acres of landscaped grounds. The buildings on site include approximately 14,800 square feet (sf) of total development broken down as follows: approximately 8,000 sf Main Residence; approximately 4,800-sf Pool Pavilion; and approximately 2,000 sf Male Staff Quarters. Since Mrs. Robinson's death in 1977, the buildings have remained largely unoccupied for residential uses, but portions (including primarily the areas adjacent to the kitchen of the Main Residence) have been utilized by volunteers of The Friends of Robinson Gardens who work to restore and maintain the Virginia Robinson Gardens and manage educational and docent programs. A maximum of 6 volunteers are on site daily. In addition to volunteers, approximately 7 staff tend to the premises daily, including one live-in caretaker. Table 1 outlines the allowable operations on site daily. Generally, docent-led tours take place twice daily, Tuesday through Friday, for a maximum of 100 patrons daily. Alternatively, educational classes and seminars (or limited commercial filming) are held on site, Tuesday through Friday, for a maximum of 80 patrons daily. Twice a year, the gardens are utilized for special events related to the overall allowed use of the site as a public garden or arboretum.

The site is fully developed; however, a substantial portion (approximately 5.5 acres) is landscaped and/or used for garden purposes. As such, the project site is substantially pervious with respect to drainage. Large stands of king palms are located on the eastern portion of the site, while terraced gardens occupy the western portion of the site between the Main Residence and Cove Way. As shown in Figure 2 (Estate

Site Plan), the experimental garden/arboretum occupies the portion of the site immediately adjacent and to the north and east of the Main Residence. Refer to Figure 2 for a detailed site plan.

Site Access, Circulation, and Parking

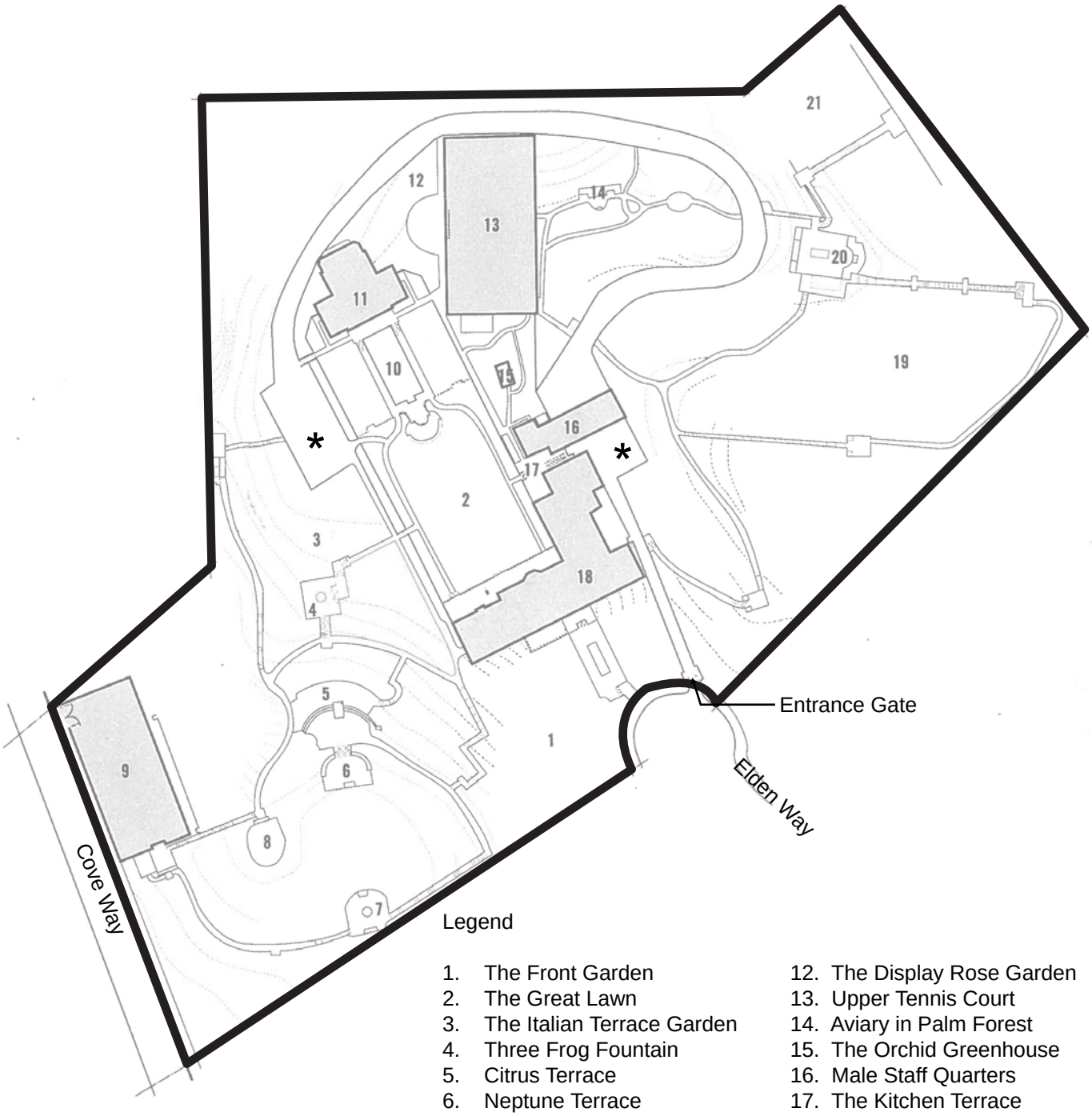
The project site currently has one access point, located at the end of the cul-de-sac on Elden Way. The gated, single driveway is located at the eastern side of both the cul-de-sac and the project site. Access is granted by a call box, similar to most single-family residential estates in the area. The access driveway is approximately 8 feet wide. As the driveway approaches the main garage and the male staff quarters, a porte-cochere allows vehicles of approximately 8 feet by 8 feet to pass through to the northern portion of the site and beyond, including the public parking area. Therefore, visitors must make parking arrangements before visiting the site, and their vehicles must not exceed these dimensions.

As shown on Figure 2, the single driveway winds past the eastern side of the Main Residence and previous staff quarters; traverses the northern portion of the site, to the north of the Pool Pavilion; and extends back to the west, ending in the guest parking lot. This driveway allows for single-direction traffic based on the width of the drive aisle; however, the driveway is used for traffic in both directions.

An access gate for pedestrians is located in the center of the site along the Elden Way cul-de-sac; however, as pedestrian traffic is restricted by the current operational regulations of the Virginia Robinson Gardens, this gate is only used in special, pre-arranged circumstances.

Per the current operations of the Virginia Robinson Gardens, patrons must park on site; no public, on-street parking is allowed. As shown on Figure 2, parking is provided at two locations on site: (1) immediately adjacent to the main garage and male staff quarters (3 spaces), and (2) on the western side of the Pool Pavilion (20 spaces). Parking is allowed by advanced reservation only and effectively restricts the number of patrons who visit the site for tours and classes daily. Guest reservations must be made in advance for parking on the property and are managed by the Friends of Robinson Gardens. Parking for special events is currently provided primarily by valet, which is standard for event parking at estates in the City of Beverly Hills and the immediate neighborhoods. When valet is not available for special events, guests park in the surrounding neighborhoods and are shuttled by mini-buses from multiple designated points. This is also standard event practice in the City of Beverly Hills and the immediate neighborhood.

Elden Way is the only roadway in the vicinity that provides unrestricted on-street parking. On-street parking along Lexington Road, N Crescent Drive, Cove Way, and Oxford Way is limited to 2-hour parking from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM As such, Elden Way is heavily used by construction and landscaping personnel for the estates in the larger vicinity (i.e., north of Sunset Boulevard) for long-term, unrestricted parking. Accordingly, even if on-street parking were allowed on Elden Way for patrons of Virginia Robinson Gardens, it would be difficult to find an open parking space during daytime hours. Parking on site is thus a functional requirement (rather than an environmental requirement).



***Source*:** Beverly Hills' First Estate, The House and Gardens of Virginia & Harry Robinson By: Timothy Lindsay, Marcella Ruble, and Evelyn Carlson (Edited by Maralee Beck and Jamie Wolf).

NORTH
NOT TO SCALE

Figure 2
Estate Site Plan

ATKINS

Surrounding Land Uses

Development in the immediate vicinity of the project site includes residential uses to the north, west, south, and east. The surrounding area is characterized by curvilinear streets lined with large, well maintained single-family homes. Approximately 72 percent of the entire City of Beverly Hills is comprised of residential land uses, approximately 74 percent of which are single-family homes and estates.

General Plan and Zoning Designations

According to the Land Use Element of the City's General Plan, the project site and surrounding vicinity are designated as low density, single-family residential. The maximum allowable building density in the project area is one dwelling unit (du) per acre. As shown on the City's Zoning Map, the project site and surrounding area are designated as R-1.X (One-Family Residential Zone).

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The mission statement of the Virginia Robinson Gardens is as follows:

> The purpose of the Virginia Robinson Gardens is to preserve and promote this historically significant first estate of Beverly Hills for the education and enjoyment of the general public.

To this end, the primary goal of the proposed project is to increase public accessibility to the Virginia Robinson Gardens. Specifically, the proposed project has been developed to meet the following objectives:

- Increase the number of days per week that the project site is open to the public
- Increase the daily operating hours
- Increase visitor access each day for seminars and classes, while maintaining the same total number of visitors allowed currently
- Update public programs to conform with changes to hours of operation
- Allow for expanded special uses at the project site
- Promote the use of alternative modes of transportation by allowing for more flexibility in parking and arrival to the project site
- Formally shift the primary focus of the project site from plant testing to preservation, restoration, and further programming that accommodates public accessibility

PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

As discussed above, the 1980 EIR functions as the governing document for operation of the project site as a public open space. When the EIR was adopted, the project site was most valued as an extension of the plant testing program at the Los Angeles Arboretum. As such, preservation and restoration of the gardens was not a primary goal, nor was public accessibility to the facility. However, since the 1980 EIR was certified/adopted, the primary objectives of the Virginia Robinson Gardens have shifted. Today, preservation, programming, and public access are the primary goals of the project site. To this end, the Friends of Robinson Gardens continue to work to restore Mrs. Robinson's collections and the historical context of the property, as well as maintain the grounds and gardens. To meet the current primary goals of the Virginia Robinson Gardens, the proposed project includes changes to the operation and public

accessibility of the project site, requiring modifications to the operational limitations established in the 1980 EIR. In addition to the information provided in Table 1, a discussion of each of the operational changes is provided below. By way of discretionary action, the County Board of Supervisors will consider an amendment to the existing Agreement between the County and The Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens. Formally, this amendment will consist of rewriting Section 4.05 of the Agreement to reflect the proposed changes to the days and hours of operation of Virginia Robinson Gardens.

Days of the Week

Currently, patrons can visit the Virginia Robinson Gardens 4 days a week, Tuesday through Friday, but the site is closed on all holidays. As such, if a holiday falls on a Tuesday through Friday, the operating hours of the facility are further restricted.

The proposed project would ensure that the Virginia Robinson Gardens are available for visitation 5 days a week, Tuesday through Saturday. Further, the facility would be open on holidays, with the exception of Christmas Day and New Years Day. Generally, the operating days of the week would follow that of the County holiday schedule; however, for example, if the Fourth of July falls on a Sunday and is observed by the County on Monday, Virginia Robinson Gardens would not be open on Sunday but would be open on Monday (both for regular business hours and the overlapping observed holiday). Based on data provided by other public gardens (including those in the Los Angeles region), Saturdays and holidays are historically the best days for families and working adults to visit the gardens. Further, consistent with the proposed changes to educational programming, certain continuing education classes can only visit on Saturdays, such as the horticulture plant identification class from UCLA or the landscape painting and nature photography class from Santa Monica College. For example, botanical illustration courses frequently require five consecutive days to produce a painting and could therefore not be held at the facility under the current operations. These changes support the goals of increasing public access to the facility, as well as promoting the continuation and expansion of educational programming.

Hours of Use

Currently, patrons can visit the Virginia Robinson Gardens for only 6 hours per day, between 9:30 AM and 3:30 PM. These visiting hours are further restricted by the requirement to attend a docent-led tour that is offered daily at 10:00 AM and/or 1:00 PM, depending on tour reservations.

The proposed project would expand the daily operating hours to 8 hours per day, consistent with typical working hours, from 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Accordingly, the hours of use would not substantially conflict with the surrounding neighborhood's residential functions. The change in operating hours would meet the primary goals of the Virginia Robinson Gardens by increasing public access and allowing daily docent tours to begin and end later in the afternoon (however, the number of patrons daily would remain the same). Also, this change would provide greater flexibility for educational programming, as courses could begin and end later in the day, thereby serving a wider audience. Additionally, this change would enable more working families to enjoy the facility on Saturdays.

Number of Patrons in Attendance

Currently, with advanced reservations, visitors on site are restricted to the following:

- 100 visitors daily for docent tours, or
- 80 visitors daily for either classes/seminars or commercial filming

Under the proposed project, with advanced reservations, daily attendance would include the following:

- 100 visitors daily for docent tours, seminars/classes, or commercial filming (video only, no motion picture), or a combination of any of these three activities

This change would not alter the existing maximum number of visitors on site daily (100) but would allow greater flexibility for the Virginia Robinson Gardens to provide programming that meets public interests while simultaneously meeting the goal of greater site accessibility. For example, under the proposed project, a 49-member class/seminar could be offered in the morning and a 51-person tour in the afternoon. However, under current operations, if both a tour and a class/seminar are offered in the same day, the total number of visitors is restricted to 50 people per tour at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM or 100 visitors per day, or if a seminar or luncheon is scheduled, visitation is restricted to 80 persons. All public visitations would continue to require advanced reservations and parking on site.

Types of Daily Events

Currently, the types or topics of daily events are restricted to educational programs or tours of the grounds for biology, botany, and horticulture groups, with related classes and seminars.

Under the proposed project, the types or topics of daily events would be determined at the discretion of the site Superintendent, primarily based on how well the topic presents the cultural context of the property and/or the gardens. This could include, for example, how well the topic interprets the historical collections at the site. Daily events could include music in the garden, piano recitals in the Main Residence, theatre in the garden, poetry readings, author book signings, bird watching, donor receptions, or temporary exhibits featuring artifacts from Mrs. Robinson's collections.

All daily events would conform to the new operational restrictions outlined above.

Commercial Filming

Currently, commercial filming is restricted to 6 hours a day, Tuesday through Friday, from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM. However, filming can only take place when no tours or classes/seminars are scheduled.

Under the proposed project, commercial filming would conform to the new operational restriction outlined above (i.e., days and hours of operation, maximum visitors daily, and topics).

Special Uses

Currently, special uses at the site are limited to two events per year and include a Patron Party (evening event with approximately 250 attendees) and a Garden Party (daytime event with approximately 675 attendees throughout the day). Although located in the City of Beverly Hills, the project site is owned by Los Angeles County. When the County is performing a public function on a County-owned property, the County is not subject to the requirements of the City, but nevertheless can choose to comply with those

regulations. For the proposed project, the County would comply with City regulations to ensure consistency with the surrounding neighborhood. While there are no restrictions on these events, especially with respect to the number of attendees, in compliance with the City's Municipal Code, all events would comply with City of Beverly Hills requirements and ordinances, including the prohibition of amplified sound after 10:00 PM. Special events or uses typically require valet parking and staff, and the County will obtain a permit from the City to avoid overlapping with events held by adjacent/nearby neighbors. When valet is not used, shuttle buses are provided from various points in the surrounding neighborhoods to transport attendees to the Virginia Robinson Gardens. For the daytime events, attendees from the local neighborhood often arrive by foot, even though this is technically restricted. This is consistent with events typically held throughout Beverly Hills and the adjacent neighborhood.

Under the proposed project, special uses at the site would be increased to six events annually. The themes of the special uses would be expanded, at the discretion of the property Superintendent, but would continue to focus on the cultural and historical interpretation of the Virginia Robinson Gardens. Example themes could include the following:

- Extend Garden Tour to two consecutive days (Friday and Saturday) to allow greater overall attendance
- Offer public tour in the evening with a meal served with or without tables
- Offer public tours for donors during daylight hours featuring seasonal aspects of the garden or recent restoration projects
- Offer performing arts in the garden, such as classical music, theatre, or poetry readings
- Offer temporary exhibits to feature and interpret the many artifacts in the site's collections

All special events would continue to comply with City of Beverly Hills requirements and ordinances. The number of attendees at each event would continue to be unrestricted; however, based on previous experience with special events at the site, the number of attendees would be capped by ticket sales to ensure an enjoyable experience. For purposes of this document, it is assumed that an event would attract approximately 700 attendees. Parking for special uses would continue to be provided by valet or shuttle bus, as described above.

Parking

Currently, an advanced reservation is required for parking to ensure that all visitors are able to park on site. No street parking is permitted. Further, visitors cannot arrive to the site by foot and cannot be dropped off at the front gate (e.g., by taxi).

Under the proposed project, an advanced parking reservation would continue to be required to ensure that visitors park on site to the greatest extent possible; street parking by visitors would continue to be prohibited. The sole exception would be to allow single vehicles to park in the Elden Way cul-de-sac if they do not fit through the driveway gate or the 8-foot-by-8-foot porte cochere. Additionally, with advanced reservations, visitors would be allowed to arrive at the site on foot or be dropped off at the gate. This would support the current trend of visitors from the adjacent neighborhood walking to the site, as well as the current social promotion of the use of public transportation and alternative modes of transportation (such as taxis).

The Grounds

The proposed project would not include any physical alterations to the project site. Therefore, the existing layout of the project site would remain the same, and the proposed project would not modify the size, design, type of structures, or the gardens at the project site.

CONSTRUCTION SCENARIO

As identified above, the proposed project would only affect operation of the Virginia Robinson Gardens as it relates to public access and special uses. The proposed project would not include any physical alterations to the project site and, therefore, would not result in construction of any kind.

CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 defines "cumulative impacts" as "two or more individual effects that, when considered together, are considerable or that compound or increase other environmental impacts." In general, these impacts occur in conjunction with other related developments whose impacts might compound or interrelate with those of the project under review.

In order to analyze the cumulative impacts of the project in combination with existing development and other expected future growth, the amount and location of growth expected to occur (in addition to the proposed project) must be considered. As stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b), this reasonably foreseeable growth may be based on either of the following, or a combination thereof:

- A list of past, present, and reasonably anticipated future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including those projects outside the control of the agency
- A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document which is designed to evaluate regional or area wide conditions

The proposed project site is located in a fully developed area of the City of Beverly Hills. The project area is a stable, single-family residential area that is not undergoing, nor is it slated to undergo, substantial growth over the coming years. While demolition and replacement of estates (or construction on an existing estate) in this area of Beverly Hills is common, these practices do not substantially change the established residential nature of the area. The proposed project includes minor changes to the operational characteristics of the project site and will not substantially change or affect surrounding properties, nor will it conflict with other localized estate construction. As such, in consultation with the City of Beverly Hills Public Works and Transportation Department, there are no cumulative projects considered with respect to the proposed project. However, a standard urban growth rate has been assumed in analysis of technical aspects of this document.

9. Surrounding land uses and setting (briefly describe the project's surroundings):

Development in the immediate vicinity of the project site includes residential uses to the north, west, south, and east. The surrounding area is characterized by curvilinear streets lined with large, well maintained single-family homes with extensive landscaping that obstructs direct views of the residences.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

In addition to the County of Los Angeles (Lead Agency), no other agency approvals are required; however, as a courtesy to the City of Beverly Hills, input from the City will continue to be sought.[1] As a "good neighbor," the Department of Parks and Recreation aims to comply with the City's regulations.

INTENDED USE OF THIS EIR

This Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) is intended to provide decision-makers and the public with information that enables them to consider the environmental consequences of the proposed project. EIRs not only identify significant or potentially significant environmental effects, but also identify ways in which those impacts can be reduced to less than significant levels. In a practical sense, EIRs function as a technique for fact-finding, allowing an applicant, concerned citizens, and agency staff an opportunity to collectively review and evaluate baseline conditions and project impacts through a process of full disclosure.

To gain the most value from this report, certain key points should be kept in mind:

- This report should be used as a tool to give the reader an overview of the possible ramifications of the proposed project.
- A specific environmental impact is not necessarily irreversible or permanent. Most impacts, particularly in urban, more developed areas, can be wholly or partially mitigated by incorporating conditions of approval and/or changes recommended in this report during the design and construction phases of project development.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

The level of detail contained throughout this SEIR is consistent with the CEQA Guidelines and recent court decisions, which provide the standard of adequacy on which this document is based. The Guidelines state as follows:

Section 15162 (Subsequent EIRs and Negative Declarations):

> When an EIR has been certified or negative declaration adopted for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for that project unless the lead agency determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, one or more of the following:
>
> 1. Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;
> 2. Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or

[1] It is important to note that the County Department of Parks and Recreation is the lead department acting on behalf of the County of Los Angeles. For purposes of this document, the County Department of Parks and Recreation is referred to as the Lead Agency.

3. New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:
   a. The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;
   b. Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;
   c. Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or
   d. Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

Section 15163 (Supplement to an EIR):

(a) The Lead or Responsible Agency may choose to prepare a supplement to an EIR rather than a subsequent EIR if:
   (1) Any of the conditions described in Section 15162 would require the preparation of a subsequent EIR, and
   (2) Only minor additions or changes would be necessary to make the previous EIR adequately apply to the project in the changed situation.

(b) The supplement to the EIR need contain only the information necessary to make the previous EIR adequate for the project as revised.

(c) A supplement to an EIR shall be given the same kind of notice and public review as is given to a draft EIR under Section 15087.

(d) A supplement to an EIR may be circulated by itself without recirculating the previous draft or final EIR.

(e) When the agency decides whether to approve the project, the decision-making body shall consider the previous EIR as revised by the supplemental EIR. A finding under Section 15091 shall be made for each significant effect shown in the previous EIR as revised.

The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation has prepared an SEIR to determine the potential impacts of the proposed project. The whole of the record includes this Supplement as well as the EIR prepared and certified for the project site in 1980. During project approval, the whole of the record will meet the requirements of CEQA.

PUBLIC REVIEW

In accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, a 30-day public review period for this SEIR will commence on September 13, 2012, concluding on October 12, 2012. The Notice of Intent (NOI) has been distributed to interested or involved public agencies and organizations. The NOI has been distributed to homeowners and occupants within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site and to private individuals for review. In addition, the Draft SEIR is available for general public review at the following locations:

County of Los Angeles (as the Lead Agency)
Department of Parks and Recreation
510 South Vermont Avenue, Room 201
Los Angeles, California 90020

City of Beverly Hills Public Library
444 N. Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, California 90210

The document will also be available online at the Department of Parks and Recreation website: http://parks.lacounty.gov/. Please scroll to the bottom of the page to find the document.

During the public review period, the public will have an opportunity to provide written comments on the information contained in this Draft SEIR. Public comments on the Draft SEIR and responses to public comments will be incorporated into the Final SEIR. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors will use the Final SEIR (and the previous EIR prepared for the project site) during their consideration of the proposed project.

In reviewing the Draft SEIR, affected public agencies and interested members of the public should focus on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing potential project impacts on the environment. Comments on the Draft SEIR must be submitted in writing prior to the end of the 30-day public review period and must be postmarked no later than October 12, 2012. Please submit written comments to:

Joan Rupert, Section Head, Environmental and Regulatory Permitting
County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation
510 South Vermont Avenue, Room 201
Los Angeles, California 90020
jrupert@parks.lacounty.gov

Office hours are Monday through Thursday, 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture/Forestry Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Geology/Soils
☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Hazards/Hazardous Materials	☐ Hydrology/Water Quality
☐ Land Use/Planning	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise
☐ Population/Housing	☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation
☐ Transportation/Traffic	☐ Utilities/Service Systems	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☒ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "less than significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. A SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects *(a)* have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and *(b)* have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Joan Rupert	September 12, 2012
Signature	Date
Joan A. Rupert	Section Head, Environmental and Regulatory Permitting
Name	Title

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off site as well as on site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less-Than-Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).
5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
   a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
   b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
   c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures that were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
   a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question.
   b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

I. AESTHETICS

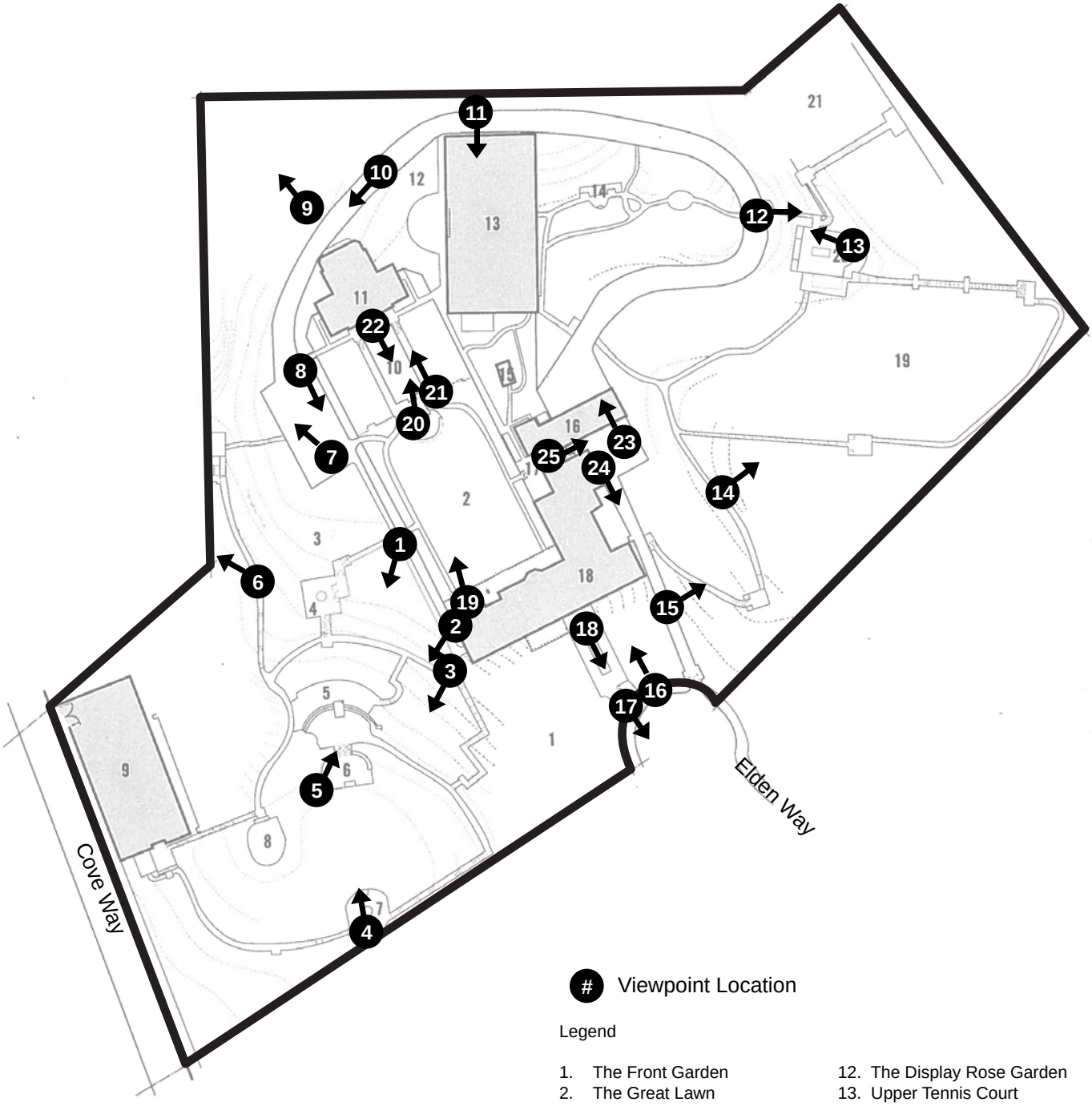
	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

For purposes of this analysis, a scenic vista is defined as a vantage point with a broad and expansive view of a significant landscape feature or a significant historic or architectural feature. A scenic vista is a location that offers a high-quality and visually interesting view. Virginia Robinson Gardens is located in an elevated area at the apex of a hill. However, views from the project site are limited to highly channelized superior views of Downtown Los Angeles, mature vegetation, and neighboring rooftops. The historic structures at the project site are not visible from the majority of the surrounding neighborhood, though the Main Residence is visible from the Elden Way cul-du-sac. Figure 3 (Viewpoint Locations Map) shows the viewpoint locations throughout the property that correspond to the views shown in Figure 4 (Viewpoints 1 and 2) through Figure 17 (Viewpoints 24 and 25) that depict the existing visual conditions.

Viewpoint 1 depicts the view from the southwest corner of the Main Residence, from the terrace looking southwest. As shown in Figure 4 through Figure 17, public scenic vistas are generally not provided in this area and are extremely limited. Channelized views of the Downtown Los Angeles skyline are visible from select locations at the project site (Viewpoints 1, 2, and 8). These background views of the skyscrapers are visible to the southwest, through the dense on-site vegetation.

As shown in Viewpoint 18 (Figure 12), the surrounding residential streets feature extremely dense landscaping along the privately-owned properties that include hedges, shrubs, and mature trees. In addition, some properties are bordered by stone walls and gates. Therefore, any views of the project site from public streets are obstructed, except from the terminus of the Elden Way cul-du-sac. Nonetheless, the proposed project would not include any physical modifications to the Virginia Robinson Gardens and its historic buildings. No new structures would be constructed that could block scenic views from either the project site or surrounding residences. As such, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact on scenic vistas in the project area.



Viewpoint Location

Legend

1. The Front Garden
2. The Great Lawn
3. The Italian Terrace Garden
4. Three Frog Fountain
5. Citrus Terrace
6. Neptune Terrace
7. Three-Tiered Italian Fountain
8. Coral Tree
9. Lower Tennis Court
10. Swimming Pool
11. Pool Pavilion
12. The Display Rose Garden
13. Upper Tennis Court
14. Aviary in Palm Forest
15. The Orchid Greenhouse
16. Male Staff Quarters
17. The Kitchen Terrace
18. Main Residence
19. The Palm Forest
20. The Palm Terrace with Pond
21. Cutting Rose Garden

***Source*:** Beverly Hills' First Estate, The House and Gardens of Virginia & Harry Robinson By: Timothy Lindsay, Marcella Ruble, and Evelyn Carlson (Edited by Maralee Beck and Jamie Wolf), Atkins, 2012.

NORTH
NOT TO SCALE

Figure 3
Viewpoint Locations Map

ATKINS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The project site features the Main Residence, Pool Pavilion, trees, and dense vegetation. As discussed further in Section V (Cultural Resources), the Main Residence at the Virginia Robinson Gardens was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on November 15, 1978, and is registered as a point of historic interest. However, the proposed project would not physically alter the structures or gardens on the project site and would, therefore, not damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings.

The closest state highway is SR-2, Santa Monica Boulevard, located approximately 1.3 miles south-southeast of the project site. SR-2 is not a state-designated scenic highway, and no portion of the project site can be seen from SR-2. SR-1, Pacific Coast Highway, is located approximately 7 miles southwest of the project site and is not officially designated as a scenic highway.[2] As with SR-2, no views of the project site can be seen from any portion of SR-1, and SR-1 cannot be seen from the project site. As discussed previously, the proposed project would not construct new buildings or remove existing vegetation and, therefore, would not impact the existing trees, vegetation, and historic integrity of the site. The proposed project would not have the potential to damage any scenic resources on the project site, in the surrounding area, or on a state scenic highway, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The project site is located within a fully developed area of the City of Beverly Hills, but is nestled at the top of a hill above Sunset Boulevard. The approximately 6.2-acre project site is a terraced, irregularly shaped parcel bound by residential uses on all sides. Figure 3 shows the viewpoint location map, and Figure 4 through Figure 17 depict the existing visual conditions throughout the project site.

The structures on the site include a one-story, white stucco Main Residence in the Beaux Arts architectural style (Viewpoints 16, 20, 22, 23, 24, and 25); a Pool Pavilion (Viewpoints 10, 19, and 21); and staff quarters (Viewpoints 23 and 25). In addition, the site features extensive gardens and lawns (Viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, and 22); an upper and lower tennis court; a swimming pool (Viewpoints 21 and 22); terraces, fountains, and ponds (Viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 4, 12, and 13); a palm

[2] California Department of Transportation, California Scenic Highway Mapping System, Los Angeles County. http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm (accessed June 25, 2012).

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 4
Viewpoints 1 and 2

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 5
Viewpoints 3 and 4

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 6
Viewpoints 5 and 6

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 7
Viewpoints 7 and 8

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 8
Viewpoints 9 and 10

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 9
Viewpoints 11 and 12

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 10
Viewpoints 13 and 14

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 11
Viewpoints 15 and 16

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 12
Viewpoints 17 and 18

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 13
Viewpoints 19 and 20

ATKINS

***Source*:** Atkins, 2012.

Figure 14
Viewpoint 21

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 15
Viewpoint 22

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 16
Viewpoint 23

ATKINS

Source: Atkins, 2012.

Figure 17
Viewpoints 24 and 25

ATKINS

forest (Viewpoints 12, 13, 14, and 15); a greenhouse; a 20-stall surface parking lot (Viewpoints 7 and 8); and pedestrian connector paths. The gardens and terraces are highly landscaped, but portions of the site feature more natural or native landscaping.

Due to the site's size, dense vegetation, and topography, most views are limited to the foreground and the immediate surroundings. However, some background views are provided at certain locations, including the Downtown Los Angeles skyline (Viewpoints 1, 2, and 3) and superior views of the rooftops and gardens of adjacent single-family homes (Viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, and 12).

Views of the site from surrounding areas are limited since the project site is on a hilltop. The dense vegetation along the perimeter of the project site is visible from Carolyn Way to the northeast and Cove Way to the west. In addition, the project site is located at the end of the Elden Way cul-du-sac. From this location, the one-story Main Residence is visible through mature trees. Elden Way is a two-way street with sidewalks, street lighting, and unrestricted on-street parking. The adjacent properties are relatively screened from street view by dense landscaping, mature trees, low stone walls, and high security walls and gates on private driveways (Viewpoint 17). The one- to two-story single-family dwelling units are typically set back from Elden Way and can be seen from the street intermittently through the vegetation and security walls.

The proposed project would continue to maintain and preserve the Virginia Robinson Gardens and its historic structures and gardens, which is key to maintaining the current aesthetic conditions of the area. The proposed project would not construct new buildings, alter existing buildings, or alter the visual aspects of the site in any way. As such, the proposed project would not degrade the visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings. However, the proposed project would allow visitors to walk to the gardens from nearby residences or public transit stops (Los Angeles Metro). With limited exception, the proposed project would allow visitors to park on the street when a vehicle cannot fit down the narrow, single-lane driveway or through the narrow porte cochere. The movement of visitors through the surrounding neighborhood and the potential for a limited number of parked cars along Eden Way would create a new, short-term, visual element to the project area. However, as Elden Way is the only street in the surrounding neighborhood with unrestricted parking, the cul-de-sac frequently contains construction and landscaping vehicles parked by workers at estates on the surrounding streets. As such, the infrequent (and prearranged) parking of a vehicle on Elden Way associated with the Virginia Robinson Gardens would not change the visual characteristics of the streetscape. No more cars will be allowed to park on the street than are currently allowed. The only potential difference is that some of those cars will be patrons of Virginia Robinson Gardens and not just other visitors to the neighborhood. Further, due to the short-term and minor nature of this new visual element, the proposed project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the project area, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project does not include any new permanent sources of light or glare on the project site. All lighting features on the project site would remain the same, and no new reflective surfaces (i.e., windows, metal fixtures, etc.) would be added. The frequency of nighttime lighting would generally not increase with implementation of the proposed project. Currently, hours of operation at the Virginia Robinson Gardens are restricted to daylight hours, with the exception of one nighttime patron party per year (the other special use currently permitted occurs during the day). Although the proposed project would increase special events from two per year to six per year, most of these events would occur during daytime hours, such Garden Tours, public tours for donors, performing arts, and temporary exhibits. However, a public tour in the evening with a meal could be offered under the proposed project. Nonetheless, lighting impacts during this event would be temporary. The lighting would likely be directed toward a specific area of the project site, and since the project site and the other properties in the area are located on large parcels, the amount of light spillage onto neighboring residences would be limited. In addition, the dense landscaping surrounding the site would block the majority of the nighttime lighting light. This lighting would also be consistent with the lighting elements of adjacent neighborhood (as hosting special events is commonplace in this neighborhood and throughout the City of Beverly Hills) and would not create a significant new source of light.

The increase of operations would result in more vehicle trips to and from the site. However, with the exception of potential limited nighttime garden tours (as a special event only), the hours of operation would typically end before vehicle headlights could become a nuisance. As such, vehicle headlights as a result of the proposed project would be consistent with existing conditions.

Currently, visitors are not allowed to park on the street and walk into the project site, but with the proposed project, limited, prearranged street parking would be allowed if a vehicle does not fit through the narrow, single-lane driveway or through the narrow porte cochere. As such, a limited number of cars associated with the proposed project could be parked infrequently on the adjacent residential streets. Light could reflect off of car windows and create glare on surrounding residential properties. However, this impact would be temporary, as cars associated with the proposed project site would not usually be permitted to park on the street for daily operations and visitors would be required to leave the site by 5:30 PM daily. Further, the proposed project would not change the amount of allowable street parking in the project area. Under the proposed project, no more cars would be allowed to park on the street than are currently allowed. The only change from existing conditions would be that some cars parked along streets leading to the project site would be patrons of Virginia Robinson Gardens, in addition to other visitors to the neighborhood. Because no new parking would be created on or off the project site, no additional vehicles would be able to park on the street and light and glare associated with parked cars would remain largely the same as conditions currently.

During special uses, vehicles arrive at the site and cars are parked in the surrounding neighborhood (by valet). This is commonplace with events held in the area by surrounding residences and would not be a condition unique to the proposed project site. In addition, the residential properties are surrounded by dense shrubs, hedges, trees, and other landscaping, which would block the majority of the glare from the limited amount of parked cars introduced by the project. Therefore, the proposed project would result in ***less-than-significant*** light and glare impacts.

II. AGRICULTURE/FORESTRY RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
(a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

There are approximately 39,812 acres of farmland in Los Angeles County. However, the project site is not located on or adjacent to any farmland including Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.[3] The project site is located in a highly developed, residential neighborhood, and the proposed project would not involve any construction activities, including grading, or changes in land use. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or with a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The project site is not currently protected under the Williamson Act or zoned for agricultural uses, nor has it been used for strictly agricultural purposes since the Robinsons purchased the property in the early 1900s.[4] The project site is located within an R-1.X One-Family Residential Zone that is fully developed

[3] California Department of Conservation, Farming Mapping and Monitoring Program, http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx (accessed June 25, 2012).
[4] California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Williamson Act Program, FTP Directory, http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/lca/pages/index.aspx (accessed June 25, 2012).

with single-family residences, and there is no agricultural zoning in the project vicinity. The proposed project would not include changes in existing land use. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with an existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract and would result in ***no impact*** to such resources.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

While the project site is currently developed with acres of manicured gardens that surround the Main Residence and Pool Pavilion, the existing vegetation is not considered to be a forestry resource per the definition of Public Resources Code Section 12220(g), timberland as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526, or timberland zoned Timberland Production per Government Code Section 51104(g). Based on a review of maps and aerial photographs of the project site, as well as site visits, the project site is not located on or in the immediate vicinity of forest lands. The proposed project would not include construction activities or a change in land use. The project site is zoned for single-family residential use (R-1.X), which does not support forest land (as defined above). In addition, no trees or vegetation would be altered as part of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning or cause the rezoning of forest lands and would result in ***no impact*** to such resources.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to nonforest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

Based on a review of maps and aerial photographs of the project site, as well as site visits, the project site is not located on or in the immediate vicinity of forest lands and has not been utilized for forest land for in the recent past. The proposed project would not include construction activities or a change in land use, and it would not result in the removal of any existing trees, though no forest land exists on the site. As such, implementation of the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on the potential for loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to nonforest uses.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(e) Involve other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to nonforest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

As discussed above, no farmland, agricultural land, or forest land is located at or in the vicinity of the project site, and the site has not been utilized for these purposes since the Robinsons purchased the property in the early 1900s. In addition, the proposed project would not include any changes to the physical environment or structures on site. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** due to the potential to convert farmland or forest land to other uses.

III. AIR QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
(a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Air quality management plans (AQMP) are prepared to accommodate growth, reduce the high levels of pollutants within areas under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), return clean air to the region, and minimize the impact of reduced air quality on the economy. Projects that are consistent with the AQMP would not interfere with attainment of the air quality levels identified in the AQMP.

Projects that are consistent with the employment and population projections identified in the Growth Management Chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments are considered consistent with the AQMP growth projections, as the Growth Management Chapter forms the basis of the land use and transportation control portions of the AQMP.

The proposed project would not affect employment or population growth since it changes only the hours of operation and does not substantially increase employment, daily visitors, or residential units. Further, the employment levels anticipated per special event under the proposed project would remain the same as the two special use events that are held currently, thereby not introducing new employees into the area. The proposed project does not involve the construction or addition of residential uses and, therefore, the population of this residential area would not be altered under the proposed project. As the proposed project is not changing the growth projections for employment and population as stipulated in the RCPG, the proposed project would be in conformance with the AQMP. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact due to conflict with the AQMP.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

As described above, the proposed project would not result in physical modifications to the project site (structures or gardens) or changes in land use. Therefore, no construction related air emissions would occur.

Operational emissions for the proposed project were determined and were based primarily on vehicular trip increases under the proposed project, which would impact air quality. Other aspects of the project, such as changes to the hours and days of operation would not substantially change day-to-day or annual air quality emissions. Air quality emissions for the proposed project were modeled with the California Emissions Estimator (CalEEMod) model using default trip rates and lengths for daily employees and volunteers as well as project-specific information for trip rates related to the extended hours of operation. Modeling assumptions and output are included as Appendix A.

Table 2 (Criteria Pollutant Emissions [lbs/day]) shows the results of the criteria pollutant analysis. The emissions calculations factor in the proposed increase in days of operation per week (from 4 days to 5 days) and the increase of special events per year (from two events to six events). The minor change in site operations results in additional operational emissions on an annual basis; however, these air quality emissions are well below the SCAQMD thresholds of significance (less than 1 percent of each threshold). Further, it is important to note that the daily emissions and the single-event emissions would remain the same as existing, because the same number of people would be permitted to access the site during these times. The minor change in criteria pollutant emissions occurs over the course of the year with one additional day per week and four additional special events per year. Further, air quality emissions and associated impacts are based on a per-day emission level and threshold. As such, proposed project is not anticipated to violate any air quality standard or to contribute significantly to an existing air quality violation and would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

Table 2 Criteria Pollutant Emissions (lbs/day)

	ROG	*NO_X*	*CO*	*SO_2*	*PM_{10}*	*$PM_{2.5}$*
Area	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mobile	0.05	0.17	0.72	0.00	0.14	0.01
Total Net	*0.05*	*0.17*	*0.72*	*0.00*	*0.14*	*0.01*
SCAQMD Threshold	55	55	550	150	150	55
Significant?	No	No	No	No	No	No

SOURCE: Atkins (2012).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project would be cumulatively considerable if new sources of air quality emissions exceed SCAQMD project-specific emissions thresholds. As discussed in Section III(b), air quality emissions from operation of the proposed project would be well below established thresholds and are less than significant on a project-specific level. Therefore, air quality emissions attributable to the proposed project would not be considered cumulatively considerable, and implementation of the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant cumulative impact with respect to air quality. Further, the project area is considered to be a developed location that is fully developed with single-family residential estates. As such, development in the area, or cumulative projects, is considered to be substantially stable and would be limited to infill or replacement projects that would not significantly alter land uses in the area or contribute substantially to air quality emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** cumulative air quality impact.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Air quality regulators typically define sensitive receptors as schools (preschool through 12th grade), hospitals, residential care facilities, day-care centers, or other facilities that may house individuals with health conditions who would be adversely affected by changes in air quality. The project site is surrounded on all sides by single-family residences, which are also considered to be sensitive receptors.

CO Hotspot Analysis

A carbon dioxide (CO) "hot spot," or area of high CO concentration, can occur at traffic congested roadway intersections as a result of accumulating vehicle emissions. CO concentrations must be calculated for study intersections when an increase of traffic from the implementation of a proposed projected causes an intersection to operate at level of service (LOS) D or worse. The proposed project is anticipated to increase vehicle trips to the project site by approximately 3,000 annually, or a minimal daily average of 15 vehicle trips. The proposed project would extend the daily operating hours into the evening (5:30 PM). Although not anticipated, this analysis conservatively assumes that all 15 trips would occur during the PM peak hour commute. However, even if all 15 vehicle trips would use the same intersections within that peak hour, the minimal increase of 15 trips would not adversely impact the roadway's level of service (refer to Section XVI [Transportation/Traffic] for further information

regarding LOS calculations and impacts). Therefore, the proposed project would not result in an acute buildup of CO at roadway intersections (or other locations) on a daily basis.

The proposed project also includes the increase of special uses at the project site from two to six annually. However, a CO hotspot is triggered only when roadway levels of service are degraded such that vehicles become backed up, resulting in the accumulation of vehicle emissions. The characteristics of the proposed special uses (i.e., number of attendees, valet operations, etc.) would not change substantially from the two events that are held annually; therefore, the number of vehicles arriving at the site at any one time (or on any given day) would not increase. Further, attendees are anticipated to arrive at the site and deliver their vehicle to a valet who will park their cars immediately, which is consistent both with current conditions for the project site, as well as with the neighborhood, where large estate events are held regularly. Valet service would ensure that vehicles arriving at the site would not remain idling and would not contribute to a CO hotspot. As such, the addition of four events annually would not affect the potential for the proposed project to result in a CO hotspot. The proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact with respect to localized CO concentrations.

Toxic Air Contaminant Analysis

Toxic air contaminants (TAC) result from both construction and operational emissions. TACs of potential concern within the project area include diesel particulate matter, a form of PM emitted mostly from diesel-powered equipment during construction activities, and chemicals emitted from industrial uses. As the proposed project does not include construction activities or industrial uses, an increase in TACs related to construction activities, the use of construction equipment, and industrial uses would not occur.

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) identifies the most notable sources of TAC emissions are from dry cleaners, auto body repair services, gasoline dispensing stations, manufacturing, distribution centers, rail yards, chrome platers, ports, petroleum refineries, and freeways or major roadways. ARB specifies buffer distances of up to 1,000 feet around stationary sources, and 500 feet from high-volume roadways, which are identified as having 100,000 daily trips or more on urban roadways.[5] The proposed project is a park/garden with an average daily increase in traffic of approximately 15 trips. Benedict Canyon Drive has the greatest existing trip volume in the study area at 1,486 daily vehicle trips. Therefore, there are no high volume roadways in the project vicinity that could contribute to substantial TAC emissions. Because the proposed project is not a TAC source facility nor does it represent a mobile TAC source, the operation of the project site would not result in a TAC impact to nearby residences or other sensitive receptors.

The proposed project includes the extension of daily operating hours and the increase of special events at the site by four (for a new total of six) annually. The proposed project is anticipated to result in approximately 15 additional daily trips in the project area, which would not result in the generation of any considerable TACs and, therefore, would not have the potential to impact nearby sensitive receptors. Conversely, the proposed project, as a park/botanical garden, is not specifically considered by the County or SCAQMD to be a sensitive receptor. Regardless, the proposed project is in a predominantly residential area and, therefore, is not located within 1,000 feet of any identified land use type identified as

[5] California Air Resources Board, *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook—A Community Health Perspective* (April 2005).

a potential TAC emitter. Further, the proposed project is not located within 500 feet of a high-volume roadway. Therefore, the project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact with respect to the generation of or proximity to TAC emissions.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Odors emanate from trace substances in the air that can be perceived by the sense of smell. This analysis focuses on objectionable odors. While almost any land use has the potential to emit odors, some land uses are more likely to produce odors because of their operations. Land uses that are known to have the potential to emit objectionable odors include: agriculture, chemical plants, composting operations, dairies, fiberglass molding, landfills, refineries, rendering plants, rail yards, and wastewater treatment plants. The proposed project would maintain the existing garden use at the project site and would not result in construction or alteration to structures or gardens on site, thereby not increasing the potential for objectionable odors on site. Further, past site uses have not been identified by adjacent neighbors as producing objectionable odors. Vehicle exhaust can also emit objectionable odors. While vehicle trips to/from the project site would increase slightly under the proposed project, the increase in objectionable odors would be minor and consistent with existing conditions. With the continuation of existing uses on the project site, the proposed project would not generate objectionable odors and would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact with respect to objectionable odors.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

A qualified Atkins biologist conducted a general biological survey of the Virginia Robinson Gardens project site and immediate vicinity on June 15, 2012, by foot between the hours of 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM. The purpose of the general survey was to inventory existing vegetation and habitat types, assess the likelihood for special-status species to occur, and confirm the presence or absence of potential wetlands and other sensitive biological resources.

The proposed project site is in a residential area of northwest Beverly Hills. The site is completely surrounded by existing, established residential development with substantial landscaping, primarily for

the purposes of decoration and to screen residential structures from adjacent streets. The existing environment is typical of urban settings in the Los Angeles Basin and is primarily comprised of buildings, surface streets, and non-native ornamental vegetation associated with landscaping. The local area is fully developed and lacks naturalized or native habitat for plant and wildlife species. The area has been developed for decades,[6] and all native habitat that had once existed has been largely removed. No native vegetation communities, drainage features, wetlands, riparian corridors, or other undeveloped habitat occurs on the project site. In general, the ornamental landscape vegetation that characterizes the project site and vicinity is mature, with taller ornamental trees, shrubbery, and groundcover interspersed among the residential homes and surface streets.

When Virginia Robinson Gardens first opened to the public in 1980, one of the primary purposes was to introduce plants from other parts of the world and test them for their potential to be introduced into the Southern California region. Vegetation at the project site is comprised primarily of exotic species that have been planted and maintained for display to visitors. The exotic species cover both tropical and subtropical plants, including various palms, flowering trees, gingers, ferns, bromeliads, and plumeria, among others.

The existing environment at the project site provides marginal habitat for a range of common (non-sensitive) wildlife species that are typical of developed areas. No special-status plant or wildlife species are likely to occur for the reasons stated further below. Wildlife species with the potential to occur in the local area include common reptiles such as western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), and alligator lizard (*Gerrhonotus multicarinatus*); common birds such as black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), rock dove (*Columba livia*), and mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*); and common mammals such as house mouse (*Mus musculus*), Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), and domestic cats (*Felis catus*) and dogs (*Canis familiaris*). Many of these common wildlife species would not be expected to occur on the project site due to existing anthropogenic-related (human-related) disturbances and lack of suitable cover and resources. In addition, some of the ornamental flowering plants provide foraging and nectar sources for common butterflies and other insects that are ordinary to the area, including swallowtail (*Papilio* spp.), white (*Pieris* spp.), and lady (*Vanessa* spp.), among others. Given the spectacular array of exotic flowering plants, these common insects would be expected to thrive and assist in pollination and plant health at the Virginia Robinson Gardens. The proposed operational changes at the project site would present no adverse affect to these common wildlife species, as they would continue to benefit from the thriving gardens, which will remain unaltered and undisturbed as a result of the proposed project.

As referenced above, no special-status plant or wildlife species are likely to occur on or in the vicinity of the project site due to existing anthropogenic-related disturbances and lack of suitable native habitat. Prior to the survey, a records search of the California Department of Fish and Game's Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) was conducted for the project site and areas located within approximately 5 miles of

[6] Historic Aerials, Historical Imagery for Beverly Hills and Vicinity (1948, 1953, 1972, 1980, 2003, 2004, and 2005), data provided by Historical Aerials by NETR Online. www.historicaerials.com/ (accessed July 9, 2012).

the site (see Appendix B).[7] The CNDDB maintains data pertaining to special-status species and sensitive natural communities that have been previously observed and reported at locations throughout the state. In total, thirty-three special-status plants, nineteen special-status wildlife, and five sensitive natural communities have been reported to the CNDDB at locations within 5 miles of the project site. However, no special-status plant species, special-status wildlife species, or sensitive natural communities have been reported to the CNDDB on the project site itself. None were observed during the July 2012 general biological survey.

None of the thirty-three special-status plant species reported to the CNDDB have a high potential to occur on or in the immediate vicinity of the project site due to lack of suitable habitat and disturbance factors. Where vegetation is present, it is dominated by non-native plant species typical of ornamental landscaping and disturbed areas, which do not provide suitable conditions for special-status plants. The underlying soils are highly disturbed and would not be expected to provide suitable conditions for most special-status plant species. In addition, most of the vegetated areas are irrigated (as necessary) and maintained for pests and weeds. These and other regular maintenance activities at the project site present unsuitable conditions for special-status plants. Therefore, no special-status plant species have a high potential to occur on or in the immediate vicinity of the project site.

Similar to that found for special-status plant species, none of the nineteen special-status wildlife species reported to the CNDDB have a high potential to occur on or in the immediate vicinity of the project site due to lack of suitable habitat and disturbance factors. Suitable habitat for most special-status wildlife species has been removed or severely degraded and fragmented in the general area encompassing the project site. The existing environment is disturbed, surrounded by development, and locally and regionally isolated. The non-native vegetation on the project site is actively maintained and does not support the constituent habitat elements (e.g., adequate cover, refugia, foraging, and breeding habitat) required by special-status wildlife known to occur in the region. The local area experiences a relatively high volume of vehicular traffic and landscape maintenance activities, which impose adverse indirect disturbances associated with noise and lighting. The longtime presence of visitors and residents at the project site, although generally unobtrusive, would likely deter special-status wildlife species from using the area for any of their life history requirements. Therefore, no special-status wildlife species have a high potential to occur on or in the immediate vicinity of the project site.

The proposed project does not include construction or land alteration activities that could result in the removal of existing vegetation or the addition of new vegetation at the project site. Although the proposed project would increase the number of visitors per week (due to the additional day of operation) and the number of special uses, all precautions that are currently in place to protect the integrity of the structures and gardens would be retained and adhered to, such that the existing vegetation remains undisturbed. Common wildlife will continue to benefit from the habitat that the gardens provide, and the biological functions and values associated with the existing environment will be conserved and even enhanced with implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not have

[7] California Department of Fish and Game, California Natural Diversity Database Search: Virginia Robinson Gardens MND, CNDDB Full Condensed Report for the Beverly Hills, Van Nuys, Burbank, and Hollywood, California USCS 7.5-Minute Topographic Quadrangles (June 2012) (see Appendix B to this document).

the potential to adversely affect sensitive or special-status species, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

As discussed above, the project site is developed with an extensive garden, three primary structures, and auxiliary features. Vegetation at the project site consists of non-native landscape plantings that do not function as any naturally occurring plant communities or habitat types. As such, the project site is not considered part of any sensitive natural community. In addition, no riparian or other sensitive habitats are located on or immediately adjacent to the project site. None are reported to the CNDDB, and none were observed during the July 2012 general biological survey. The closest stream that potentially supports riparian habitat is Benedict Canyon Creek, which is located approximately 0.75 mile west of the project site. The proposed project would have no effect on Benedict Canyon Creek or the associated riparian habitat. Therefore, no impacts to riparian habitat would occur as a result of the proposed project.

Additionally, the proposed project would not alter the existing physical condition of structures or the gardens at the project site. The amount of pervious surface at the project site would not be altered. As such, the proposed project would not increase the rate, volume, or duration of runoff flow and, therefore, would not create bed and bank erosion or sedimentation of any downstream resources. The proposed project would adhere to all existing precautions related to the protection and maintenance of plants on the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact on riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

No creeks or other drainage areas traverse the project site. Further, the project site is located in an established, fully developed residential community; there are no undeveloped parcels within the surrounding neighborhood that would support wetland resources. Wetlands, as defined by Clean Water Act Section 404, do not occur at the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on wetlands.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The project site is located in a fully developed, established residential community. Because the local and regional area is fully developed, the potential for overland wildlife movement would be highly restricted. However, some migratory bird species pass through the local and regional area due to their mobility and range of travel. Migratory birds can pass through the area while moving from wintering grounds in the south to breeding grounds in the north. Nonetheless, the number of resident bird species in the local and regional area is low due to the lack of undisturbed habitat.

As discussed above, some native terrestrial mammal species may occur within the local and regional area, such as coyotes. However, the project site is surrounded by residential development and neighborhood streets and is not located near large open spaces. The closest open space area is Franklin Canyon Reservoir Park in the Santa Monica Mountain foothills approximately 0.6 mile northeast of the project site. The area between Franklin Canyon Reservoir Park and the project area is fully developed built-up land. Species that could be present in the natural areas of the foothills would not typically use the project site as a wildlife corridor or native wildlife nursery site.

The garden, arboretum, and associated trees at the project site could provide temporary dispersal and foraging habitat for migratory birds. However, the proposed project would not involve removal or disturbance of any trees, shrubs, or other vegetation on the project site that could be used by birds and other wildlife species. Therefore, no direct impacts or loss of habitat would occur as a result of project implementation. Further, the proposed project includes the maintenance and preservation of the gardens as a resource that could result in a beneficial impact to wildlife. Although the proposed project would increase the number of visitors to the site on a weekly basis due to the addition of one operational day, the visitor activities would not require encroachment into garden habitat and would continue to be non-invasive to the existing environment, avoiding indirect impacts. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not have an adverse affect on migratory birds and other wildlife species potentially moving through the area, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact on migratory wildlife.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The City of Beverly Hills Municipal Code requires a permit prior to the removal of any protected trees in the City. This permit must be obtained from the Planning Commission and can be approved only if the tree removal meets an established set of circumstances, including a condition that the protected tree

removal cannot be reasonably avoided. The proposed project would not result in the direct or indirect removal of any trees at the project site and would, therefore, not conflict with this Municipal Code requirement or County Oak Tree Ordinance. It should be noted, however, that the project site is owned by the County and is, therefore, not required to meet the requirements of the City of Beverly Hills. As a courtesy to the City of Beverly Hills, however, the proposed project will comply with their requirements.

As put forth in the EIR prepared for the project site in 1980, Mrs. Robinson's will granted the project site to the County of Los Angeles to be used specifically for the purposes of an arboretum, plant testing facility, and visitor's center for public use and visitation. Although this EIR is not a specific policy or ordinance, it has established the guiding framework with respect to facility operation for the project site since its publication. At the time the EIR was certified, the project site was most valued as an extension of the plant testing program, rather than for preservation, restoration, or public access. However, since the EIR was certified, the primary objective of the Virginia Robinson Gardens has shifted to preservation and public access to the project site. As such, while the proposed project would increase the operational hours and days, as well as special events annually, it would not alter the protection and showcase of the facility as a public garden. To the contrary, the proposed project intends to increase access to the public, consistent with the ideals of the original grant by Mrs. Robinson. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The project site is located in an entirely developed area of Beverly Hills. There are no natural communities or habitats at the project site. Further, the project site is not governed by an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved habitat conservation plan. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on any of the aforementioned plans.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project site has an extensive cultural history in the Beverly Hills community. The Beaux Arts, one-story white stucco Main Residence was built in 1911 by retail giants Virginia and Harry Robinson. The historic property also features a Pool Pavilion (constructed in 1924), gardens, an Australian King Palm Forest, terraces, patio gardens, fountains, a swimming pool, two tennis courts, and a series of interlocking footpaths and brick stairways. Mrs. Virginia Robinson used her home to host benefits and parties for royalty, Hollywood stars, and Beverly Hills society. Some of the guests to the estate included the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Marlene Dietrich, Fred Astaire, Glenn Ford, Lillian Disney, Sophia Loren, Charlie Chaplin, and Elvis Presley. Mrs. Robinson would also host philanthropic events at her home, including the Hollywood Bowl Patronesses Benefit. Shortly before her death in 1977, Mrs. Robinson bequeathed her estate to Los Angeles County. The County operates and maintains Virginia Robinson Gardens and is assisted in this endeavor by The Friends of Robinson Gardens.[8]

The project site was placed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) on November 15, 1978, and is registered as a California Point of Historical Interest under the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), with the notation that access is restricted. The property is listed under NRHP Criterion C for Architecture and under Criterion A for Exploration/Settlement at the local level of significance. The nomination specifically states that one of the most significant characteristics of the property is the carefully designed landscape that integrates the Main Residence, Pool Pavilion, and garden. Additionally, the resource maintains a high level of design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and location. The modifications completed after the 1980 EIR to convert the property to a facility open to the public were approved as having no significant impact to historic resources, and the County has worked to conserve the property in intervening years.[9]

The City of Beverly Hills compiled a Historic Resource Inventory in 1986. The Historic Resource Inventory has not been adopted by the City as a local register, but it serves as a guide to potentially significant historic properties that may have historic or cultural significance to the City. Figure 18 (Historic Resources) maps the locally designated historic resources in the City, along with the resources listed under the NRHP and the CHRP. Virginia Robinson Gardens is identified as a significant property in the City's General Plan. The Virginia Robinson Gardens (including the Main Residence) is of local

[8] Friends of Robinson Gardens, About Virginia Robinson Gardens. http://www.robinsongardens.org/about-virginia-robinson-gardens/ (accessed June 26, 2012).
[9] Atkins, Evaluation of Effects by Proposed Operation Changes at the NRHP-Listed Virginia Robinson Gardens in Beverly Hills, California as Required Under CEQA, Memorandum from Brandy Harris, Atkins Historian, to Carrie Garlett, Atkins Project Manager (July 2, 2012) (see Appendix C to this document).

historical interest because of its distinction as being the first residence in Beverly Hills, when Beverly Hills consisted mainly of barley fields.

In compliance with the requirements of CEQA as it applies to historic resources, a professional historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) Standards for History and Architectural History evaluated potential effects of the proposed project on the NRHP-listed Virginia Robinson Gardens. The results of this evaluation are included as Appendix C of this document. Since the proposed project would not involve any construction, demolition, or landscape modifications, the area of potential effects (APE) was limited to the current property boundaries.

A qualified cultural resource specialist conducted a records review at the South Central Coastal Information Center on the campus of California State University, Fullerton. The records review revealed that with the exception of the facility itself, there are no other previously designated resources within the immediate vicinity of the project site, including previously recorded archaeological sites or resources listed on the NRHP or California Register of Historic Places (CHRP). As shown in Figure 18, the closest NRHP-designated resource, Greystone Mansion/Doheny Estate, is located approximately 1 mile to the northeast on Loma Vista Drive.

The proposed project would expand hours of operation, increase the number of visitors at the site on a weekly basis (by adding one additional operational day), revise the types of daily operational uses permitted on the property, and increase the number of special uses permitted at the site. The proposed project would not involve changes to the physical environment, such as alterations to the existing structures or gardens on the project site. The expanded operating hours and increased events would not impact the property and would be consistent with historical preservation objectives. Similarly, the proposed changes to public accessibility would not result in alterations to the site itself and no additional facilities would be constructed on site or in the vicinity that would negatively impact the property's integrity of setting.

Currently, operations at the project site focus on biology, botany, and horticulture with limited interpretation of the history of the property itself or its role in early development in Beverly Hills. The proposed project would allow the Park Superintendent to determine the subject content of tours and classes as long as they effectively interpret the historical collections at the facility. This procedural modification would have no potential to impact historic resources at the site. Instead, diversity in tour and seminar content would highlight those characteristics that make the property historically significant, including its influence on early settlement patterns, its architecture, and its landscape design. In addition, this proposed change would support local historic preservation efforts in compliance with goals outlined in the County of Beverly Hills General Plan Policy C/NR 14.5, which serves to promote public awareness of the County's historic, cultural, and paleontological resources. As the project site is owned by the County, actions are not subject to the requirements of the City of Beverly Hills. However, the proposed project is in accordance with the City of Beverly Hills General Plan Policy HC 2.1. This policy

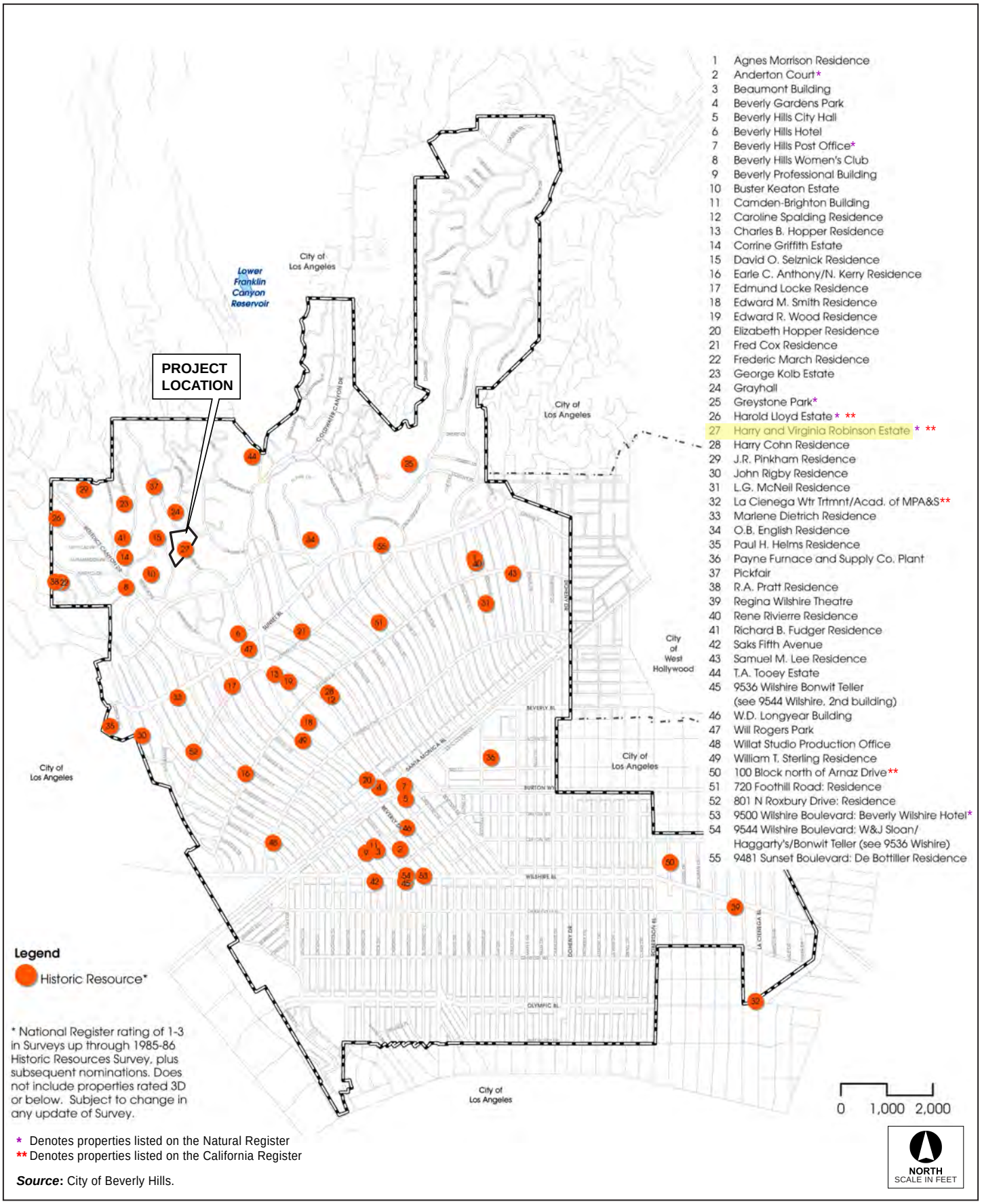


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Figure 18
Historic Resources

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specifically states it intention to develop partnerships for public education on local historic resources with preservation groups such as The Friends of Robinson Gardens.[10]

While public access at the project site would be increased, no physical changes would be made to the project site that would affect its historic integrity. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact to historical resources.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

A qualified cultural resource specialist conducted a records review at the South Central Coastal Information Center on the campus of California State University, Fullerton. The records review revealed that there are no previously designated archaeological resources within the immediate vicinity of the Virginia Robinson Gardens, including previously recorded archaeological sites. However, the surface of the project site has been previously disturbed and is fully developed with either structures or highly designed gardens. No archeological resources are known to have been discovered, and the proposed project would not include construction or ground-disturbing activities that could affect any such resources even if they were present at the project site. As such, the proposed project would result in ***no impact*** to archeological resources.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The areas of the City of Beverly Hills located north of Sunset Boulevard, including the project site, are underlain primarily by Triassic metamorphic, Jurassic granitic, and upper Miocene sedimentary rocks. The surface of the project site has been previously disturbed and is fully developed with either structures or highly designed gardens. No paleontological resources are known to have been discovered on the project site, and the proposed project would not include construction or ground-disturbing activities that could disturb such resources even if they were present. As such, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on paleontological resources.

[10] Atkins, Evaluation of Effects by Proposed Operation Changes at the NRHP-Listed Virginia Robinson Gardens in Beverly Hills, California as Required Under CEQA, Memorandum from Brandy Harris, Atkins Historian, to Carrie Garlett, Atkins Project Manager (July 2, 2012) (see Appendix C to this document).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The surface of the project site has been previously disturbed and is fully developed with either structures or highly designed gardens. No paleontological resources are known to have been discovered on the project site, and the proposed project would not include construction or ground-disturbing activities that could disturb such resources even if they were present. As such, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on human remains.

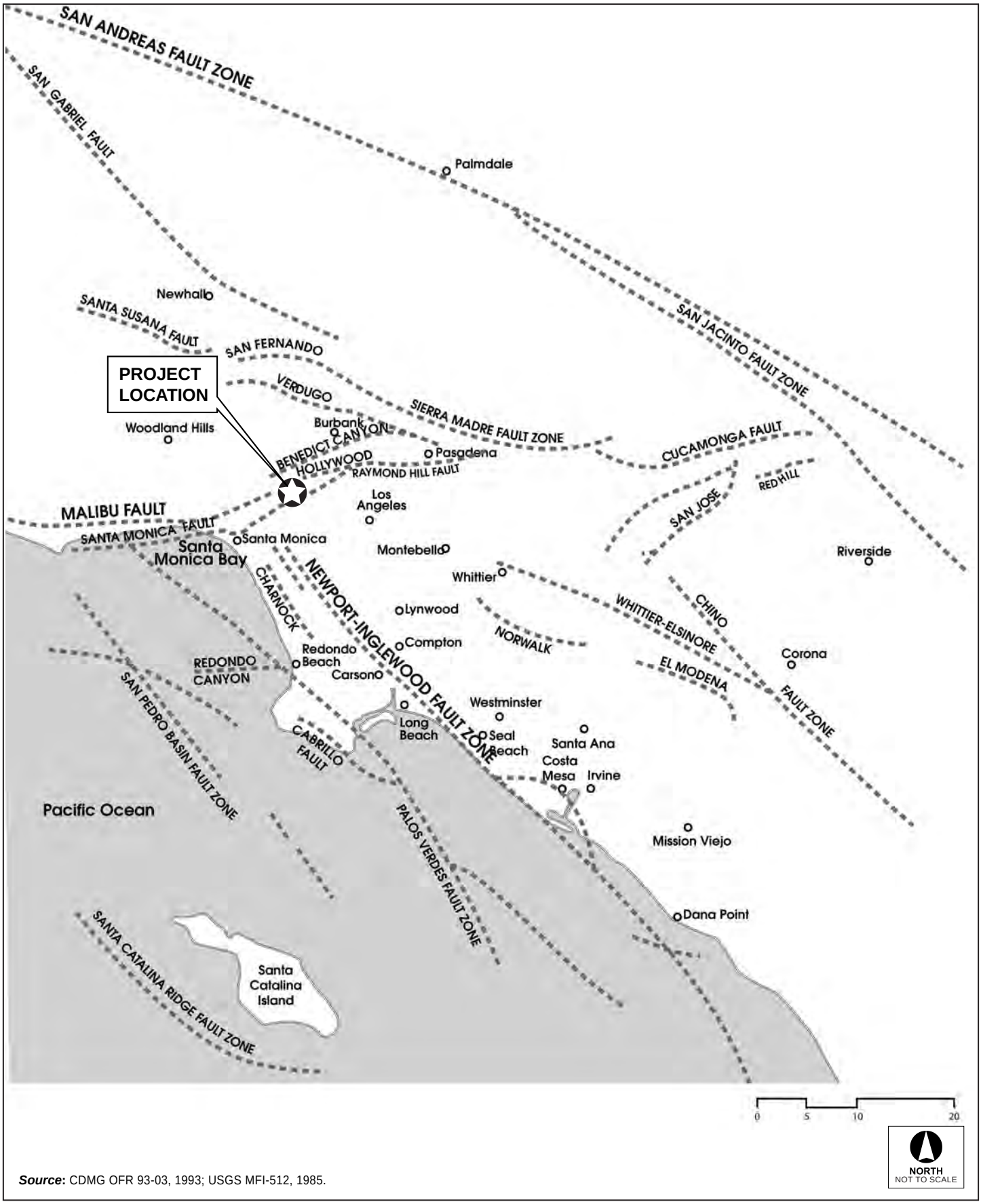
VI. GEOLOGY/SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
(i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The City of Beverly Hills is located in a seismically active region of Southern California. As such, any development that would occur within the geographical boundaries of Southern California has the potential of exposing people and/or structures to potentially substantial adverse effects involving the rupture of a known earthquake fault. Beverly Hills contains both active and potentially active faults. Specifically, three active or potentially active faults are located within the limits of the City of Beverly Hills, as shown in Figure 19 (Regional Faults Map). These major faults include the Hollywood Fault to the east, the Santa Monica Fault to the west, and the Newport-Inglewood Fault Zone to the south. The Hollywood and Santa Monica Faults are part of a major east/west-trending, left lateral-reverse fault system that forms the southern boundary of the Transverse Ranges physiographic province. This system of faults is located along the southern front of the Santa Monica Mountains and extends from offshore in Santa Monica Bay to the San Gabriel Mountains.

The project site is located approximately 1 mile from the Santa Monica fault that bisects Beverly Hills. However, the Santa Monica fault has not been active during recorded history. Although an increased number of people would visit the project site on a weekly basis (due to the addition of one operational day) and annual basis (due to the increased operational day weekly and four special events) under the proposed project, visitors would not be further exposed to geologic hazards. It is expected that most of these visitors would come from Southern California would not experience an appreciable increase in risk



***Source*:** CDMG OFR 93-03, 1993; USGS MFI-512, 1985.

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Figure 19
Regional Faults Map

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associated with general seismicity; any exposure would be typical of that in the Southern California region. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact regarding exposure of people to a known earthquake fault.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(ii) Strong seismic groundshaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Several active and/or potentially active faults within Los Angeles County and the City of Beverly Hills could potentially affect structures on the project site due to seismic shaking. All of Southern California is in a seismically active region; as such, ground motion caused by an earthquake is likely to occur at the project site during the lifetime of the proposed project. However, the physical conditions of the project site would not be altered from existing conditions and visitors and employees would be exposed to the same amount of potential seismic groundshaking. The current structures were updated in 1980 (upon opening as a public facility) to meet Building and Safety requirements to assure the safety of the visitors. In addition, it is expected that most of these visitors would come from Southern California would not experience an appreciable increase in risk associated with general seismicity; any exposure would be typical of that in the Southern California region. As no new construction or further alterations would occur under the proposed project, a ***less-than-significant*** impact to exposing persons and structures to strong seismic groundshaking is anticipated.

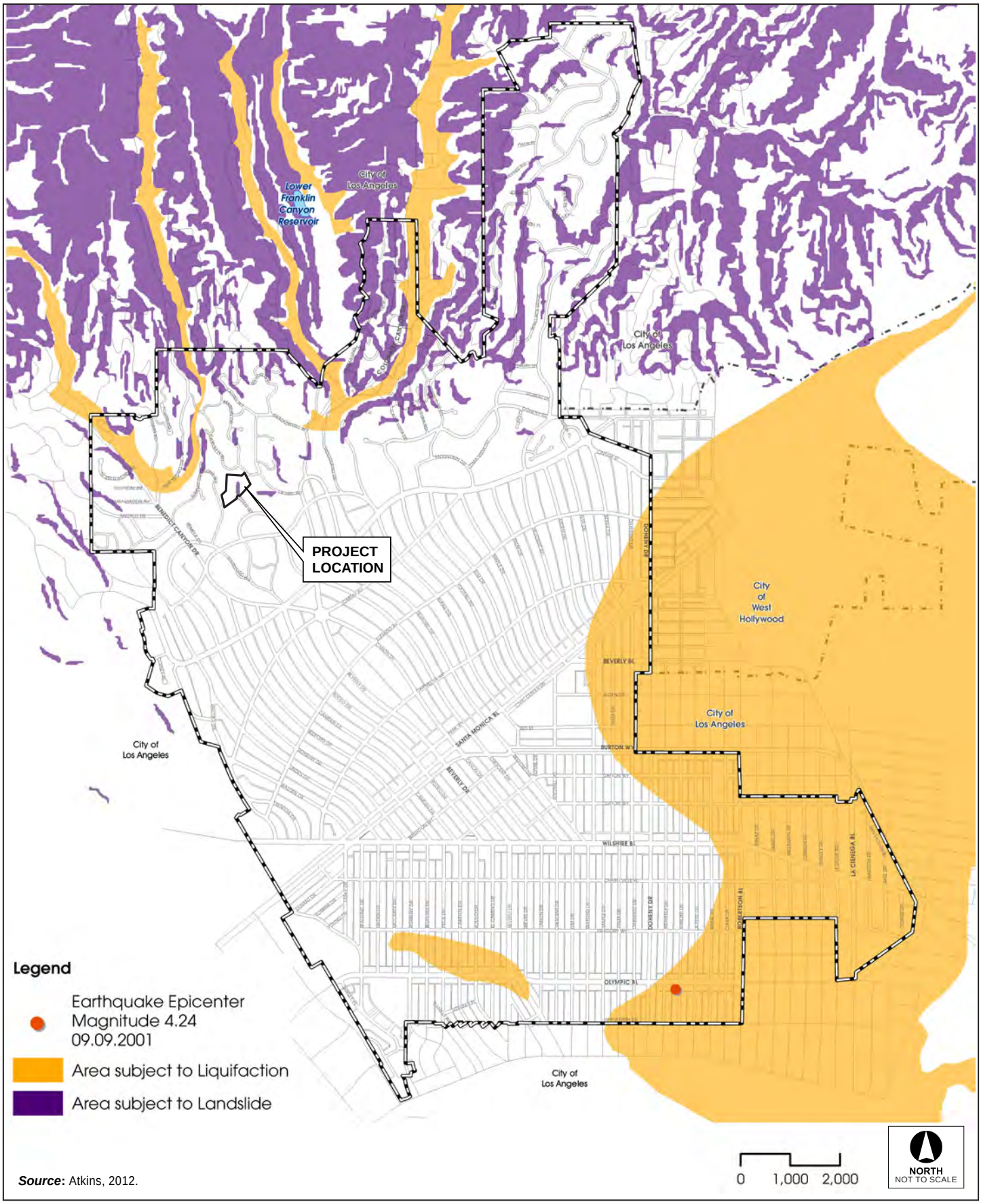
	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Liquefaction-related phenomena can include lateral spreading, loss of bearing strength, vertical settlement from densification (subsidence), buoyancy effects, and flow failures. Liquefaction typically occurs in areas where the groundwater is less than 30 feet from the surface and where the soils are composed of poorly consolidated fine to medium sand. Groundshaking packs the sand grains closer together so that there is less pore space available for the water. This increases the water pressure between the sand grains within the alluvium. These soils therefore, become very wet and mobile causing foundations of structures to move, leading to varying degrees of structural damage.

According to the Beverly Hills Hazards Mitigation Action Plan,[11] and as shown in Figure 20 (Seismic Hazards Map), the project site is not located in an area susceptible to liquefaction. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to exposure of people or structures to liquefaction hazards.

[11] City of Beverly Hills, *Hazard Mitigation Action Plan 2010–2015*, Map 10 (City of Beverly Hills Liquefaction Zones), August 17, 2010. http://hazardmitigation.calema.ca.gov/docs/lhmp/Beverly_Hills_LHMP_Rev1.pdf (accessed June 26, 2012).



***Source*:** Atkins, 2012.

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Figure 20
Seismic Hazards Map

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Landslides are often associated with earthquakes, but there are other factors that can influence the occurrence of landslides. These factors include the slope, moisture content of the soil, and the composition of the subsurface geology. The hillside area of Beverly Hills is subject to landslide potential. Surface movement in the hillside area could be triggered by rain, a breach in a reservoir, damage to potable water reservoirs or pumping facilities, or earthquake. Hillside development has placed additional loads on the subsurface bedrock.

According to the Beverly Hills General Plan Seismic Hazards Map (Figure 20), a portion of the northwestern part of the project site is subject to landslides. The project site is located atop a small north-south trending ridge in an area of relatively hilly, although developed, terrain. The topography throughout the approximately 6.2-acre project site varies from a low of 450 feet above mean sea level (msl) to 515 feet msl. The Main Residence is constructed on terrain with a slope of about 3 to 4 percent, while the landscaped gardens slope as much as 70 percent. As such, landslides could occur during wet-weather events.

However, no ground disturbance would occur under the proposed project that could trigger landslides and no new structures would be added to the property that could increase the exposure to landslides. Although an increased number of people would visit the project site on a weekly basis (due to the addition of one operational day) and annual basis (due to the increased operational day weekly and four special events) under the proposed project, the risk to each visitor due to landslides would not be increased by the proposed project. The existing exposure level would continue to each visitor. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not increase the landslide potential at the project site and would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to exposure of people to landslides.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Significant erosion typically occurs on steep slopes where stormwater and high winds can carry topsoil down hillsides. The project site is located atop a small north-south trending ridge in an area of relatively hilly, although fully developed, terrain. The Main Residence is constructed on terrain with a slope of about 3 to 4 percent, while the terraced gardens slope as much as 70 percent. As such, the project site has the potential for soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. However, the proposed project would not result in any ground disturbing activities, would not alter the conditions of the existing soil, and would not alter drainage volumes or patterns on or off the project site. In addition, the increase in visitors would not result in soil erosion or loss of topsoil as they would be required to stay on the designated paths and

would not impact the existing setting. As such, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact on soil erosion or loss of topsoil.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project would not be susceptible to liquefaction or lateral spreading. Subsidence can occur as a result of excessive groundwater or petroleum extractions, causing the ground surface to sink. As groundwater and/or petroleum extraction do not occur and are prohibited at the project site, the project site is not subject to subsidence or collapse. Although, as discussed above, a portion of the project site is vulnerable to landslides, the proposed project would not involve construction activities, modifications to the existing project site, or any changes to the physical environment. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause any geologic unit or soil to become unstable. Although the proposed project would increase the number of visitors at the project site on a weekly basis (due to the addition of one operational day) and annual basis (due to the increased operational day weekly and four special events), the risk to each visitor would not change from current conditions, which have not been identified as problematic. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Expansive soils are primarily composed of clays, which increase in volume when water is absorbed and shrink when dry. Expansive soils are of concern since building foundations may rise during the rainy season and fall during dry periods in response to the clay's actions. If movement varies under different parts of a building, structural portions of the building may distort. Clay soils beneath the City of Beverly Hills have the potential to expand. However, the proposed project would not result in construction of any kind and would, therefore, not change the subsurface conditions at all. The existing structures have been located on the project site for approximately 100 years and have not been extensively damaged by expansive soil. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to expansive soils.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The project site is currently served by the City of Beverly Hills' wastewater disposal system (sewer). The proposed project would not involve the installation or use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems and, therefore, would result in ***no impact*** regarding the ability of soils to support these systems.

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project includes operational changes that would result in a minor increase in vehicle trips and energy usage associated with the increase in operating hours, days, special uses, and allowable visitors (weekly and annually). Greenhouse gas emissions would result from sources associated with project operation, including direct sources such as motor vehicles, natural gas consumption, solid waste handling/treatment, and indirect sources such as electricity generation. Emissions from these sources were estimated for the proposed project using CalEEMod version 2011.1.1 (based on maximum daily emissions using default emission factors and project-specific consumption and generation rates). Modeling assumptions and output are included as Appendix D. Table 3 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions [MT/yr]) details the anticipated increase in greenhouse gas emissions from implementation of the proposed project. As shown, the maximum annual emissions from the increase in operational activities are 26.47 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (MT CO_2e).

Neither the SCAQMD nor the CEQA Guidelines have established numeric/quantitative or qualitative thresholds of significance for greenhouse gas emissions. The CEQA Guideline Amendments, adopted in December 2010, state that each local lead agency must develop its own significance criteria based on local conditions, data, and guidance from public agencies and other sources. However, the SCAQMD released a draft guidance document regarding interim CEQA greenhouse gas (GHG) significance thresholds in October 2008. On December 5, 2008, the SCAQMD Governing Board adopted the staff proposal for an interim GHG significance threshold for projects where the SCAQMD is lead agency. SCAQMD proposed a tiered approach, whereby the level of detail and refinement needed to determine significance increases with a project's total GHG emissions. The tiered approach defines projects that are

exempt under CEQA and projects that are within the jurisdiction of and subject to the policies of a GHG Reduction Plan as less than significant.

Table 3	Greenhouse Gas Emissions (MT/yr)			
	CO_2	CH_4	N_2O	CO_2e
Area	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Energy	3.07	0.00	0.00	3.09
Mobile	19.33	0.00	0.00	19.35
Waste	0.08	0.01	0.00	0.17
Water	3.83	0.00	0.00	3.86
Total Net	*26.31*	*0.01*	*0.00*	*26.47*
SCAQMD Threshold				3,000.00
Significant?				No

SOURCE: Atkins (2012).

CO_2e emissions represent the sum of the individual gas emissions as converted to CO_2 equivalents. CH_4 emissions are multiplied by 21 and N_2O by 310 to determine CO_2 equivalents. The math to convert CH_4 and N_2O to CO_2 equivalents is not shown, therefore values will not sum across rows. Emissions results are rounded based on CalEEMod output.

As part of the SCAQMD Working Group, the SCAQMD has proposed interim screening values for residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects. For residential projects the threshold is set at 3,500 MT CO_2e/yr, for commercial the threshold is 1,400 MT CO_2e/yr, and for mixed-use the threshold is 3,000 MT CO_2e/yr. These screening levels are based on a 90 percent capture rate, or that 90 percent of the proposed projects would exceed these levels and need to be further evaluated. These thresholds are designed to meet the Assembly Bill (AB) 32 goals and to continue to provide reductions within the SCAQMD jurisdiction beyond 2020.

The minor increase in vehicle trips and energy use related to increased operational hours and special events would not result in a substantial increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. As shown in Table 3, the proposed project would result in far less than 1,400 MT CO_2e/yr (the most restrictive of the thresholds) and would, therefore, be far below the SCAQMD's screening level threshold. As such, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact due to the generation of GHG emissions.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

As discussed under Section VII(a), the proposed SCAQMD screening level thresholds are designed such that a 90 percent capture rate is achieved. This 90 percent capture rate means that 90 percent of all development projects would need to incorporate some form of emission reductions in order to reduce

emissions. These rates are established to be compliant with the AB 32 threshold of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

Because the proposed project is compliant with the SCAQMD screening levels and is required to implement all regulatory-mandated reduction measures, the proposed project would be in compliance with the AB 32 requirements. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with plans, policies, or regulations adopted to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, and it would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

VIII. HAZARDS/HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

As with most residences and other facilities in the City of Beverly Hills, small consumer quantities of household cleaning and other hazardous materials in the City of Beverly Hills are routinely used, stored, and transported in commercial/retail businesses, educational facilities, hospitals, and households. The proposed project would expand the current operating hours (by 2 hours daily and one additional day weekly), and, as a result, more visitors would be able to access the Virginia Robinson Gardens, a main objective of the County. Further, more visitors would have access to the site during the four additional special events annually.

Although there would be increased vehicle trips to the project site, none of these would include the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. The operation of the site would be limited to minor quantities of pesticides and herbicides associated with landscape maintenance; petroleum hydrocarbons or oil and grease associated with the increased automobile traffic; and the routine use of household chemicals like paints, cleaning solvents, and ammonia associated with maintenance of the project site and painting classes. However, these chemicals would be consumed by routine use and would not increase substantially as a result of the proposed project. Through consumer compliance with label warnings and storage recommendations from individual manufacturers, these hazardous materials would not pose any greater risk than at other residential uses in the immediate neighborhood. Although use of the site would increase slightly over existing conditions, the proposed project would not introduce new or more substantial uses of hazardous materials. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact regarding the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project would not involve changes to the physical environment, such as ground-disturbing or construction-related activities that could release hazardous materials into the environment. There are no hazardous materials at the project site that could be disturbed in other ways that would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Continued use of landscaping- and art-related materials would occur at the project site but not in substantially increased quantities. As such, implementation of the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact due to the creation of a significant hazard through the accidental release of hazardous materials.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The closest schools to the proposed project site include Hawthorne School (located approximately 0.9 mile southeast) and Harvard-Westlake Middle School (located approximately 1.0 mile northwest). As such, the proposed project is not located within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. In addition, as discussed above, no changes in operation would occur that would emit hazardous emissions or handle substantial or different hazardous materials. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on the safety of nearby schools.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

According to the City of Beverly Hills General Plan, no sites within the City are currently listed in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLIS) database or the Cortese List. In addition, although there are properties in Beverly Hills on the Brownfield Reuse Program "CalSites" database and the Spills, Leaks, Investigations, and Cleanup (SLIC) list, these site are not located within a 1-mile radius of the project site and are topographically and hydrologically down-gradient. The closest site in the database to the project site is at Hawthorne School, approximately

0.9 mile southeast of the project site. Based on a search of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database, lead was discovered during the school modernization project, but has since been removed by DTSC and no further action is required as of February 2012.[12]

The California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) maintains an Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program that deals specifically with leaking fuel tanks. While there may be other constituents of concern resulting from leaking fuel tanks, the primary substance of concern of this program is fuel. Most frequently, these fuel tank leaks are associated with common neighborhood gasoline service stations. According to the SWRCB Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) database, there are four LUST sites within a 1-mile radius of the project site, as presented in Table 4 (Facilities on LUST Database within 1 Mile of Project Site).[13]

Table 4 Facilities on LUST Database within 1 Mile of Project Site

Name	*Address*	*Distance from Site (mi)*	*Potential Contaminants of Concern*	*Cleanup Status*
Beverly Hills Hotel	9641 Sunset Blvd	0.37	Gasoline	Case Closed (February 1997)
Beverly Hills City	1137 Benedict Canyon Dr	0.41	Aviation	Case Closed (April 1996)
Lucy Washington & Michael Niven	619 Doheny Rd	0.72	Benzene Diesel, Gasoline, Toluene	Case Closed (July 2010)
Greystone Estate	501 Doheny Rd	0.96	Gasoline	Case Closed (October 2011)

SOURCE: State Water Resources Control Board, Geotracker, http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov (accessed June 27, 2012).

Although properties on the EnviroStor database and the LUST database are located within a 1-mile radius from the project site, the sites have been remediated and the cases are closed. Therefore, these sites do not impact current operations at the project site and would not impact the operation of the proposed project. In addition, the project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites, and no significant hazard to the public would be created as a result of location on such a listed site. As such, the proposed project would result in a ***no impact*** due to location on a Cortese-listed project site.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(e) If located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The closest airport to the project site is the Santa Monica Airport, located approximately 5 miles southwest of the project site as "the crow flies" and approximately 7.5 miles by roadway. As such, the

[12] California Department of Toxic Substances Control, EnviroStor, Hawthorne School Modernization (60001594). http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report.asp?global_id=60001594 (accessed June 27, 2012).
[13] State Water Resources Control Board, Geotracker. http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov (accessed June 27, 2012).

project site is not within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport. However, the project site is frequently within the flight path of helicopters crisscrossing the City of Beverly Hills. The proposed project would not alter the existing flight paths in the area and helicopters are prohibited on the project site. As such, the proposed project would result in ***no impact*** related to a safety hazard for people residing or working in the vicinity of an airport.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(f) If within the vicinity of a private airstrip, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The project site is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. The closest airport to the project site is the Santa Monica Airport, located approximately 5 miles southwest of the project site as "the crow flies" and approximately 7.5 miles by roadway. Additionally, the project site is frequently within the flight path of helicopters crisscrossing the City of Beverly Hills. The proposed project would not alter the existing flight paths in the area; and helicopters are prohibited on the project site. As such, the proposed project would result in ***no impact*** related to a safety hazard for people residing or working in the vicinity of a private air strip.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The City of Beverly Hills has developed two plans designed to implement programs facilitating emergency management: the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and the Hazard Mitigation Action Plan (HMAP). The EOP addresses the City's planned response to emergency situations associated with all hazards, such as natural and man-made disasters, technological incidents, and national security emergencies. In addition, the HMAP includes resources and information to assist City departments, residents, and public and private sector organizations in planning for hazards. The strategies outlined in the HMAP address multi-hazard issues as well as activities for earthquakes, wildfires, terrorism, earth movements, flooding, and wind storms.[14]

The proposed project would voluntarily comply with all applicable City codes and regulations pertaining to emergency response and evacuation plans maintained by the police and fire departments in the City of Beverly Hills. The proposed project would not include street closures and would not change the traffic flow or access to the site, which could impede emergency evacuation. According to the General Plan,

[14] City of Beverly Hills, *Hazard Mitigation Action Plan 2010–2015*, Map 10 (City of Beverly Hills Liquefaction Zones) and Map 12 (City of Beverly Hills Fire Hazards Zones) (August 17, 2010), http://hazardmitigation.calema.ca.gov/docs/lhmp/Beverly_Hills_LHMP_Rev1.pdf (accessed June 26, 2012).

Elden Way is not a street that carries regional traffic that could serve as a major evacuation route.[15] Therefore, although traffic in the area would increase slightly as a result of the proposed project, this change would be minimal and would not impact local streets and emergency evacuation routes. In addition, the proposed project would not involve any changes to the on-site uses. Although more events would occur throughout the year (an increase of four events), attendance at those events would be generally the same. The proposed project would also still only allow a maximum of 100 visitors per day for non-special-use events. Therefore, the proposed project would not interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan, resulting in ***a less-than-significant*** impact.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

There has not been a wildland fire of any significance in Beverly Hills, and the last large wildland fire adjacent to the City occurred in Franklin Canyon over 50 years ago. Nonetheless, wildland fires present a substantial hazard to life and property in areas of Beverly Hills that are built within or adjacent to hillsides and mountainous areas. The area of the City north of Sunset Boulevard has been classified as the Very High Fire Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). As shown in Figure 21 (Fire Hazard Severity Zones), the project site is within the VHFHSZ. Factors contributing to the risk of a wildland fire include heavy vegetation adjacent to homes and residential lot density. Approximately 1,628 parcels in Beverly Hills fall within the VHFHSZ.[16]

The project site is in the VHFHSZ and includes dense vegetation that could propagate a fire. However, Fire Station #2, located at 1100 Coldwater Canyon Drive, is approximately 0.5 mile from the project site and would respond in the case of a wildland fire. Further, the project site meets, and the proposed project would meet, all applicable regulations related to fire safety. Although the proposed project would increase the number of visitors to the site weekly (due to increased daily hours and one additional operational day) and annually (due to four additional special events), the risk to each visitor due to wildland fires would not change as a result of the proposed project. The proposed project would not introduce a new use into a wildland fire zone and would not increase the maximum number of people at the site at any given time. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact due to the exposure of people to wildland fire hazards.

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[15] City of Beverly Hills, *City of Beverly Hills General Plan*, Circulation Element, Map CIR1 (Streets Carrying Regional Traffic), http://www.beverlyhills.org/services/planning_division/land_use_n_zoning/general_plan/genplan.asp (accessed June 26, 2012).

[16] City of Beverly Hills, *Hazard Mitigation Action Plan 2010–2015*, (August 17, 2010), Map 12 (City of Beverly Hills Fire Hazards Zones), http://hazardmitigation.calema.ca.gov/docs/lhmp/Beverly_Hills_LHMP_Rev1.pdf (accessed June 26, 2012).

IX. HYDROLOGY/WATER QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

In general, changes in land use will result in changes in water quality; there is a strong correlation between decreasing water quality and increasing development. As more land is developed and more impervious surfaces are created, groundwater recharge is affected as well as the volume, rate, and quality of surface water runoff. Urban runoff flows into the storm drains; ultimately flowing to local creeks, rivers, and the ocean. Polluted runoff can have harmful effects on drinking water, recreational water, and wildlife.

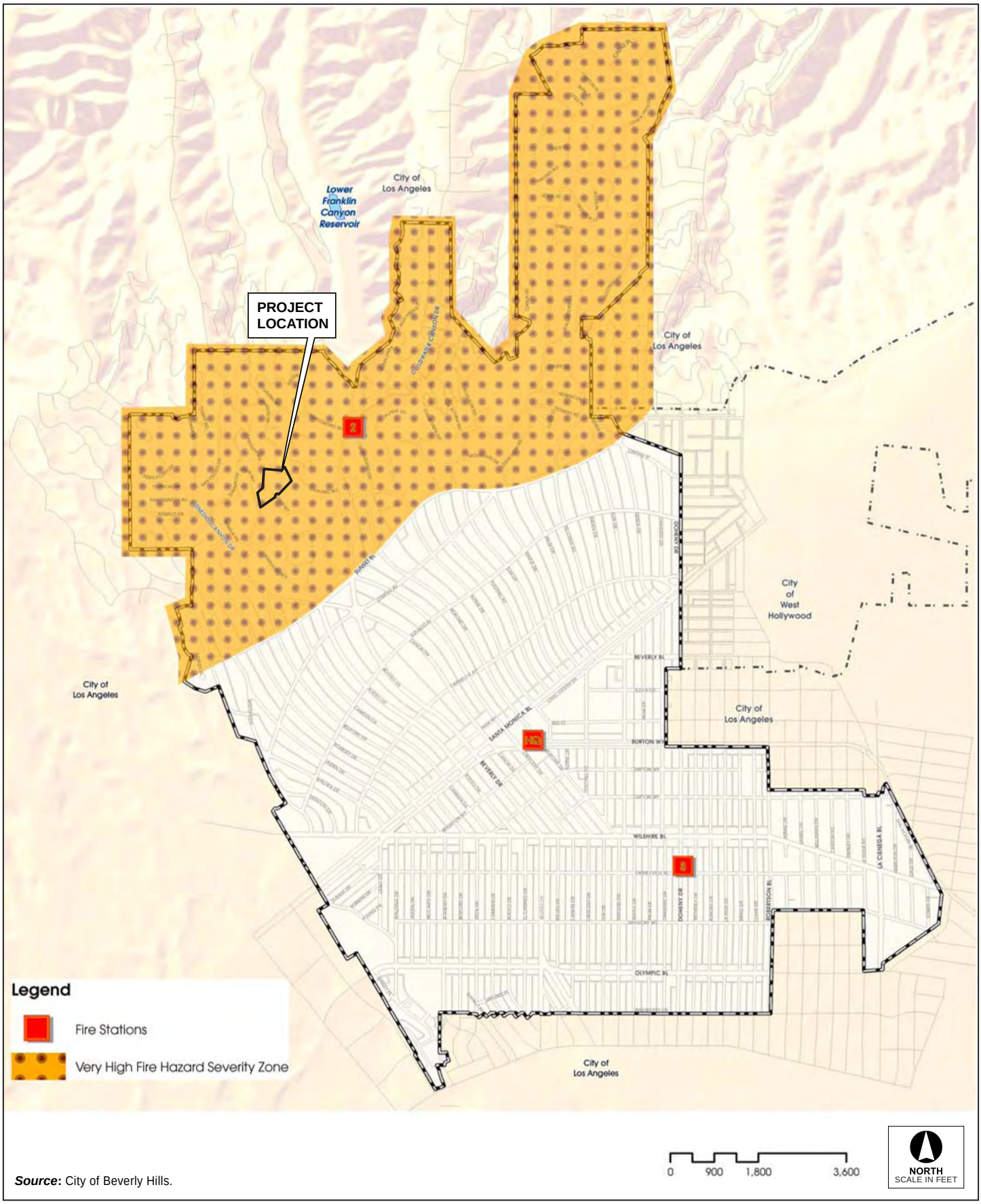
The proposed project would not alter existing development at the project site or change the land use. No additional impervious surfaces would be added as a result of the proposed project; therefore, additional runoff would not be created. Currently, the site is substantially pervious (approximately 5.5 acres of the total site acreage of 6.2 acres) and is heavily landscaped. As such, the majority of water entering the site (rain and/or irrigation) is absorbed into the ground and does not runoff into neighboring properties down-gradient from the project site. In addition, much of the landscape on site has been designed to be drought tolerant and the irrigation system would not be altered with the implementation of the proposed project.

Although the proposed project would result in slightly more vehicle traffic to the project site, which could release minor amounts of petroleum and oil onto the roads and potentially run off into local water bodies, this would be insignificant compared to existing conditions in the area. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact due to violation of a water quality standard or waste discharge requirement.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Groundwater is concentrated in areas called basins, which are the natural hydro geological unit for delineating groundwater. An aquifer is a subsurface saturated geological formation that contains and transmits significant quantities of water. Multiple subbasins and aquifers may be located within each basin. The City of Beverly Hills is located on the Central Coastal Plain of the Los Angeles Groundwater



***Source*:** City of Beverly Hills.

100029141 | Virginia Robinson Gardens Supplemental EIR

Figure 21

Fire Hazard Severity Zones

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Basin. This basin is composed of four subbasins, three of which the City of Beverly Hills is able to access: Santa Monica Subbasin, Hollywood Subbasin, and Central Subbasin.

According to the City's General Plan, the project site is located within the Hollywood Groundwater Basin.[17] This subbasin lies beneath the northeastern part of the Coastal Plain of the Los Angeles Groundwater Basin. Replenishment of groundwater in the Hollywood Subbasin occurs through percolation of precipitation and stream flow; however the development of impermeable surfaces in the area has greatly decreased the surface area available for direct percolation. The Hollywood Subbasin has an estimated storage capacity of approximately 300,000 acre-feet. The City of Beverly Hills resumed pumping water from the Hollywood Subbasin in April 2003. Currently, the City receives about 10 percent of its water supply from this groundwater resource. The project site is served by the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) of Southern California.

Although the proposed project is located within the Hollywood Groundwater Basin, it would not deplete a ground water resource or interfere with groundwater recharge. The proposed project would not involve construction, which could penetrate the groundwater table and degrade the water quality. Further, as the proposed project intends to maintain the existing pervious surfaces (lawn and gardens) on site, a beneficial result will continue to occur to groundwater recharge in the area from the project site directly.

While the proposed project would increase visitation to the project site on a weekly basis (due to the increase in daily hours and the additional operational day) and annually (due to the increase of four special events), the project would not result in a substantial water demand that would require MWD to obtain more water resources from groundwater sources (refer to Section XVII [Utilities/Service Systems] for further information regarding project-related water demand). Further, the proposed project would not change its existing land use to a use that would deplete groundwater sources. As such, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact to the City's groundwater supplies.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The City of Beverly Hills is located within the boundaries of the Ballona Creek Watershed, which drains an area of approximately 130 square miles. Major tributaries to Ballona Creek include Centinela Creek, Sepulveda Canyon Channel, Benedict Canyon Channel, and numerous storm drains. Due to the extensive modifications of Ballona Creek and its tributaries, its natural hydrologic functions within the Watershed have been significantly reduced. Approximately 40 percent of the Watershed is covered by impervious surfaces; as a result, infiltration of precipitation to groundwater has been reduced.

[17] City of Beverly Hills, *City of Beverly Hills General Plan*, Conservation Element, Figure CON1, http://www.beverlyhills.org/services/planning_division/land_use_n_zoning/general_plan/genplan.asp (accessed June 26, 2012).

Furthermore, as most channels are now concrete lined, riparian vegetation and aquatic habitat have been eliminated from these channels. The project site is located approximately 0.75 mile east of Benedict Canyon Creek, which is part of the Ballona Creek Watershed. The project site is up-gradient from the creek. The existing project site primarily consists of pervious surfaces due to its extensive gardens and landscaping. The proposed project would not alter existing development at the project site or change the land use and would, therefore, not result in erosion or siltation. Currently, the site is substantially pervious (approximately 5.5 acres of the total site acreage of 6.2 acres) and is heavily landscaped. No additional impervious surfaces would be added as a result of the proposed project; therefore, additional runoff would not be created. As such, the proposed project would not result in the alteration of the drainage pattern of the site, or directly affect the course of a stream or river, and would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact to erosion or siltation.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

As discussed in Section IX(c), the project site is located approximately 0.75 mile east of Benedict Canyon Creek. However, the proposed project would not increase impervious surfaces or change existing conditions in a way that would create additional runoff. Further, the proposed project would not alter any aspect of drainage at the project site. There are existing storm drains along Eldin Way and other surrounding streets that serve the project site. The existing storm drains have sufficient capacity to serve the project site, and the proposed project would not increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in any flooding, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(e) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project would not create impervious surfaces at the project site and would not include construction activities. As no impervious surfaces would be added to the project site, runoff would not increase above existing conditions. The project area is currently served by City of Beverly Hills storm drain infrastructure; insufficient capacity has not been identified near the project site. As the project would not create or contribute to runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

As discussed in Sections IX (a) through (e), the proposed project would not increase development at the project site or change its land use. No additional impervious surfaces would be created as a result of the proposed project; therefore, additional runoff would not be created. Although the proposed project would result in an increase of approximately 15 vehicular trips per day, which could release minor amounts of petroleum and oil onto the roads that could run off into local water bodies, this would not be substantial when compared to existing conditions. Further, the existing garden and landscaped nature of the project site (which would remain the same under the proposed project) work as a natural filter to water reaching the site. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially degrade water quality and would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact on water quality.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The 1 percent annual chance flood (100-year flood), also known as the base flood, is the flood that has a 1 percent change of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) classifies the City of Beverly Hills under Flood Zone X, which is an area that is determined to be outside the 0.2 percent annual chance floodplain.[18] As with the rest of the City, the project site is located in Flood Zone X. As such, the proposed project is not within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped by FEMA. In addition, the proposed project does not include the construction of new housing or any other structures at the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard zone, resulting in ***no impact***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

As with the rest of the City, the project site is located in Flood Zone X. As such, the proposed project is not within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped by FEMA. As discussed in Section IX(g), the

[18] Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Insurance Rate Map, Los Angeles County, California, and Incorporated Areas. Map Number 06037C1585F (effective September 26, 2008), http://www.fema.gov/hazard/map/firm.shtm (accessed June 26, 2012).

proposed project does not involve the construction of new structures. In addition, no new features would be installed on site that would impede or redirect flood flows. As such, the proposed project would result in ***no impact*** based on the impedance or redirection of flows.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Flooding could result when water retention structures fail or experience an operational malfunction. Portions of the City of Beverly Hills are threatened by flooding from the City's Greystone Reservoir, and the City's five above-ground reservoirs. The City lies in the inundation path of the Lower Franklin Canyon Dam, which is located approximately 0.7 mile north of the project site. In the event of a breach of the Lower Franklin Reservoir, the residential area north of Carmelita Avenue would be exposed to immediate danger, which includes the project site. The National Inventory of Dams characterizes this dam with significant hazard potential. Dams with significant hazard potential are those in which failure or misoperation would result in no probable loss of human life, but can cause economic loss, environmental damage, and disruption of lifeline facilities.[19]

Currently, the former Lower Franklin reservoir is used to detain flood waters and as a nature preserve. In the event of a failure of the flood control dam, the escaping water would flow into the Higgins-Coldwater Channel. This belowground concrete channel is located on the eastern side of Coldwater Canyon Drive.[20]

The proposed project would not result in the construction of new structures but would increase the number of visitors to the site on a weekly basis (due to an increase in daily operating hours and the addition of one operational day) and annually (due to the additional of four special events). Although the project site is located in an area that the City's General Plan considers as susceptible to potential flooding from the Lower Franklin Canyon Dam, the project site sits on the top of a hill. As such, in the highly unlikely event of dam failure, it is not expected that the project site would experience flooding. Further, the proposed project would not increase the exposure risk to individual visitors. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant loss, injury, or death involving flood due to failure of a dam, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

[19] City of Beverly Hills, *City of Beverly Hills General Plan*, Safety Element, http://www.beverlyhills.org/services/planning_division/land_use_n_zoning/general_plan/genplan.asp (accessed June 26, 2012).
[20] City of Beverly Hills, *Hazard Mitigation Action Plan 2010–2015* (August 17, 2010), http://hazardmitigation.calema.ca.gov/docs/lhmp/Beverly_Hills_LHMP_Rev1.pdf (accessed June 26, 2012).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

According to the Tsunami Inundation Map for Emergency Planning for the Beverly Hills Quadrangle, the project site is not located within a tsunami inundation zone. The project is between 450 feet msl and 515 feet msl and therefore, is shielded from any inundation. However, the project site is located downgradient from the Lower Franklin Canyon Reservoir. Nonetheless, as described above, the project site sits on top of a hill and would not likely be impacted by potential seiches. In addition, inundation requires a complete and instantaneous breach of the dam structure; therefore, such a failure is considered remote and speculative. The project site is located in an area characterized by hilly, but fully developed, terrain and steep slopes and consists of mainly pervious surfaces. Although the project site could be susceptible to mudflow during a large rain event, the proposed project would not alter the physical condition of the project site and is located atop a hill such that substantial mudflow from upgradient locations would not occur. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact regarding seiche, tsunami, or mudflows.

X. LAND USE/PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The project site is located at 1008 Elden Way in the northwestern portion of Beverly Hills. The project site is approximately 6.2 acres in size, located at the end of a cul-de-sac in an established residential area. Consistent with surrounding land uses, the project site is developed with the Main Residence, the Pool Pavilion, a swimming pool, the upper and lower tennis courts, and approximately 5.5 acres of landscaped grounds. The project site is known to be the first estate within the City of Beverly Hills and was utilized for single-family residential purposes until approximately 1977 when Mrs. Robinson died. In approximately 1980, the project site was deeded to the County and began operating as a botanic garden in accordance with the direction of the Virginia Robinson Will. While the zoning and General Plan Designation was not changed, the land uses on site were changed from purely residential to a public facility with limited access. At that time, an EIR was prepared to analyze the potential impacts due to this land use; and operational restrictions were established. Since the certification of the 1980 EIR, the project site has been used as a public facility where visitors are allowed to tour the Virginia Robinson Gardens. However, the physical and visual character of the site remains consistent with the single-family character of the surrounding community.

The proposed project would result in modification of the operating schedule of an existing public facility; and would not include new construction or physical alteration of the project site, nor would it extend

outside of the existing project site boundaries. The project site does not and would not represent any barrier between any two portions of the City or neighborhood. Additionally, the proposed project would not change the general land uses at the project site currently. As described above, the project site has and would remain consistent with the physical character of the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a division of the existing community and would result in ***no impact***.

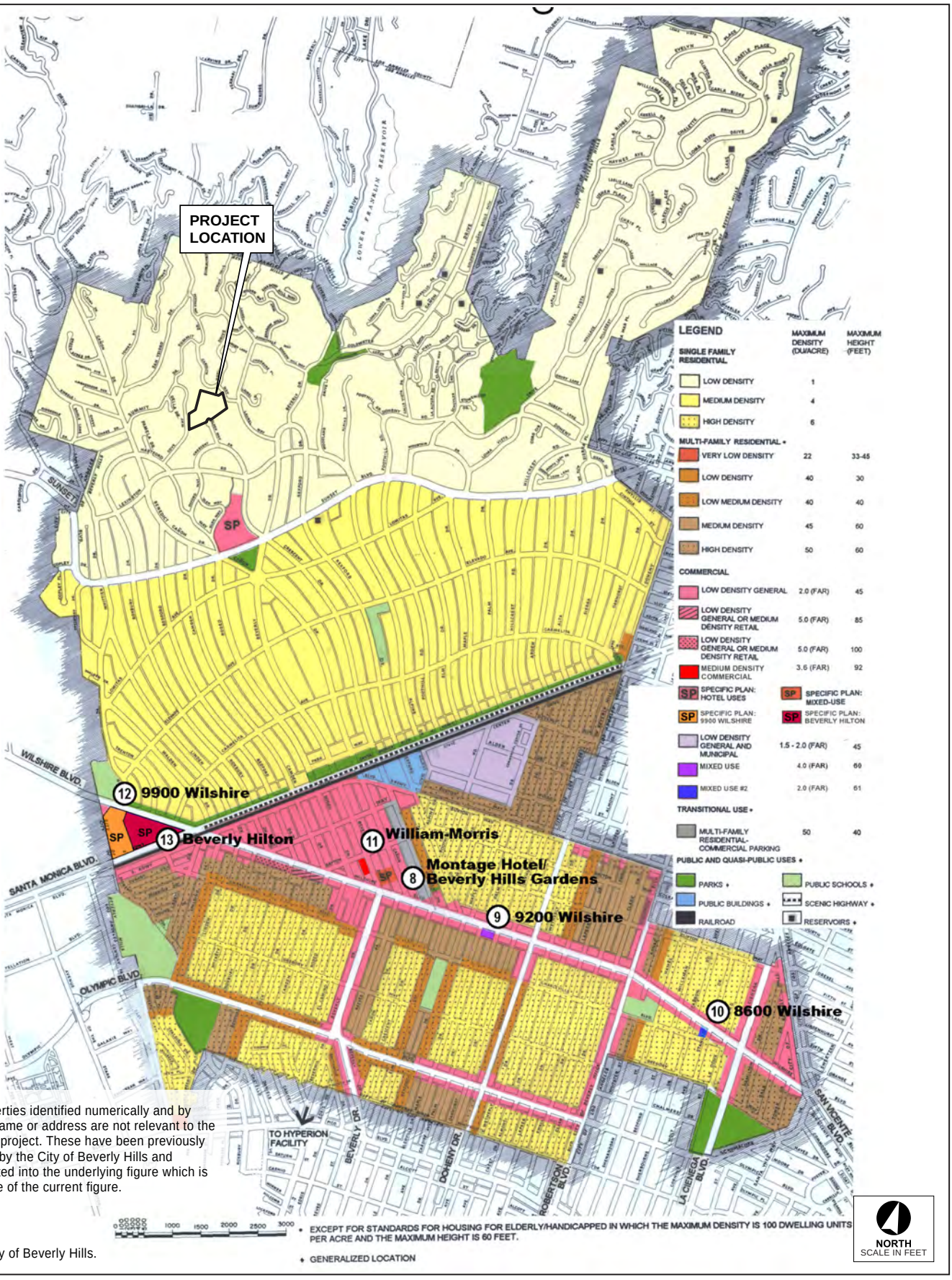
	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

By way of discretionary action, the County Board of Supervisors will consider an amendment to the existing Agreement between the County and The Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens. Formally, this amendment will consist of rewriting Section 4.05 of the Agreement to reflect the proposed changes to the days and hours of operation of Virginia Robinson Gardens.

Zoning and Land Use. The project site is under the ownership and jurisdiction of Los Angeles County, but within the City of Beverly Hills. Because the proposed project is regarded as a public function, the County would have sovereign immunity from the zoning and building regulations of the City. However, to ensure consistency with the surrounding community the proposed project would adhere to the City's land use requirements. As shown in Figure 22 (Land Use Map), the project site has a General Plan designation of Single Family Residential, Low Density. Consistent with this designation, the project site is zoned R-1.X (One-Family Residential Zone). This zoning and General Plan designation is the same for the surrounding, established residential area of Beverly Hills that is developed with large lot, well landscaped and manicured, secured residential manors.

As discussed previously, until her death, the project site was utilized for purely single-family residential purposes by Mrs. Virginia Robinson, consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. Mrs. Robinson also regularly hosted large gatherings and galas at the estate. On March 12, 1974, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved an agreement with Mrs. Robinson to assume possession of the Virginia Robinson estate upon her death. Under this agreement the County agreed to conserve the property and operate it as an arboretum or botanical garden. After Mrs. Robinson's death on August 5, 1977, the County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens assumed maintenance of the property. On June 10, 1980, County Board of Supervisors adopted the current EIR for the Virginia Robinson Gardens, which analyzed the potential impacts of changing the general land uses on the project site from purely single-family residential to a public facility with restricted or limited access (although the zoning and General Plan designations were not changed). At that time, the land uses, which continue to this day, were determined to be compliant with the regulating land use documents.



The properties identified numerically and by building name or address are not relevant to the proposed project. These have been previously identified by the City of Beverly Hills and incorporated into the underlying figure which is the source of the current figure.

***Source*:** City of Beverly Hills.

Figure 22
Land Use Map

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General Plan Consistency. The City's General Plan is comprehensive and provides a framework for the City's physical, economic, and social development, while sustaining natural environmental resources. The Plan is long range, considering how the City will be in the year 2025, while presenting policies and implementation programs to guide decisions. The amended General Plan recognizes that Beverly Hills is built out and that new housing, retail, office, and other buildings must fit within and complement the character and quality of existing residential neighborhoods. The Plan also acknowledges the need to support greater educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities for all residents.

Although the proposed project would not include new construction, it would intensify the existing use by attracting a greater amount of visitors to the site. The proposed project is within the intent of the City's Land Use Element plans and policies as it relates to existing neighborhood character and quality.

- **LU 2.1 City Places: Neighborhoods, Districts, and Corridors**—Maintain and enhance the character, distribution, built form, scale, and aesthetic qualities of the City's distinctive residential neighborhoods, business districts, corridors, and open spaces.
- **LU 2.6 City History**—Acknowledge the City's history of places and buildings, preserving historic sites, buildings, and districts that contribute to the City's identity while accommodating renovations of existing buildings to maintain their economic viability, provided the new construction contextually "fits" and complements the site or building.
- **LU 5.1 Neighborhood Conservation**—Maintain the uses, densities, character, amenities, and quality of the City's residential neighborhoods, recognizing their contribution to the City's identity, economic value, and quality of life.
- **LU 6.1 Neighborhood Identity**—Maintain the characteristics that distinguish the City's single family neighborhoods from one another in such terms as topography, lot size, housing scale and form, and public streetscapes.

The proposed project would not conflict with General Plan goals and policies. The proposed project would maintain and conserve the character of existing residential neighborhoods. Although the hours of operation would be expanded, the same number of people would be permitted at the project site per day as existing (100 persons). Traffic would increase, but only incrementally, and would not degrade the current character of the surrounding neighborhood. In addition, no new structures would be added to the site and no construction would occur. As such, the proposed project would not alter the housing scale and form, topography, or lot size of the project site and would not impact public streetscapes.

Additionally, the proposed project would help to acknowledge the City's history of places and buildings. The proposed project would focus special events and classes on the interpretation of the historical collections at the facility. The proposed project would continue to preserve the Virginia Robinson Gardens as a historic site that contribute to the City's identity.

1980 EIR Consistency. In accordance with the Virginia Robinson Will, the 1980 EIR established the project site as a facility for testing, planting, and demonstrating the natural growth of plants that cannot be grown at other Arboretum facilities in the County. Additionally, the 1980 EIR identified an Arboretum educational program that allowed for special tours of the grounds for biology, botany and horticulture groups with related classes and seminars. The EIR established a detailed schedule, limiting hours of operation and the number of visitors allowed at the project site for guided tours, classes and

seminars, and special events; as well as number of employees at the project site. As such, operation of the project site has effectively been governed by the findings of the 1980 EIR.

However, it should be noted that the Virginia Robinson Will did not stipulate the operational restrictions (hours, days of the week, number of patrons, etc), but only the general use of the property to increase the public accessibility to such gardens and botanical uses. Approval of the proposed project would amend the operational stipulations of the 1980 EIR; however, the changes are consistent with the existing uses of the project site, as they are effectively a continuation or increase of the existing uses, thereby not introducing new uses on site. By way of discretionary action, the County Board of Supervisors will consider an amendment to the existing Agreement between the County and The Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens. Formally, this amendment will consist of rewriting Section 4.05 of the Agreement to reflect the proposed changes to the days and hours of operation of Virginia Robinson Gardens. As such, the proposed project would maintain the consistency of the existing uses of the project site with, and would not conflict with, the existing City of Beverly Hills land use plans and regulations. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact. Further, because the proposed project would amend the existing operational hours and days of the project site that were established in the 1980 EIR (although not the land uses regulations), the proposed project would still be consistent with the land use regulations and policies for the project site.

Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation and would result in ***less-than-significant*** land use impact.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The project site is not located within a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. Further, the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on the plant and wildlife species that exist on the project site. As such, the proposed project would result in ***no impact*** due to conflict with an applicable habitat conservation or natural community conservation plan.

XI. MINERAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The proposed project is located in a highly developed residential neighborhood in the northern area of the City of Beverly Hills. As identified in the Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ) map included in the Conservation Element of the City's General Plan, the project site is located within an area designated as MRZ-3. The classification MRZ-3 is assigned to areas of undetermined resource significance. As the project site and the surrounding area are substantially developed, any mineral resources that may have existed have already been disturbed or made unavailable. Further, the proposed project would not result in construction activities or physical alterations of the project site, including subsurface activities, such that mineral resources would be encountered. As such, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or interfere, to any greater extent than under existing conditions, with a mineral resource that would be of value to the region and residents of the state, thereby resulting in ***no impact***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The proposed project is located in a highly developed residential neighborhood in the northern section of the City of Beverly Hills. As identified in the MRZ map included in the Conservation Element of the City's General Plan, the project site is located within an area designated as MRZ-3, or undetermined resource significance. As the project site and the surrounding area are substantially developed, any mineral resources that may have existed have already been disturbed or made unavailable. Further, the proposed project would not result in construction activities or physical alterations of the project site, including subsurface activities, such that mineral resources would be encountered. As such, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or interfere, to any greater extent than under existing conditions, with a mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local plan, thereby resulting in ***no impact***.

XII. NOISE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐

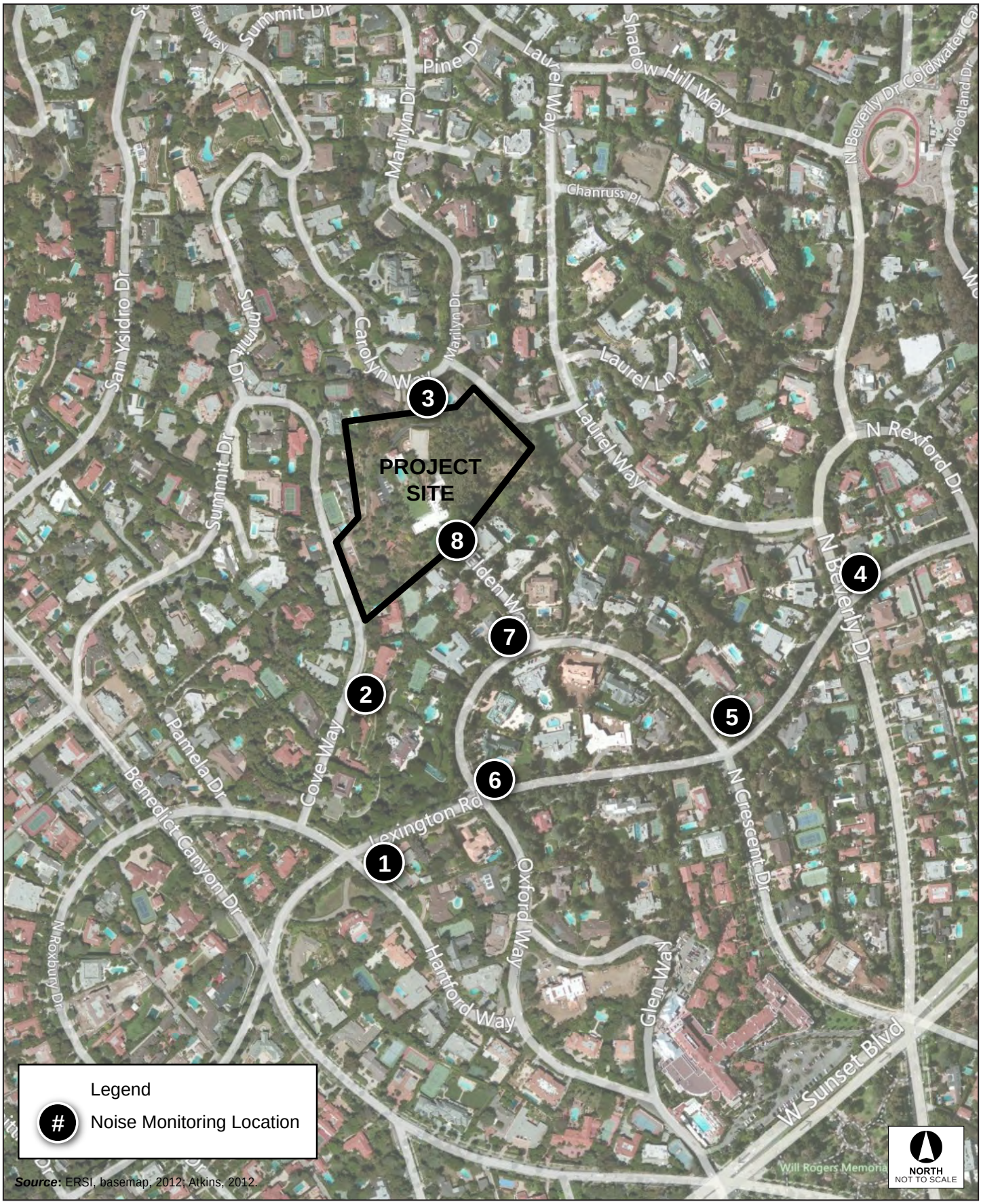
Discussion

An ambient sound level survey was conducted on June 21, 2012, to quantify the noise environment in the single-family neighborhood surrounding the project site. A total of seven measurements were taken in the project vicinity and one was taken on site. The measurements were taken during the daytime (12:00 PM to 3:00 PM) and were 15 minutes in duration. A Larson Davis 814 ANSI (American National Standards Institute) Type I Integrating Sound Level Meter was used to record ambient sound levels. Weather conditions during the measurements were clear and warm. Sound pressure magnitude is measured and quantified using a logarithmic ratio of pressures, the scale of which gives the level of sound in decibels (dB). To account for the pitch of sounds and the corresponding sensitivity of human hearing to them, the raw sound pressure level is adjusted with an A-weighting scheme based on frequency that is stated in units of decibels (dBA). Table 5 (Ambient Sound Level Measurements [dBA]) summarizes the measured L_{eq} and noise sources for each monitoring location and the locations are shown in Figure 23 (Noise Monitoring Locations).

Table 5 Ambient Sound Level Measurements (dBA)

Site	Location	Daytime Noise Sources	Date/Time	L_{eq}	L_{max}	L_{min}
1	Southeast corner of Lexington Road and Hartford Way	Traffic on Lexington Road and Hartford Way	6-21-2012 12:02 PM	65	82	47
2	East side of Cove Way, north of Hartford Way	Traffic on Cove Way	6-21-2012 12:32 PM	55	76	41
3	South side of Carolyn Way	Traffic on Carolyn Way	6-21-2012 12:54 PM	54	77	36
4	East side of Beverly Drive, north of Lexington Road	Traffic on Beverly Drive and Lexington Road	6-21-2012 1:14 PM	69	90	49
5	East side of Crescent Drive, north of Lexington Road	Traffic on Crescent Drive and Lexington Road	6-21-2012 1:35 PM	60	75	47
6	West side of Crescent Drive, north of Lexington Road	Traffic on Crescent Drive and Lexington Road, leaf blowers, one helicopter flyover	6-21-2012 1:54 PM	62	74	48
7	Northwest Corner of Elden Way and Crescent Drive	Traffic on Crescent Drive and Elden Way, leaf blowers	6-21-2012 2:20 PM	51	65	42
8	Virginia Robinson Gardens	Traffic on Eldon Way, leaf blower, one helicopter flyover	6-21-2012 2:40 PM	55	73	44

SOURCE: Atkins (June 21, 2012) (refer to Appendix E for complete noise measurement data).
Ambient measurements were 15 minutes in duration.



Source: ERSI, basemap, 2012; Atkins, 2012.

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Figure 23

Noise Monitoring Locations

ATKINS

As shown in Table 5, the primary source of noise in the project vicinity is traffic noise. Leaf blowers and helicopter flyovers are also intermittent sources of noise, occurring daily (regardless of weekday or weekend). The City's noise ordinance (Beverly Hills Municipal Code Section 5-1) does not establish specific noise level limits for land uses in the City. According to the City's General Plan, the noise regulations in the municipal code were replaced by the Land Use Noise Compatibility Matrix included in the General Plan Noise Element.[21] The Noise Compatibility Guidelines establish a "normally acceptable" noise level for single-family residences of up to 60 dBA CNEL, and noise levels up to 70 dBA CNEL are "conditionally acceptable." The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is the average equivalent A-weighted sound level over a 24-hour period. This measurement applies weights to noise levels during evening and nighttime hours to compensate for the increased disturbance response of people at those times. CNEL is the equivalent sound level for a 24-hour period with a +5 dBA weighting applied to all sound occurring between 7:00 PM and 10:00 PM and a +10 dBA weighting applied to all sound occurring between 10:00 PM and 7:00 AM. Noise compatibility guidelines typically apply to the permanent ambient noise environment. However, because the City has not established noise level limits for short-term increases in noise level, for the purposes of this analysis the noise compatibility guidelines apply to short-term increases in noise level as well as permanent increases in ambient noise level. Section 5-1-104 of the Noise Ordinance does establish qualitative criteria for determining whether a noise constitutes a disturbance to the peace, which is prohibited. As shown in Table 5, the noise levels measured on site and at the four sites closest to the project site are within the "normally acceptable" noise level range. The sites closest to Lexington Road, which carries substantially higher traffic volumes than Elden Way, experience noise levels in the "conditionally acceptable" range.

The proposed project would not involve construction activities of any kind and, therefore, would not result in short-term construction-related noise impacts. The proposed project would not result in an increase in the maximum number of visitors at the project site each day; therefore, the daily increase in noise levels from activity at the project site would not change. However, the number of days that the project would generate noise would increase (one additional operational day weekly; four additional special events, some of which could occur in the evening hours, annually). The primary operational component of the project site that increases noise is periodic traffic noise. Noise from tours typically consists of normal, human conservation levels. Noise from events typically consists of conversation and live, and potentially amplified, music until 10:00 PM, consistent with the City of Beverly Hills Noise Ordinance. These sources of operational noise are discussed below.

Traffic Noise

The increase in ambient noise levels as a result of traffic generated by the proposed project is assessed using standard noise modeling equations adapted from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) noise prediction model. The modeling calculations take into account the posted vehicle speed, average daily traffic volume, and the estimated vehicle mix. Model output is provided in Appendix E. The noise model assumes that roadways would experience a decrease of approximately 3 dBA for every doubling of distance from the roadway, which is typical of developed areas. Noise levels are calculated for

[21] City of Beverly Hills, *City of Beverly Hills General Plan* (January 12, 2010), Appendix B (Land Use Noise Compatibility Guidelines), http://www.beverlyhills.org/services/planning_division/land_use_n_zoning/general_plan/genplan.asp (accessed June 26, 2012).

(1) conservative-scenario public tour-only days, which assume two full tours; and (2) special use days, which assume a full-capacity, special event. The vehicle trips generated by the proposed project were provided by the project-specific traffic impact analysis prepared for the project (Atkins 2012).

On public tour days, the site generates up to approximately 50 vehicle trips for both tours. Tours are currently offered four days per week, Tuesday through Friday. Under the proposed project, tours would be offered five days per week, Tuesday through Saturday. Therefore, one additional day per week would experience an increase in traffic of 50 trips per day under the proposed project. Large events at the site generate up to 460 vehicle trips per event, assuming a maximum capacity of 700 guests. Two special uses are currently hosted at the site annually; under the proposed project, up to six special uses would occur annually. Therefore, four additional days per year would experience an increase in traffic of up to approximately 460 trips per day from special use traffic. Trips generated by site staff, volunteers, and the live-in caretaker are included in the traffic volumes without project operation. These trips are part of the ambient condition because they occur whether or not tours and special uses are hosted on the project site on a given day.

The conservative-scenario increase in traffic noise generated by the project site under existing conditions is provided in Table 6 (Existing Site-Generated Increases in Ambient Noise Levels [Year 2012]). As shown in Table 6, calculated noise levels from existing traffic range from 48 to 64 dBA CNEL. These noise levels are consistent with the measured ambient noise levels provided in Table 5, which range from 51 to 69 dBA and also include other sources of noise, including leaf blowers and helicopter flyovers. The conservative-scenario increase in traffic noise generated by the proposed project under future (Year 2014) conditions is provided in Table 7 (Future Site-Generated Increases in Ambient Noise Levels [Year 2014]).[22] Similar to existing conditions, potential increases in noise level in Year 2014 would occur with or without implementation of the proposed project. Implementation of the proposed project would increase the frequency that the increase in daily traffic from site operation would occur.

City of Beverly Hills General Plan Noise Element Policy N1.5 establishes the increases in noise level that would be considered significant, based on existing noise level. For roadways that generate noise levels of less than 55 dBA CNEL, an increase in noise level that would cause the roadway to generate a noise level of 55 dBA CNEL or higher would be considered significant. For roadways that would generate a noise level of 60 to 64 dBA CNEL, an increase of 2 dBA CNEL or more would be considered significant.

[22] Although changes proposed for the project site are anticipated to take effect by fall 2013, opening year conditions (future year) were analyzed using year 2014 volumes to yield the most conservative analysis. This assumes that it would take County staff at least a year to put together a full schedule of six proposed special events.

Table 6 Existing Site-Generated Increases in Ambient Noise Levels (Year 2012)

Roadway Segment	*Project Site Operation Scenario*	*Traffic Volume (Average Daily Trips)*	*Noise Level (dBA CNEL)*[a]	*Increase from Ambient Noise Level*	*Allowable Increase (dBA CNEL)*[b]	*Significant Increase?*
Benedict Canyon Drive—Hartford Road to Lexington Road	Ambient Conditions (No tours or events)	19,000	64	—	—	—
	Public Tours Only	19,050	64	0	<2	No
	Public Tours and Event	19,510	64	0	<2	No
Lexington Road—Benedict Canyon Drive to North Beverly Drive	Ambient Conditions (No tours or events)	8,500	60	—	—	—
	Public Tours Only	8,550	60	0	<2	No
	Public Tours and Event	9,010	60	0	<2	No
North Crescent Drive—Western intersection with Lexington Road to eastern intersection with Lexington Road	Ambient Conditions (No tours or events)	410	48	—	—	—
	Public Tours Only	460	48	0	<7	No
	Public Tours and Event	920	51	+3	<7	No
Elden Way—Project site to Crescent Drive	Ambient Conditions (No tours or events)	260	45	—	—	—
	Public Tours Only	310	46	+1	<10	No
	Public Tours and Event	770	50	+5	<10	No
Beverly Drive—Laurel Way to Lexington Road	Ambient Conditions (No tours or events)	16,000	63	—	—	—
	Public Tours Only	16,050	63	0	<2	No
	Public Tours and Event	16,510	63	0	<2	No

SOURCE: Atkins, *Traffic Impact Analysis, Virginia Robinson Gardens Project, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles County, California* (July 2012); Atkins (June 21, 2012) (refer to Appendix E for complete noise measurement data).

a. Noise level at 50 feet from the roadway centerline

b. Policy N1.5 of the City of Beverly Hills General Plan Noise Element establishes the increases in noise level that would be considered significant, based on existing noise level. For roadways that generate noise levels of less than 55 dBA CNEL, an increase in noise level that would cause the roadway to generate a noise level of 55 dBA CNEL or higher would be considered significant. For roadways that would generate a noise level of 60 to 64 dBA CNEL, an increase of 2 dBA CNEL or more would be considered significant.

Table 7 Future Site-Generated Increases in Ambient Noise Levels (Year 2014)

Roadway Segment	*Project Site Operation Scenario*	*Traffic Volume (Average Daily Trips)*	*Noise Level (dBA CNEL)*	*Increase from Ambient Noise Level*	*Allowable Increase (dBA CNEL)*[a]	*Significant Increase?*
Benedict Canyon Drive—Hartford Road to Lexington Road	Ambient Conditions (No tours or events)	19,400	64	—	—	—
	Public Tours Only	19,450	64	0	<2	No
	Public Tours and Event	19,910	64	0	<2	No
Lexington Road—Benedict Canyon Drive to North Beverly Drive	Ambient Conditions (No tours or events)	8,700	60	—	—	—
	Public Tours Only	8,750	60	0	<2	No
	Public Tours and Event	9,210	61	+1	<2	No
North Crescent Drive—Western intersection with Lexington Road to eastern intersection with Lexington Road	Ambient Conditions (No tours or events)	420	48	—	—	—
	Public Tours Only	470	48	0	<7	No
	Public Tours and Event	930	51	+3	<7	No
Elden Way—Project site to Crescent Drive	Ambient Conditions (No tours or events)	265	45	—	—	—
	Public Tours Only	315	46	+1	<10	No
	Public Tours and Event	775	50	+5	<10	No
Beverly Drive—Laurel Way to Lexington Road	Ambient Conditions (No tours or events)	16,400	63	—	—	—
	Public Tours Only	16,450	63	0	<2	No
	Public Tours and Event	16,910	63	0	<2	No

SOURCE: Atkins, *Traffic Impact Analysis, Virginia Robinson Gardens Project, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles County, California* (July 2012); Atkins (June 21, 2012) (refer to Appendix E for complete noise measurement data).

a. Policy N1.5 of the City of Beverly Hills General Plan Noise Element establishes the increases in noise level that would be considered significant, based on existing noise level. For roadways that generate noise levels of less than 55 dBA CNEL, an increase in noise level that would cause the roadway to generate a noise level of 55 dBA CNEL or higher would be considered significant. For roadways that would generate a noise level of 60 to 64 dBA CNEL, an increase of 2 dBA CNEL or more would be considered significant.

As shown in Table 6, public tour days do not result in an increase in ambient noise level on any roadway, with the exception of Elden Way. Tour-generated trips result in a conservative-scenario increase in noise level of 1 dBA CNEL on Elden Way. Generally, 1 to 2 dBA changes are not perceptible. Therefore, one additional tour day would not result in any detectable increase in ambient noise level compared to existing ambient noise levels. On days when special uses are held at the project site, the project site does not generate any increase in noise level on Benedict Canyon Drive, Lexington Road, or Beverly Drive, but does generate increases in noise level of 3 dBA CNEL and 5 dBA CNEL on North Crescent Drive and Elden Way, respectively, which are low-traffic residential streets that do not provide connection to the regional circulation network. In general, a 5 dBA change in community noise levels is noticeable, and a 3 dBA change is the smallest increment that is perceivable by most receivers. Therefore, the increase in noise level on event days may be noticeable; however, the per-event noise would not be different than on special use days that occur twice annually under current conditions. The proposed project would result in

four additional days of special uses, when an increase in traffic noise would potentially be noticeable. However, roadway noise would not exceed 55 dBA and would not result in a significant increase in roadway noise on either North Crescent Drive or Elden Way. Additionally, the calculated noise levels of 50 dBA CNEL and 51 dBA CNEL are within the normally acceptable noise level range for single-family residences. Therefore, the increase in traffic noise as a result of operation of the project site would not result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of applicable noise standards under the existing plus project scenario.

As shown in Table 7, public tour days would not result in an increase in ambient noise level on any roadway in Year 2014, with the exception of a 1 dBA CNEL increase in noise level on Elden Way. Similar to existing conditions, one additional tour day per week would not result in a detectable increase in ambient noise level compared to future ambient noise levels. On days when special uses are held at the project site, the project site would not generate any increase in noise level on Beverly Drive or Benedict Canyon Drive. A 1 dBA CNEL increase in noise level would occur on Lexington Road; however, this increase in noise level would generally not be perceptible. Similar to existing conditions, special uses would have the potential to generate an increase in noise levels up to 5 dBA CNEL on North Crescent Drive and Elden Way. Therefore, the increase in noise level on special use days may be noticeable. However, roadway noise would not exceed 55 dBA noise levels and would remain within the normally acceptable noise level range for single-family residences. Therefore, the increase in traffic noise as a result of operation of the project site would not result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of applicable noise standards under the Year 2014 scenario.

Operational Noise

Maintenance operations on the project site, including operation of leaf blowers and other landscaping equipment, would be identical to existing conditions, and conditions on surrounding properties in the area, with implementation of the proposed project. No increase in maintenance or landscaping operations would occur. Noise generated on a per-tour and per-special use basis would be the same as existing conditions because the types of tours and special uses held at the site would be similar to existing conditions. Therefore, noise generated by the site on a public tour or special use day with implementation of the proposed project would be the same as an existing tour or special use day. However, the frequency of tours and events would increase under the proposed project.

Tours of the site do not generate noise levels beyond normal human conversation levels. The noise level for normal conversation is approximately 65 dBA at 3 feet (Caltrans 1998). Existing noise levels on the project site and along Cove Way, Elden Way, and Carolyn Way adjacent to the project site range from 51 to 55 dBA. Noise levels form normal conservation and would not exceed 50 dBA more than 20 feet from the source. Further, tours of the site would typically not reach the project-site boundaries along Carolyn Way based on the terraced topography at the east-northeast side of the property. Parking may be provided for tour-attendees in the future near the lower tennis court, off Cove Way. However, conversational noise levels would not exceed 50 dBA at nearby residences based on the distance between this location and the residences. The only tour-conversation that would take place near the Elden Way entrance to the site includes entrance to the site by call box, and a few patrons who might be interested in seeing the front of the Main Residence. This is typical of current conditions and conversational noise levels would not exceed the 50 dBA level at the two adjacent residences based on the spatial separation.

Therefore, noise from tours is generally not audible off site over ambient noise levels and does not generate excessive noise levels at any nearby sensitive receptor. An increase in tour operations from 5 days per week from 4 days per week would not result in any exposure to an excessive noise source.

Special uses are typically held inside (primarily the Pool Pavilion) or on the great lawn between the Main Residence and the Pool Pavilion, which is blocked from adjacent residential/noise sensitive uses by the structures, thereby reducing conversational noise levels.

Noise levels from events at the gardens consist of crowd noise and sometimes live music. Similar to existing conditions, sit-down events would typically accommodate up to 250 guests, and Garden Tour events would host up to 700 guests, staggered over a period of several hours, to ensure the most pleasant experience for attendees. A noise study prepared for improvements to the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara addressed both crowd noise and noise from live, non-amplified music in an outdoor event venue, similar to events at the Virginia Robinson Gardens. Based on this noise technical study, a string quartet playing music at an outdoor function with no amplification would generate noise levels of up to 55 dBA at 100 feet. Crowd noise from 480 attendees would generate noise levels up to 63 dBA at 100 feet from the source, assuming 50 percent of attendees would be speaking at normal vocal effort at the same time, and that 50 percent of those speaking are male (who typically have louder voices). These assumptions for speech noise are considered conservative for the proposed project because it is not anticipated that more than 250 guests would be in the same location on site. All amplified music or sound would comply with the Beverly Hills Noise Ordinance, which requires stopping said amplification at 10:00 PM; this is consistent both with existing conditions at the project site and with events that are held at residences within the surrounding community, which is commonplace of the Beverly Hills lifestyle.

The great lawn is the only area on the project site capable of hosting sit-down events with live music that would concentrate guests in one location. Speech and music noise together generate noise levels up to 64 dBA at 100 feet. The nearest residences to the great lawn are located approximately 150 feet away on Elden Way and Carolyn Way. At this distance, events generate noise levels of up to 61 dBA. Therefore, typical event noise is audible over ambient noise levels. However, the tall, dense landscaping that surrounds the great lawn, as well as the Main Residence structure would help to deaden any sound bleeding onto nearby residences. Implementation of the proposed project would result in four additional days that residents may be exposed to special use noise. Typical special use noise levels would have the potential to exceed the maximum normally acceptable noise level of 60 dBA at the nearest residences. However, noise levels would not exceed the conditionally acceptable noise level of 70 dBA. This noise level limit is intended to protect residences from permanently noisy environments.

Occasional increases in noise level above the normally acceptable noise level, but still within the conditionally acceptable noise level range, would not be considered incompatible or excessive. The special uses currently held on site are considered an acceptable use and the types of events that would occur under the proposed project would not generate noise levels above those currently held on the site. Additionally, special uses at the site would be subject to a Facility Use Permit, subject to the discretion of the property Superintendent. If the Superintendent determines that noise levels potentially generated by a special use would disturb the peace according to Section 5-1-104 of the City's noise ordinance, the event would not be allowed to take place. Because special use noise would be well within the conditionally

acceptable noise level range for single-family residences, special uses would occur on only four additional days per year, and events would be subject to a discretionary Facility Use Permit, additional events at the project site would not result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of applicable noise standards.

Besides sit-down special uses on the great lawn, activities at the project site consist of specialized tours of the site and educational classes/seminars on the site. Guests would be staggered over a period of several hours, and throughout the site. Silent auctions would continue to occur at the North Tennis Court in conjunction with special uses on the great lawn (daytime or evening). Guests visiting the auction area would be staggered throughout the event. Noise generated from tours and silent auctions consists of normal conversation. Similar to noise generated by public tours, noise levels form normal conservation typically does not exceed 50 dBA more than 20 feet from the source (Caltrans 1998). Therefore, noise from special use tours and silent auctions is generally not audible off site over ambient noise levels and does not generate excessive noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors. An increase in these types of events would not result in exposure to an excessive noise source.

Street parking for public tours and special uses is currently prohibited. Under the proposed project, street parking would continue to be prohibited, with the exception of guests who obtain a reservation in advance if parking cannot be made available on site due to vehicle size restrictions. Noise sources from cars parked on public streets would potentially include car alarms, door slams, radios, and normal conversation. These sources are generally short-term and intermittent and would be scattered throughout the neighborhood on roadways that allow public parking. Public street parking is currently allowed in the project vicinity and street parking for public tours and events at the project site would not generate any unusual noise sources that would differ from existing street parking. It should be noted that on-street parking along Elden Way is unrestricted; this is the only stretch of roadway within the vicinity that provides for unrestricted parking. For example, on-street parking along Lexington Road, N Crescent Drive, Cove Way, and Oxford Way is limited to 2-hour parking from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. As such, Elden Way is heavily utilized by construction and landscaping personnel for the estates in the larger vicinity (i.e., north of Sunset Boulevard) for daily long-term, unrestricted parking. Accordingly, even if on-street parking were allowed on Elden Way for patrons of Virginia Robinson Gardens, it is incredibly difficult to find an open parking space during daytime hours along Elden Way. As such, noise levels from an infrequent tour attendee parking on Elden Way would register a greater noise level. Additionally, noises would be different from each other in kind, duration, and location based on tour, class, seminar, etc, so that the overall effects would be separate and in most cases would not affect noise-sensitive receptors at the same time. Therefore, noise generated from street parking would not result in exposure to an excessive noise source.

Noise Summary

The proposed project would result in an increase in the number of days that public tour and special use traffic is generated in the project area. However, the increase in noise levels as a result of public tours and events would not result in excessive noise levels. Noise levels generated by public tours, special use tours, and silent auctions would generally not be perceptible over existing conditions. Noise from sit-down events with live music and guests concentrated in one location would have the potential to result in noticeable increase in noise levels over ambient conditions. However, these noise levels would be within

the conditionally acceptable noise ranges for residential land use and would be subject to a Facility Use Permit, granted by the property Superintendent. Therefore, additional events at the project site would not result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of applicable noise standards. Additionally, occasional street parking would not generate excessive noise. This impact would be ***less than significant***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Result in the exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

As identified above, the proposed project would not result in any construction activities, reducing the potential for vibrational effects. Operational activities would be similar to existing operations, which do not utilize any vibration generating equipment. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on groundborne noise or vibration.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project area. Under the proposed project, the project site would be open to the public two additional hours per day and one additional day per week annually. As stated above, this intensity of use would increase traffic noise in the area but would not exceed the thresholds as outlined by the City's General Plan. In addition, the daily on-site noise as a result of public tours, special-use tours, classes, and silent auctions would generally not be perceptible over existing conditions. Special events would occur periodically, no more than six times per year, but would not contribute to a permanent noise increase in the vicinity. Noise associated with the operation of the proposed project would increase but would be within acceptable levels, would be periodic, and would not be excessive. This impact would be ***less than significant***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

As described in Sections XII(a) and (b), the proposed project would result in an increase in public access to the project site. Traffic associated with this increase would be minor and sporadic and, therefore, traffic-related noise impacts would be less than significant. The increase in tour days and special uses at

the project site would not result in a substantial increase in operational noise levels. Special events would occur sporadically, six times per year, but would be within the conditionally acceptable noise ranges for residential land use and would be subject to a Facility Use Permit, granted by the property Superintendent. The proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to periodic increases in ambient noise levels.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(e) If located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in the exposure of people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The closest airport to the project site is the Santa Monica Airport, located approximately 5 miles southwest of the project site as "the crow flies" and approximately 7.5 miles via roadway. As such, the project site is not within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport. However, the project site is frequently within the flight path of helicopters crisscrossing the City of Beverly Hills. The proposed project would not alter the existing flight paths in the area; and helicopters are prohibited on the project site. Further, as shown in Table 5, ambient noise levels in the project area are acceptable according to City guidelines for compatibility, even with helicopter flyovers. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people to excessive noise levels from aircraft, resulting in ***no impact***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(f) If within the vicinity of a private airstrip, result in the exposure of people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The project site is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. However, the project site is frequently within the flight path of helicopters crisscrossing the City of Beverly Hills. The proposed project would not alter the existing flight paths in the area; and helicopters are prohibited on the project site. Further, as shown in Table 5, ambient noise levels in the project area are acceptable according to City guidelines for compatibility, even with helicopter flyovers. The project does not propose any changes to the project site and would not have any effect on helicopter traffic. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people to excessive noise levels from aircraft, resulting in ***no impact***.

XIII. POPULATION/HOUSING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

According to the Southern California Association of Governments Integrated Growth Forecast the City of Beverly Hills' population was 34,100 people in 2008 and is projected to be 35,000 people in 2020.[23] The City is almost entirely built out and opportunities for growth are limited, as reflected in the growth projections identified above.

Until 1977, the project site served as a single-family residence for Virginia Robinson and her staff. Since her death, the buildings have remained largely unoccupied for residential uses, but portions (including primarily the areas adjacent to the kitchen of the main residence) are used by Friends of Robinson Gardens volunteers who help restore and maintain the Virginia Robinson Gardens and manage educational and docent programs. A maximum of six volunteers are on site daily. In addition to the volunteers, approximately 7 staff per day tend to the premises. These volunteers and maintenance staff are generally on the site during daytime hours only and do not live at the residence. However, one live-in caretaker lives at the project site fulltime.

The proposed project would modify the existing operating schedule for the Virginia Robinson Gardens but would not increase the number of volunteers/employees at the project site. The hours of operation for the project site would be increased by two hours per day and extended an additional day each week (open to the public five day per week compared to four). The number of allowable visitors per day would remain the same (100 visitors per day); however, the restrictions as to their activities on site would be relieved. As such, the proposed project would not increase the number of daily visitors but would increase the number of visitors at the project site on a weekly basis.

Similarly, the number of attendees at special uses would not increase above the approximately 700 that occurs currently, but the number of special uses would increase on site from two to six annually under the proposed project. This would increase the number of visitors to the site annually (a main goal of the proposed project). However, the proposed project would not include new residential development, change of land use, or construction of any kind that would induce population growth in the project area. The number of employees and volunteers needed on site daily would not change. In addition, the existing live-in caretaker would continue to live on the site, but no other permanent on-site residents would be added as a result of the proposed project. Although the proposed project would increase the number of visitors at the project site, these visitors would be intermittent and would not represent an

[23] Southern California Association of Governments, Integrated Growth Forecast, Adopted 2012 RTP Growth Forecast, http://www.scag.ca.gov/forecast/index.htm (accessed June 26, 2012).

increase in permanent population. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact due to direct or indirect population growth.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The proposed project has been developed with the Virginia Robinson estate since approximately 1911, contributing to the large-estate, single-family residential character of the surrounding area. Currently, one live-in caretaker lives at the project site. Under the proposed project, existing conditions would not be altered and the existing housing structure would not be displaced or demolished. The live-in caretaker would continue to live at the project site, but no additional residents would be added. Additionally, the proposed project would not result in new construction or physical alteration of the project site, structures, or gardens. As such, the proposed project would not affect existing housing in the project area and would not create the need for construction of replacement housing and the project would result in ***no impact***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

As described under Sections IV(a) and (b), the proposed project would not induce substantial population growth or reduce the number of available housing units that could displace existing residents. The current live-in caretaker would continue to live at the project site and would not be displaced by the proposed project. In addition, the number of employees/volunteers at the project site would not be affected by the proposed project. As the proposed project would only modify the operating schedule of the project site and would not result in new employment or construction, the proposed project would result in ***no impact*** related to the displacement of a substantial number of people.

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or in the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
(i) Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The Beverly Hills Fire Department (BHFD) provides fire and emergency services within the City of Beverly Hills. The BHFD is comprised of five divisions and approximately 89 full time employees among all divisions. There are three fire stations within the City. Station 2, located at 1100 Coldwater Canyon Drive, is the closest station to the project site. The goal of the BHFD is to be as fast and as safe as possible, but to at least maintain their comparatively low response times despite increased traffic and service calls. Response times average four minutes for an engine company and 3.5 minutes for an ambulance.[24] The City is almost entirely built out and the demand for fire services is currently met. As such the City does not anticipate adding new fire stations in the near-term.

Generally, impacts associated with the provision of fire protection services would occur if a project would result in an increase in demand for fire protection services to the extent that construction of new or expanded fire department facilities is required to maintain existing service levels. Typically, an increase in demand for fire services is associated with a substantial increase in population in a service area or development of a previously undisturbed area requiring entirely new fire services. As described under Section IV (Population/Housing), the proposed project would not result in substantial population growth in the project area. Further, the number of people visiting the site on a daily basis (100 visitors) would not change from existing conditions; rather, the number of days that number of people would be allowed on site would increase by one (from 4 to 5 days per week). Additionally, the number of special uses on the site would increase from two to six annually; however, the number of per-event attendees would not change substantially from current conditions. The increase in visitors at the project site would be minor, intermittent, and not permanent and would not adversely affect existing service levels. As such, the proposed project would not result in a substantial increase in demand for fire protection services and would not necessitate construction of new or expansion of existing facilities.

Additionally, as described under Section XVI (Transportation/Traffic), the proposed project would not result in a substantial increase in traffic in the project area. The proposed project would not degrade intersection operating conditions below the thresholds established by the City. As such, the proposed project would not affect BHFD's response times. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact on the provision of fire protection services in the project vicinity.

[24] City of Beverly Hills, *City of Beverly Hills General Plan Update Technical Background Report* (October 2005).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(ii) Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The project site is served by the Beverly Hills Police Department (BHPD). The BHPD is comprised of 115 sworn officers and 86 professional civilian support staff. The BHPD is authorized for 127 sworn officers and is currently in the process of hiring new officers.[25] Under existing conditions, the ratio of officers to residents is approximately 3.37 officers per 1,000 residents. The police station closest to the project site is located at 464 North Rexford Drive. However, the BHPD does not utilize a standard personnel-to-population ratio due to the vast disparity of night-time population (approximately 35,700 residents) to daytime population (approximately 250,000 people). The BHPD's main indicator of effectiveness is its response time to emergency calls. Response time goals depend on the priority of the call and in most cases BHPD meets the response time goal.[26] There are no plans for immediate or near-term expansion of BHPD facilities or staff.

Generally, impacts associated with police protection services would occur if a project would result in an increase in demand for police protection services to the extent that construction of new or expanded facilities is required to maintain existing service levels. Typically, an increase in demand for police protection services is associated with a substantial increase in population in the service area or development of a previously undisturbed area requiring entirely new fire services. As described under Section IV, the proposed project would not result in substantial population growth in the project area. Further, the number of people visiting the site on a daily basis (100 visitors) would not change from existing conditions; rather, the number of days that number of people would be allowed on site would increase by one (from 4 to 5 days per week). Additionally, the number of special uses on the site would increase from two to six annually; however, the number of per-event attendees would not change substantially from current conditions. The increase in visitors at the project site would be minor, intermittent, and not permanent and would not adversely affect existing service levels. As such, the proposed project would not result in a substantial increase in demand for police protection services that would necessitate construction of new or expansion of existing facilities. The BHPD would have sufficient capacity to accommodate the increase in visitor population associated with the proposed project.[27] Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact on the provision of police protection services in the project vicinity.

[25] Gregg Mader, Email communication with Sergeant, Beverly Hills Police Department (August 1, 2012).
[26] City of Beverly Hills, *City of Beverly Hills General Plan Update Technical Background Report* (October 2005).
[27] Gregg Mader, Email communication with Sergeant, Beverly Hills Police Department (July 16, 2012).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(iii) Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The Beverly Hills Unified School District (BHUSD) consists of four elementary schools (K–8), one high school (9–12) and an adult school. The kindergarten through 12th grade enrollment is approximately 4,617 students and the adult school has approximately 300 students. The BHUSD employs approximately 320 certificated and 150 classified personnel.[28]

Generally, impacts associated with schools occur when a project results in an increase in demand for school facilities to the extent that construction of new or expanded facilities is required to accommodate increased demand. Typically, an increase in demand for school facilities is associated with an increase in number of households in the service area. As described under Section IV (Population/Housing), the proposed project would not result in household growth in the project area and, therefore, would not increase the school-age population in the BHUSD. The number of employees on site would not change as a result of the proposed project; daily and event volunteers live primarily in the neighborhood and would not be moving nearby, such that the school-age population would increase. The increase in visitors at the project site would be minor and intermittent and would not affect demand for school facilities in the project area. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on the ability of the BHUSD to accommodate existing and future students.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(iv) Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The Beverly Hills Recreation and Parks Department is generally responsible for maintaining and planning for parkland in the City of Beverly Hills. Will Rogers Memorial Park is the closest city park to the project site. However, the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation owns, operates, and maintains the project site.

Generally, impacts associated with parks occur when a project results in an increase in demand for public parks to the extent that construction of new or expanded park facilities is required to accommodate new demand. Typically, increased demand for parks is associated with an increase in population in the vicinity of a public park(s) that leads to increased use. As described under Section IV, the proposed project would not result in substantial population growth in the project area. Further, the overarching goal of the proposed project is to increase public accessibility to the project site such that they can enjoy the historic and cultural icon that is the Robinson estate as well as the acres of gardens. The proposed project would increase recreational opportunities, even if only slightly, and this would result in a beneficial impact to

[28] Beverly Hills Unified School District, Human Resources. http://www.beverlyhills.k12.ca.us/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=31866&type=d&pREC_ID=27573&title=Human+Resources+Department&un=ESD-HR (accessed June 26, 2012).

recreation. The increase in visitors at the project site would represent a very temporary population and it is unlikely that these visitors would frequent other public parks in the project area on the same day as visiting the project site due to the recreational nature of the site. As such, the proposed project would not result in a substantial increase in demand for public parks that would necessitate construction of new or expansion of existing park facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** with regard to public parks.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(v) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

There are no other public facilities in the immediate vicinity of the project site. Further, as the proposed project would not induce population growth either directly or indirectly, there would be ***no impact*** to other public facilities in the City of Beverly Hills.

XV. RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The proposed project would not result in the substantial new employment opportunities or development of residential land uses that would result in substantial permanent population growth in the project area. As such, the proposed project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or recreational facilities.

One of the primary objectives of the proposed project is to increase the availability of the Virginia Robinson Gardens to the general public by expanding the hours of operation, increasing the allowable themes for classes and seminars, and adding four additional special events annually. As such, the proposed project would increase the public availability and use of the project site, including the botanical gardens and grounds. The increase in public availability resulting from the proposed project would remain within the original intent and boundaries set forth by the Robinson Will. However, visitors would be subject to the same restrictions that are currently in place for the purpose of protecting the integrity of the project site. As such, the proposed project would not result in the deterioration of the project site and would not contribute to the deterioration of other parks and recreational facilities in the project vicinity. In addition, the proposed project would not include construction of recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would have ***no impact*** on recreation.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The project site is the existing Virginia Robinson Gardens, a passive recreational facility owned and operated by the Los Angeles County would not include new development or expansion of existing facilities at the project site. Further, the proposed project would not result in a direct population growth that would require the expansion of recreational facilities. The overarching objective of the proposed project is to increase public access to the project site, while maintaining the visual and historic integrity of the property and the proposed project would not result in an adverse physical effect to the environment. As such, the proposed project would result in ***no impact***.

XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and nonmotorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including, but not limited to, intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Existing Conditions

Regional Access

The I-405 Freeway, which has four mixed-flow lanes plus one High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane, provides primary regional access to the project site. It is a major north/south highway west of Beverly Hills. In the vicinity of the Beverly Hills, I-405 has an interchange with Sunset Boulevard, Wilshire Boulevard, and Santa Monica Boulevard, which are located just south of the study area and provide access from the study site via Benedict Canyon Drive and Beverly Drive. Local access is also provided via Lexington Drive.

Traffic Counts

Exploratory machine counts were conducted on Crescent Drive and Elden Way from Tuesday to Sunday in June 2012. The goal of these counts was to determine the peaking characteristics of the site traffic and to determine the analysis periods for the project site. Review of the machine counts indicated that the roadway adjacent to the study area experienced peaks on the weekdays from 7:00 to 8:00 AM and from 4:45 to 5:45 PM.

Review of temporal distribution of daily traffic indicates that the roadway experiences the highest traffic on Thursdays and the lowest traffic on Sundays. Traffic on Fridays is similar to daily traffic on Thursdays. Traffic volumes on Saturdays are lower than the weekday peak volumes and occur during the middle of the day as opposed to the PM peak for weekdays.

Review of daily traffic distribution indicates that the AM peak hour volume on Elden Way is less than 10 vehicles per hour and the PM peak hour is approximately 25 vehicles per hour. Elden Way accommodates higher volumes on weekdays as compared to weekends and experiences the highest volumes between 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Weekend volumes on other roadways are approximately half of weekday traffic. Traffic related to construction activities in the neighborhood and parking overflow traffic from other streets in the entire area/neighborhood parks on Elden Way because it is the only street in the area that has unrestricted parking. For example, Crescent Drive, Lexington Street, and other local street all have two-hour parking restrictions, which is absent on Elden Way. However, no volume reductions were performed to study counts and this yields a conservative analysis of operations.

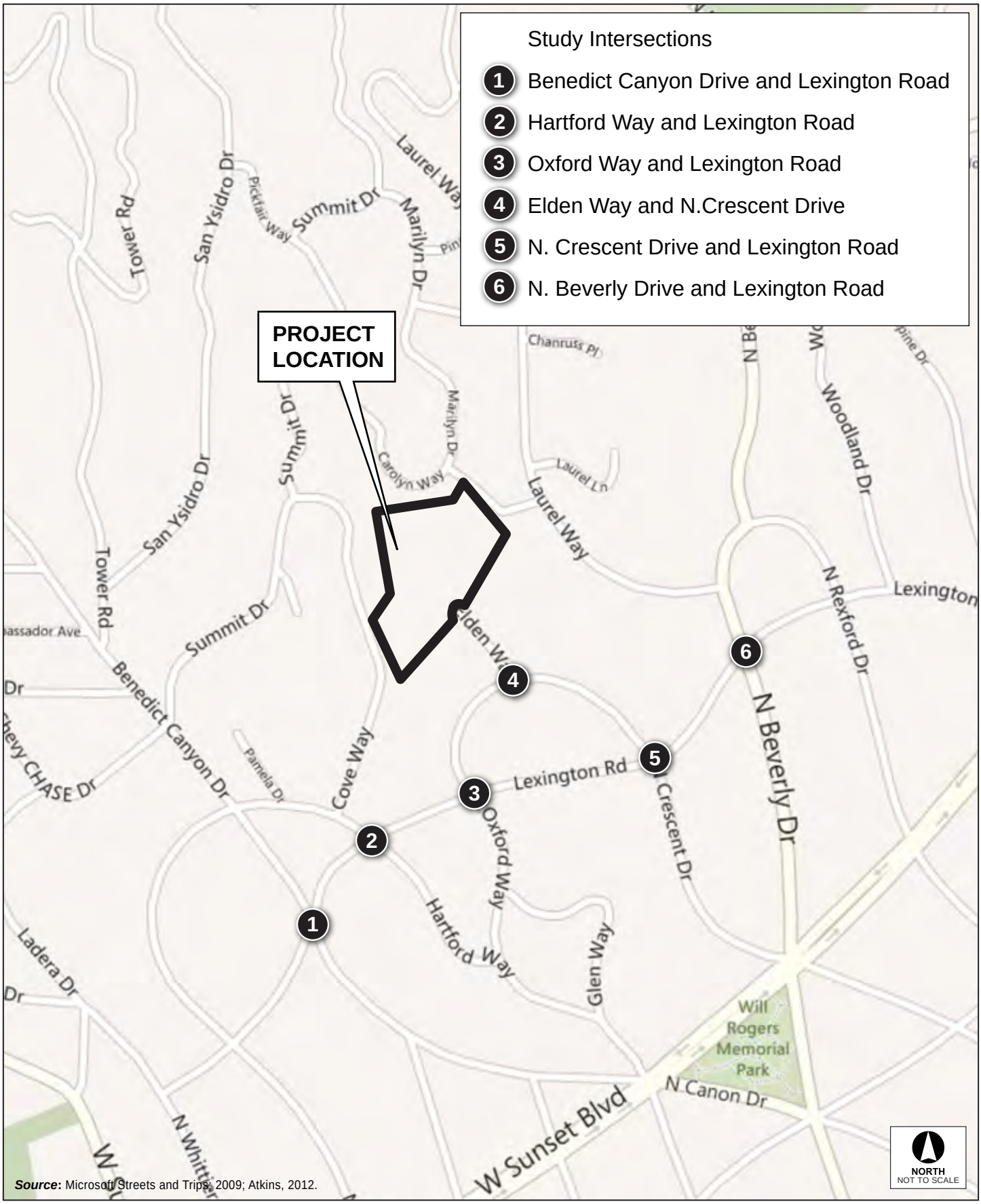
The traffic counts also revealed that the project site did not experience any traffic during the morning peak hour and that the traffic intensity for the PM peak hour was much higher than that observed for the AM peak. Due to these observed patterns, the PM peak hour was determined to be 4:45 to 5:45 PM for the analysis. Existing year 2012 intersection operating conditions were evaluated for the evening (4:45 to 5:45 PM) peak periods.

Approach to Analysis

The following analysis is based on a traffic impact analysis conducted for the proposed project (included as Appendix F). In order to determine the effect of the proposed project on traffic conditions in the project vicinity the following six intersections were analyzed, as shown in Figure 24 (Study Intersections Map):

1. Benedict Canyon Drive and Lexington Road
2. Hartford Way and Lexington Road
3. Oxford Way and Lexington Road
4. Elden Way and North Crescent Drive
5. North Crescent Drive and Lexington Road
6. North Beverly Drive and Lexington Road

All roadways in the study area are two lane roadways with no turning lanes at intersections. The intersections of Benedict Canyon Drive/Lexington Road and North Beverly Drive/Lexington Road are signalized intersections. The remaining intersections are side-street stop-controlled intersections. Existing PM peak hour volumes are shown in Figure 25 (Existing [2012] PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts).



Source: Microsoft Streets and Trips, 2009; Atkins, 2012.

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Figure 24
Study Intersections Map

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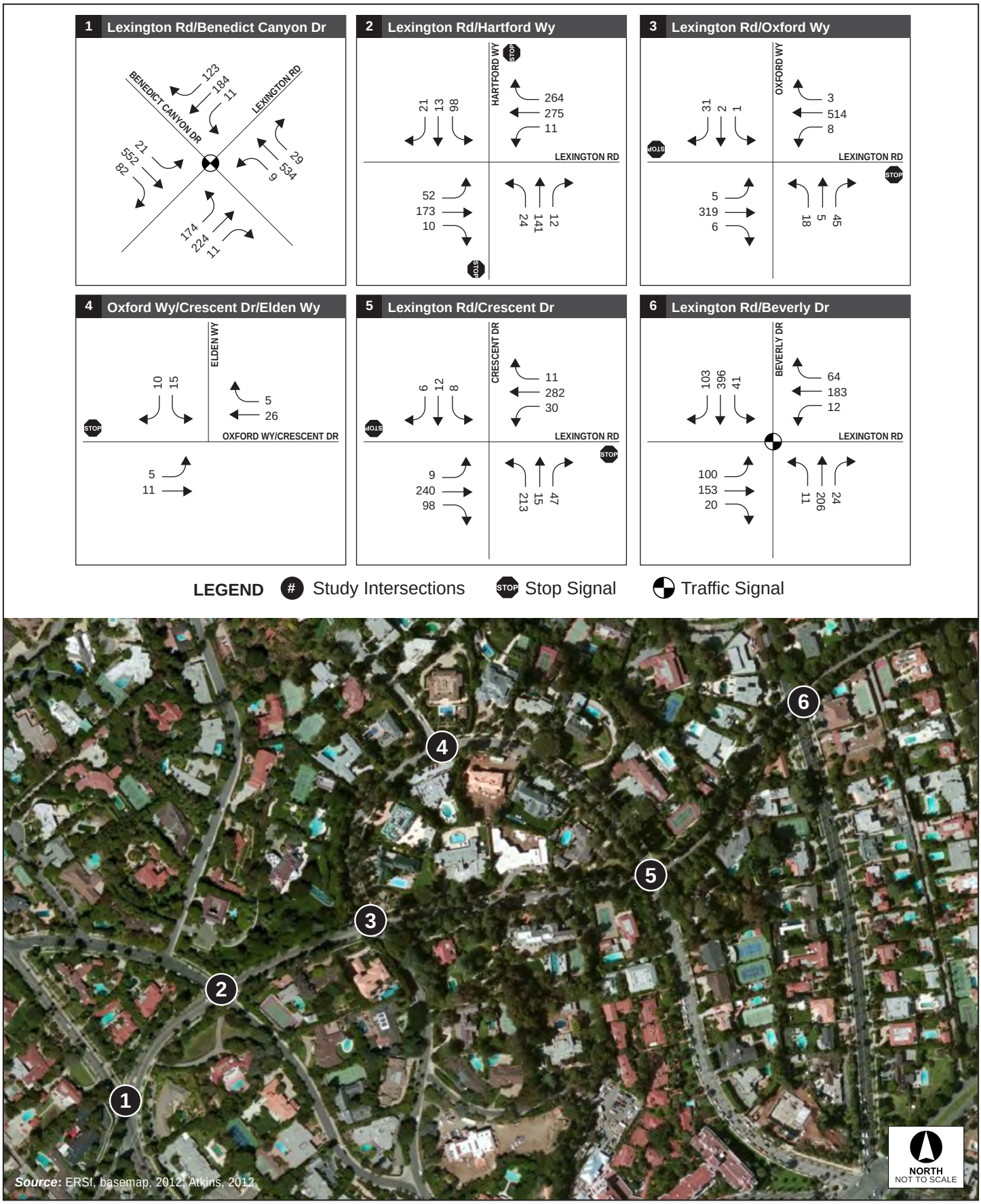

Source: ERSI, basemap, 2012; Atkins, 2012.

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Figure 25

Existing (2012) PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts

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The performance of intersection with regard to traffic congestion is expressed in terms of intersection level of service (LOS) and volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratios. The LOS is a qualitative description of the performance of an intersection based on the average delay per vehicle. Intersection levels of service range from LOS A, which indicates free flow or excellent conditions with short delays, to LOS F, which indicates congested or overloaded conditions with extremely long delays. The V/C ratio reflects the relationship between the overall capacity of an intersection to convey traffic and the volume of traffic at that same intersection at a given point in time.

The study intersections, both signalized and unsignalized, have been evaluated using the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 2010 methodology. In addition to HCM methodologies, Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU) methodologies were used to compute intersection LOS in accordance with the analysis procedures of the City of Beverly Hills. Table 8 (Level of Service Criteria—Signalized Intersections, Average Seconds of Delay) presents the LOS criteria for the signalized intersections and Table 9 (Level of Service Criteria—Unsignalized Intersections, Average Seconds of Delay) shows the LOS criteria for unsignalized intersections.

Table 8 Level of Service Criteria—Signalized Intersections, Average Seconds of Delay

Level of Service	*HCM Signalized Intersection Delay (sec/veh)*	*ICU Thresholds (Utilization)*[a]
A	0.0–10.0	0–0.55
B	>10–20	>0.55–0.64
C	> 20–35	>0.64–0.73
D	> 35–55	>0.73–0.82
E	> 55–80	>0.82–0.91
F	> 80	>0.91

SOURCE: ITE, *Highway Capacity Manual*, Special Report 209, TRB (2010).

a. Utilization refers to the relationship between the capacity of an intersection to convey traffic and the volume of traffic at that intersection at a given time. This measure provides insight into how an intersection is functioning and how much extra capacity is available to handle traffic fluctuations and incidents.

Table 9 Level of Service Criteria—Unsignalized Intersections, Average Seconds of Delay

Level of Service	*Signalized Intersection Delay (sec/veh)*
A	0.0 – 10.0
B	>10 – 15
C	> 15 – 25
D	> 25 – 35
E	> 35 – 50
F	> 50

SOURCE: ITE, *Highway Capacity Manual*, Special Report 209, TRB (2010).

To establish existing year 2012 intersection operating conditions, intersection turning movement counts were collected at the study intersections on two midweek days (Tuesday and Wednesday) in June 2012. Table 10 (Intersection Operations for Existing [2012] Conditions) summarizes the existing Peak Hour LOS at the six study intersections under existing conditions. Three of the six intersections operate at LOS F and the remaining intersections operate at LOS D or better.

Table 10 Intersection Operations for Existing (2012) Conditions

Intersection	LOS		Delay/Utilization		v/c	
	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU
Lexington Road/Benedict Canyon Road[a]	C	F	21.5	95.8%	0.88	0.96
Lexington Road/Hartford Way	F	—	95.8		0.87	
Lexington Road/Oxford Drive	C	—	15.9		0.18	
N. Crescent Drive/Elden Way	A	—	8.8		0.03	
Lexington Road/N. Crescent Way	F	—	51.6		0.84	
Lexington Road/N. Beverly Drive[a]	B	D	10.8	81.4%	0.65	0.81

SOURCE: Atkins, *Traffic Impact Analysis, Virginia Robinson Gardens Project, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles County, California* (July 2012).
a. Signalized intersection, ICU values used for comparative analysis.

Significance Thresholds

According to the City of Beverly Hills criteria for evaluating traffic impacts, the following thresholds were used to determine the presence or absence of project-related traffic impacts.

- A change in V/C ratio of 0.040 or more if the "Plus Project" condition at a given intersection is LOS D
- A change in V/C ratio of 0.020 or more if the "Plus Project" condition at a given intersection is LOS E or F

Trip Generation

Under existing conditions, the project site generates approximately 40 total vehicle trips per day and approximately 25 round trips per day, which translates to a total of 50 vehicle trips per day. The proposed project would extend operating hours by 2 hours per operating day (until 5:30 PM daily); extend the weekly operation from four days per week to five (Tuesday to Saturday); and allow for an additional four special events per year. The proposed project is not projected to result in additional vehicle trips during weekdays, but it would shift the departure time of trips from the project site.

Currently, operation of the project site adds no trips during the analysis peak hour since the visiting hours end at 3:30 PM. Extending the project site hours-of-operation to 5:30 PM would add approximately 10 trips to the PM peak hour, which extends from 4:45 to 5:45 PM. However, this is a conservative estimate since the peak hour starts well after the closure time of the project site and these trips reflect potential employee or other residual visitor trips. The proposed increase in special events that would be held throughout the year would occur during non-peak hours and will be accompanied by valet parking which would negate any impacts to intersection operations or impacts due to parking issues for these events.

Existing plus Project Condition

In order to assess potential impacts to the study intersections, project-related traffic was added to existing condition volumes. Table 11 (Intersection Operations for Existing [2012] Plus Project Conditions) shows the results of the intersection operations analysis for the weekday PM Peak Hour under Existing plus Project traffic conditions.

Table 11 Intersection Operations for Existing (2012) Plus Project Conditions

Intersection	LOS		Delay/Utilization		V/C		Change in V/C
	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	
Lexington Road/Benedict Canyon Road	C	F	21.7	95.8%	0.88	0.96	0
Lexington Road/Hartford Way	F	—	99		0.882		+0.012
Lexington Road/Oxford Drive	C	—	21.9		0.26		+0.08
N. Crescent Drive/Elden Way	A	—	8.8		0.04		+0.01
Lexington Road/N. Crescent Way	F	—	51.6		0.84		0
Lexington Road/N. Beverly Drive	B	D	11	81.8%	0.65	0.82	+0.01

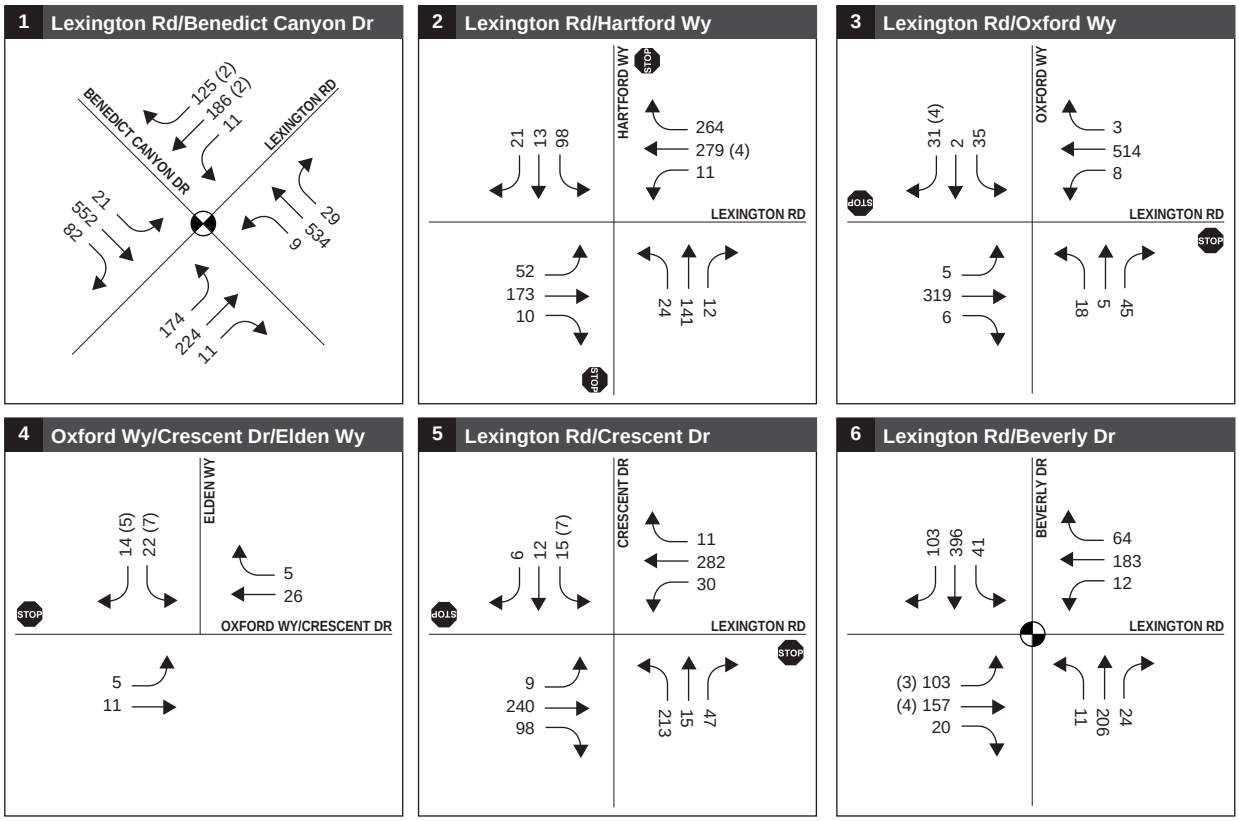
SOUJRCE: Atkins, *Traffic Impact Analysis, Virginia Robinson Gardens Project, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles County, California* (July 2012).
a. Signalized intersection, ICU values used for comparative analysis.

Similar to the results of the existing conditions analysis (Table 10), assessment of the Existing plus Project condition indicates that three of the six study intersections would operate at LOS F. However, the addition of project generated trips does not cause any of the intersections to exceed the significance criteria. As such, the proposed project does not result in a significant impact to intersection operations. Figure 26 (Existing Plus Project [2012] PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts) shows the Existing (2012) Plus Project PM peak hour turning movement counts.

Opening Year Background Conditions

The proposed project is anticipated to take effect by fall 2013. However, opening year conditions were analyzed using year 2014 volumes to yield a conservative analysis. To estimate baseline 2014 traffic conditions, an annual growth rate of 1 percent was assumed for calculating ambient growth for the study area. This growth rate is a conservative estimate of traffic growth since the study area is built out with limited potential for significant changes to land use intensity.

Anticipated traffic growth between existing and opening year conditions is projected to result in minor increases to intersection delays as compared to existing conditions. The intersections of Lexington Road and Benedict Canyon Road, Lexington Road and Hartford Way and Lexington Road and North Crescent Way are projected to function at LOS F as shown in Table 12 (Intersection Operations for Opening Year [2014] Conditions). In addition, the intersection of Lexington Drive and North Beverly Drive is projected to operate at LOS E for 2014 conditions as compared to LOS D under existing (2012) conditions. Figure 27 (Opening Year [2014] PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts) shows the Opening Year (2014) PM peak hour turning movement counts.



Source: ERSI, basemap, 2012; Atkins, 2012.

Figure 26

Existing Plus Project (2012) PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts

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Table 12 Intersection Operations for Opening Year (2014) Conditions

Intersection	LOS		Delay/Utilization		V/C	
	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU
Lexington/Benedict Canyon Road	C	F	23.2	97.2%	0.90	0.97
Lexington/Hartford Way	F	—	119.8		0.96	
Lexington/Oxford Drive	C	—	16.2		0.19	
N. Crescent Drive/Elden Way	A	—	8.8		0.03	
Lexington/N. Crescent Way	F	—	58.2		0.88	
Lexington/N. Beverly Drive	B	E	11.2	83%	0.66	0.83

SOURCE: Atkins, *Traffic Impact Analysis, Virginia Robinson Gardens Project, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles County, California* (July 2012).

Opening Year (2014) Plus Project Conditions

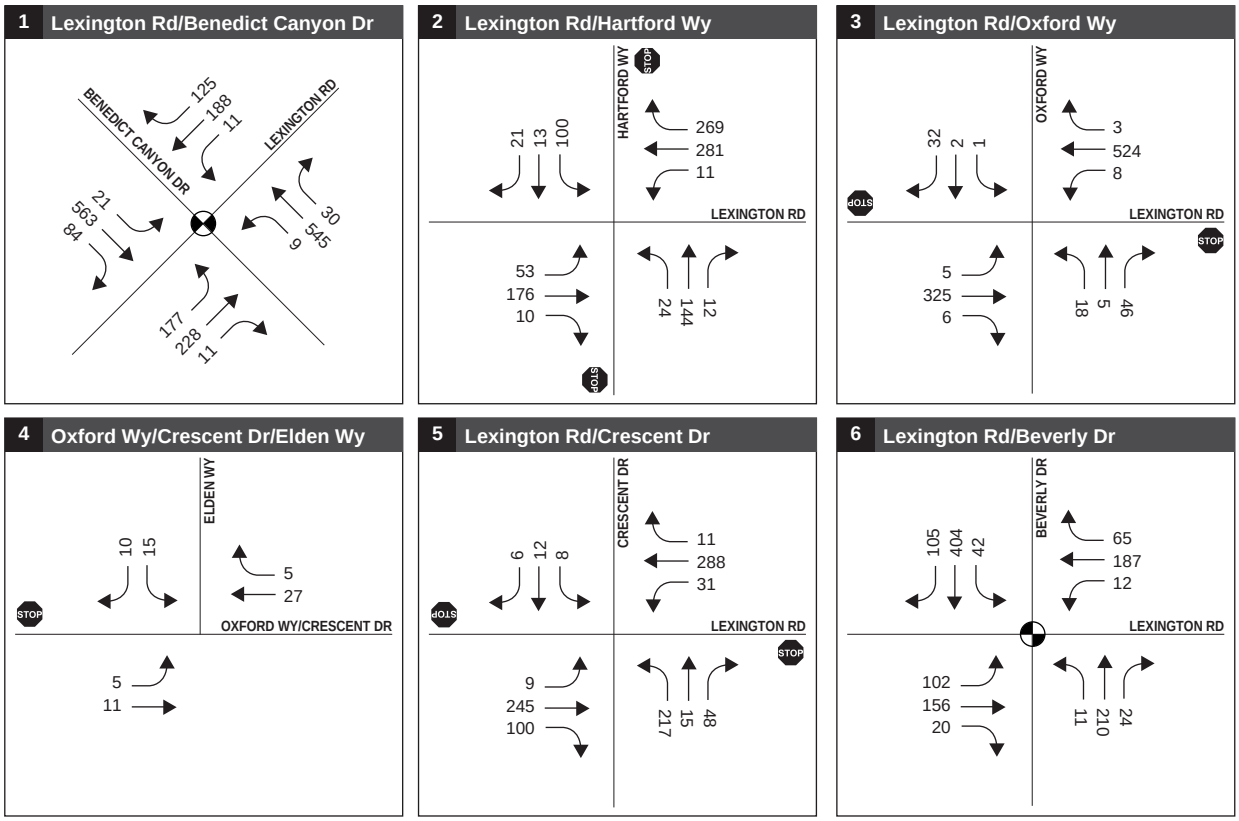
Traffic generated by the proposed project was then added to opening year (2014) background condition volumes to determine the potential impact of project-generated trips. Table 13 (Intersection Operations for Opening Year [2014] Plus Project Conditions) shows the results of the intersection analysis for the weekday PM Peak Hour under Year 2014 plus Project traffic conditions. The Opening Year (2014) Plus Project Conditions PM Peak Hour turning movement counts are shown in Figure 28 (Opening Year Plus Project [2014] PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts).

Table 13 Intersection Operations for Opening Year (2014) Plus Project Conditions

Intersection	LOS		Delay/Utilization		V/C		Change in V/C
	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	HCM	ICU	
Lexington/Benedict Canyon Road	C	F	23.4	97.5%	0.9	0.97	0
Lexington/Hartford Way	F	—	124		0.97		+0.01
Lexington/Oxford Drive	C	—	16.3		0.19		0
N. Crescent Drive/Elden Way	A	—	8.8		0.04		+0.01
Lexington/N. Crescent Way	F	—	58.4		0.88		0
Lexington/N. Beverly Drive	B	E	11.3	83.4%	0.67	0.84	+0.01

SOURCE: Atkins, *Traffic Impact Analysis, Virginia Robinson Gardens Project, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles County, California* (July 2012).

Similar to opening year (2014) conditions without project trips (Table 12), the analysis of the Year 2014 plus Project conditions indicates that three of the six analysis intersections would operate at LOS F. However, the addition of project generated trips would not cause any of the intersections to exceed the applicable significance thresholds. As such, the proposed project would not result in a significant impact to intersection operations.



LEGEND # Study Intersections STOP Stop Signal Traffic Signal

Source: ERSI, basemap, 2012; Atkins, 2012.

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Figure 27

Opening Year (2014) PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts

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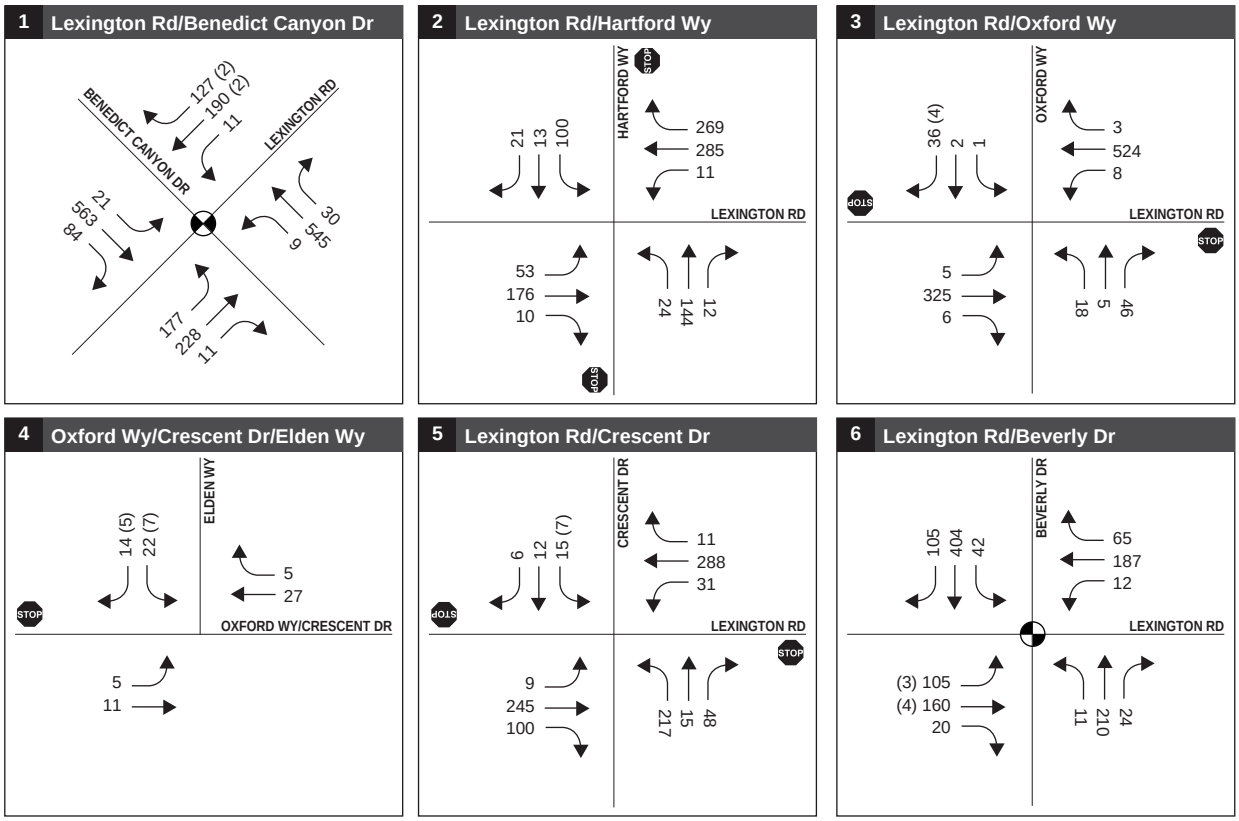

Source: ERSI, basemap, 2012; Atkins, 2012.

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Figure 28

Opening Year (2014) Plus Project Conditions PM Peak Hour Turning Movement Counts

ATKINS

Conclusion

Implementation of the proposed project (under current and future conditions) would not degrade LOS at any of the six study intersections below the thresholds established by the City of Beverly Hills. Therefore, in accordance with the City's Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact to traffic conditions.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to, level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

A congestion management plan (CMP) traffic impact analysis begins with determining the geographic scope of the study area. The criteria for determining the study area for CMP arterial monitoring intersections and for freeway monitoring locations are:

- All CMP arterial monitoring intersections where the proposed project will add 50 or more trips during either the AM or PM weekday peak hours of adjacent street traffic.
- All CMP mainline freeway monitoring locations where the proposed project will add 150 or more trips, in either direction, during either AM or PM weekday peak hours.

The closest CMP arterial monitoring intersection is Santa Monica Boulevard and Wilshire Boulevard. However, the proposed project would not contribute 50 or more trips to this intersection in either the AM or PM peak hours. Further, there are no CMP mainline freeway facilities in the project area. As such, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact based on conflict with a CMP.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The closest airport to the project site is the Santa Monica Airport, located approximately 5 miles southwest of the project site as "the crow flies" and approximately 7.5 miles by roadway. The proposed project does not include an aviation component and would not result in a change to aircraft operations in the area. The project site is frequently within the flight path of helicopters crisscrossing the City of Beverly Hills, but the proposed project would not alter the existing helicopter flight paths in the area; and helicopters are prohibited on the project site. As such, the proposed project would result in ***no impact*** related to a change in air traffic patterns.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The proposed project would not result in new construction, alteration of the existing project site, or a change in access or circulation at the project site. The increased use of the area near the lower tennis court, accessed off Cove Way, will not result in a change to access to the site as there is currently a driveway cut and it is infrequently used as a parking area for volunteers or groundskeepers. As access and circulation at the site will not change, the proposed project would not have the potential to increase transportation-related hazards associated with project design features or incompatible uses, resulting in *no impact*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Under existing conditions, emergency access to the project site is provided by Elden Way. As the proposed project would not involve changes to the physical environment or access to the site, emergency access at the project site would remain unchanged. Further, although the proposed project would increase the number of visitors to the site on a weekly and annual basis, the per-day and per-special-event number of attendees will not change substantially from existing conditions. The proposed project will not increase the number of permanent residents potentially requiring emergency response. Therefore, the proposed project would have a *less-than-significant* impact on emergency access.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The project site is most conveniently accessed by single occupancy vehicle. Currently, visitors are not allowed to arrive at the site on foot or by taxi, and parking on surrounding roadways is prohibited. Under the proposed project, access by multiple modes of transportation would be increased: visitors would be allowed to arrive at the site on foot, having arrived to the neighborhood via public transit; via taxi; and, and with advanced reservations, although generally visitor parking would be prohibited on surrounding streets, parking of a vehicle that would not otherwise fit on site would be allowed on Elden Way.

All roadways within the project area operate as Class III bikeways and accommodate bicycle traffic alongside vehicular traffic. However, under existing conditions there is little to no bicycle or pedestrian traffic in the project area, and implementation of the proposed project is not anticipated to affect bicycle conditions.

Overall however, the proposed project would encourage the use of alternative modes of transit in accordance with City policies contained in the Circulation Element of the General Plan and would not conflict with adopted policies and plans. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***beneficial impact*** with regard to policies associated with alternative modes of transportation.

XVII. UTILITIES/SERVICE SYSTEMS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project would modify the operating schedule of the project site by increasing daily operating hours and extending days of operation to five days per week. However, the number of daily visitors would remain the same as existing (100 people per day). Additionally, the proposed project would allow for an increase of four "special events" per year. For special uses, visitors utilize restroom facilities on site and VIP portable facilities are arranged for the facility. As such, special uses do not generate a substantial increase in wastewater discharge as much of the services are portable and brought to the site (including water, electricity, and sewage provided by the VIP portable facilities). The increase in operating hours and visitation described above would result in an increase in wastewater discharged from the project site. The increase in wastewater discharge would primarily be caused by additional use of bathroom facilities at the project site over existing conditions. However, the increase in wastewater due to the proposed project would generally be minor.

Wastewater discharged from the project site is conveyed to the Hyperion Treatment Plant in the City of Los Angeles. The Hyperion Treatment Plant has a dry weather capacity of 450 million gallons per day (mgd) for full secondary treatment and. As of 2010, average dry weather flow is approximately 300 mgd, for a remaining capacity of 150 mgd.[29] Implementation of the proposed project would create a negligible increase in wastewater when compared to the available capacity of the Hyperion Treatment Plan. The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) stipulates standards and regulations for utility service providers such as the HTP. A substantial increase in wastewater diverted to the HTP could conflict with pollutant standards and regulations of the Los Angeles RWQCB.

[29] Los Angeles Department of Public Works of Sanitation, *A Five-Year Strategic Plan (Fiscal Years 2010/11–2014/2015)* (September 2010), http://www.lacitysan.org/general_info/pdfs/Strategic_Plan_10-11_Final.pdf (accessed June 26, 2012).

However, as discussed below in Section XVII(d), the proposed project would result in an increase in water annually of 28,160 gallons. Assuming an industry standard that the wastewater discharge from a property equals 110 percent of the water demand, the proposed project would result in an increase in wastewater discharge of approximately 30,976 gallons annually. It is important to note that this is a conservative estimate provided to illustrate the worst-case scenario. According to the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation, the proposed project would not exceed the wastewater limits of the HTP and could be accommodated within existing local infrastructure.[30] Therefore, the plant would be able to adequately treat project-generated sewage in addition to existing sewage, and the treatment requirements of the RWQCB would not be exceeded. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to wastewater treatment requirements and available capacity at the Hyperion Treatment Plant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

As discussed in Sections XVII(a) and (d), the proposed project would result in an increase of approximately 30,976 gallons of wastewater and 28,160 gallons of water (demand) annually. These increases would be accommodated within existing entitlements and infrastructure and would not require the expansion of treatment facilities that could cause significant environmental impacts. As such, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact due to the necessity to build new or additional facilities.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project site is currently served by the City of Beverly Hills storm drain and sewer facilities. The proposed project would not result in any physical changes to the project site, including both structures and the gardens. As such, the proposed project would not alter existing stormwater flows from the project site and therefore would not result in additional stormwater flows that would require the construction of new or expanded stormwater facilities that could result in a significant impact. As such, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact to stormwater facilities.

[30] Ali Poosti, Written communication from Division Manager, Wastewater Engineering Services Division, City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation, Re: Virginia Robinson Garden – Request for Wastewater Service Information (August 20, 2012).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Water is supplied to the City of Beverly Hills, including the project site, by MWD. In addition, the City extracts and treats groundwater from the Hollywood Subbasin as a partial alternative to water provided through MWD. Groundwater supplies account for approximately 10 percent of the City's average annual consumption. According to the City's 2010 Urban Water Management Plan, the City would have sufficient water supplies under existing entitlements to meet water demand under normal conditions, single dry year conditions, and multiple dry year conditions through 2035.[31]

Based on utility information provided by the Los Angeles County Parks, for the 2011/12 fiscal year, water usage for both indoor and outdoor facilities at the project site was 634,000 cubic feet (or an average of 0.013 million gallons per day [mgd]). However, the majority of water use at the project site is for irrigation purposes, as there is only one full-time resident (a grounds keeper) and a maximum of eleven staff or volunteers at the project site daily. The proposed project would not change the amount of landscaped area at the project site and, therefore, would have no effect on irrigation water demand. The proposed project would result in a minor and intermittent increase in visitors at the project site due to the addition of 2 hours per operational day, one additional operational day weekly, and four additional special use events annually. Additional visitors would cause an incremental increase in demand for water while at the project site primarily associated with bathroom use. For daily use, visitors utilize restroom facilities on site, associated with the existing residence and Pool Pavilion. For special uses, visitors utilize restroom facilities on site and VIP portable facilities are arranged for the facility. As such, special uses do not generate a substantial increase in water demand as much of the services are portable and brought to the site (including water, electricity and sewage provided by the VIP portable facilities). In any event, the proposed project would not result in the need for construction of new facilities at the project site or change the existing land uses. In addition, the proposed project would not induce substantial population growth in the project area. As such, the increase in water demand at the project site would conservatively be based on 100 additional people per week (5,200 visitors annually) and 700 additional visitors per four additional special uses (2,800 visitors annually). This would result in an increase in water demand of approximately 28,160 gallons annually.[32]

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[31] City of Beverly Hills, *2010 Urban Water Management Plan* (August 2011), http://www.water.ca.gov/urbanwatermanagement/2010uwmps/Beverly%20Hills,%20City%20of/Beverly%20Hills%202010%20UWMP_August%202011.pdf (accessed June 26, 2012).

[32] *US Energy Policy Act*; *1994 Plumbing Code* (requiring 1.6 GPF); and Vickers, *Handbook of Water Use and Conservation* (2001) (frequency of uses by sex). Assumes 60% women and 40% men; Women use toilet 3 times per each male use. [5,200 visitors (annually for the additional operational day) x 0.4 men x 1.6 gallons per flush] + [5,200 visitors (annually for the additional operational day) x 0.6 (for women) x 3 flushes per day x 1.6 gallons per flush] + [2,800 visitors (annually for special events) x 0.4 men x 1.6 gallons per flush] + [2,800 visitors (annually for special events) x 0.6 women x 3 flushes per day x 1.6 gallons per flush].

This minor increase would be accommodated through the City's existing entitlements with MWD and would not require new or expanded water treatment facilities. Impacts related to water supply would be *less than significant*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

As described for Sections VIII(a) and (b), the proposed project would not exceed the available wastewater treatment capacity of the HTP. Further, the project site is already connected to the City's sewer system. Therefore, the proposed project would not require the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities. As the site is currently adequately served by the City of Beverly Hills wastewater infrastructure and the proposed project would not result in substantial changes to wastewater at the site annually, the proposed project would result in a *less-than-significant* impact as a result of the current wastewater treatment provider determining they could continue to serve the project.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The City of Beverly Hills' Public Works Department, Solid Waste Division provides waste collection service for all single-family residential areas and most multi-family residential buildings, including the project site. The City contracts with Crown Disposal, Inc., for commercial and industrial waste collection and approximately 20 to 25 percent of multi-family residential buildings. Crown Disposal, Inc. operates a material recovery facility and has sister companies that collect recycling materials and produce renewable energy from diverted waste. The material recovery facility helps reduce the amount of landfill waste. In addition to landfill waste collection, Crown Disposal, Inc. provides recycling and composting services to assist the City in meetings its waste diversion goals. The City disposes its solid waste in four different landfills: Puente Hills Landfill, Chiquita Canyon Landfill, Sunshine Canyon Landfill, and the Calabasas Sanitary Landfill.[33] Table 14 (Landfill Capacity) summarizes the existing available capacity at each of the four landfills serving the City.

[33] City of Beverly Hills, *City of Beverly Hills General Plan Update Technical Background Report* (October 2005).

Table 14 Landfill Capacity

Landfill	*Location*	*Current Remaining Capacity (Cubic Yards)*	*Maximum Capacity (Cubic Yards)*	*Cease Operation Date*	*Maximum Daily Load (tons)*
Chiquita Canyon Sanitary Landfill	29201 Henry Mayo Drive Valencia, CA 91384	29,300,000	63,900,000[1]	11/24/2019	6,000
Puente Hills Landfill	13130 Crossroads Pkwy South Industry, CA 91746	35,200,000	74,000,000	10/31/2013	13,200
Sunshine Canyon SLF County Extension	14747 San Fernando Road Sylmar, CA 91342	112,300,000	140,900,000	12/31/2037	12,100
Calabasas Sanitary Landfill	5300 Lost Hills Road, Agoura, CA 91301	18,100,000	69,300,000	9/30/2025	3,500

SOURCE: CalRecycle, Facility/Site Search, http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/SWFacilities/Directory/search.aspx (accessed August 1, 2012).

a. In October 2004, the Chiquita Canyon Landfill owner/operator submitted an application for a new Conditional Use Permit (CUP), which is currently being reviewed. The CUP proposes a horizontal and vertical expansion of about 32 million tons to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill.

Under existing conditions, the landfills serving Beverly Hills have a combined available capacity of 194,900,000 cubic yards. If the Chiquita Canyon Landfill expansion is approved it will add an additional 32 million tons to the total available capacity. Much of the solid waste generated at the project site is green waste associated with the maintenance of the gardens. Implementation of the proposed project would have no effect on the amount of green waste generated at the project site. Existing and project-related solid waste associated with daily operations at the project site is summarized in Table 15 (Solid Waste Generation). To estimate the change in solid waste generation associated with the proposed project, a rate of 0.09 ton per acre per year was assumed for daily tours.[34] Further, to estimate the change in solid waste associated with the proposed increase in special events at the project site, a rate of 120 pounds of solid waste per event is assumed.[35] Existing and project-related special event solid waste estimates are also provided in Table 15.

Table 15 Solid Waste Generation

Activity	*Generation Rate*	*Existing (lbs/yr)*[a]	*Proposed Project (lbs/yr)*[b]
Daily Operations (Public Tours and Classes/Seminars)	0.09 ton/acre/yr or 0.493 lb/acre/day	636	795
Special Events	120 lbs/event	240	720
Total	—	*876*	*1,515*

SOURCE: CalEEMod; Atkins, *San Diego Marriot Marquis and Marina Facilities Improvement and Port Master Plan Amendment Project Draft EIR* (2011).

a. Assumes conservative estimate of 208 operating days (Tuesday–Friday, 52 weeks per year).

b. Assumes conservative estimate of 260 operating days (Tuesday–Saturday, 52 weeks per year), to include holidays with the exception of Christmas Day and New Years Day.

[34] Consistent with solid waste generation rate utilized in the CalEEMod modeling software used to estimate air quality and greenhouse gas emissions associated with the proposed project.

[35] The special event rate was adopted from the San Diego Marriot Marquis and Marina Facilities Improvement and Port Master Plan Amendment Project EIR (Marriot Project). It is assumed that based on venue size, the events for which the rate of 120 lbs of solid waste was applied in the Marriot Project EIR would be similar to those at the project site. As such, this generation rate is valid for application to the proposed project.

The proposed project would result in an increase of approximately 639 pounds of solid waste per year. Given the City's diversion rate of 57 percent, the proposed project would generate a total approximately 864 pounds of solid waste annually, which would be accommodated by the available capacity at nearby landfills, identified in Table 14.

From a cumulative perspective, the Los Angeles County Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan 2009 Annual Report determined that based on the continuation of business as usual practices, solid waste disposal capacity in Los Angeles landfills would begin to experience a shortfall in 2014.[36] However, this estimate does not account for a number of recently approved and proposed landfill expansions that would significantly expand landfill capacity, which could be made available to the City and the proposed project in the future. Other expansion not taken into consideration are the in-County landfill expansions currently being pursued at the Antelope Valley Landfill (adding 8.96 million tons) and the Chiquita Canyon Landfill (adding 32 million tons), or the development of out-of-County landfills such as the Eagle Mountain Landfill in Riverside County and the Mesquite Regional Landfill in Imperial County; the operation of the latter two landfills would provide enough additional capacity to accommodate Los Angeles County's disposal need during the latter part of the present 15-year planning period (2009–2024).[37]

Furthermore, as the proposed project would not involve construction activities, compliance with construction-related waste diversion requirements is not applicable. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any federal, state, or local plans, policies, or regulations related to solid waste. Impacts associated with solid waste would be ***less than significant***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The City is required by state law to recycle at least 50 percent of all trash generated; however, Beverly Hills currently diverts approximately 57 percent of their waste. Both residential and commercial refuse is sorted for recyclables. Further, as discussed in Section XVII(g), the proposed project would not exceed the capacity of landfills that serve the project site. The proposed project would be in compliance with federal, state, and local statures and regulation regulated to solid waste and would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact to solid waste.

[36] Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, *County of Los Angeles Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan 2009 Annual Report* (February 2011), Countywide Summary Plan & Countywide Siting Element, p. 34.
[37] Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, *County of Los Angeles Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan 2009 Annual Report* (February 2011), Countywide Summary Plan & Countywide Siting Element, Appendix E-3 (Comparison of Daily Disposal Demand & SB 1016 Limit).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(h) Require or result in the construction of new energy production or transmission facilities, or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause a significant environmental impact?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

Electricity is provided to the project site by Southern California Edison and natural gas is provided by Southern California Gas Company. The California Energy Commission indicates that power providers, including SCE, ensure adequate supplies for energy demand by having a 15 to 17 percent excess buffer above typical peak demand. Current energy reserves anticipate the buffer at 22 percent above typical peak demand.[38]

The proposed project would not result in new development or a change in existing land use at the project site. Although the proposed project would result in a minor increase in public access to the project site, use of the project site is not energy intensive. Based on utility information provided by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, the project site used approximately 42,190 kilowatt hours (kWh) during the 2011/2012 fiscal year. As described under Sections VIII(f) and (g), the proposed project would result in an approximate 25 percent increase in operating days at the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would result in an approximate 25 percent increase in energy use over existing conditions. Project-related electricity demand would be approximately 52,737.5 kWh per year, representing a net increase of 10,547.5 kWh per year. A similar increase in natural gas demand would result from implementation of the proposed project; project-related natural gas demand would be approximately 483,000 cubic feet per year (or 4,830 therms per year), representing a net increase of approximately 96,600 cubic feet per year (966 therms per year).

When compared with energy demand at the county level (the County of Los Angeles is within the Southern California Edison service area) the net increase in electricity associated with the proposed project would represent approximately 0.000015 percent of the total 67,323 million kWh used by the County.[39] This would be a negligible increase in electricity demand. Similarly, the increase in natural gas demand associated with the proposed project would represent approximately 0.00003 percent of the County's total natural gas usage in 2010. This would also be a negligible increase in natural gas demand.[40]

The project site is primarily used for public tours of the botanical gardens and grounds, which does not require a substantial amount of electricity or natural gas. For special uses, public utilities (electricity and natural gas type facilities (i.e., heaters) are brought onto the site and would not increase the generation on site. Therefore, the proposed project would not require the construction of new or expansion of existing energy production or transmission facilities, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

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[38] California Energy Commission, *Summer 2008 Electricity Supply and Demand Outlook* (May 2008).
[39] California Energy Commission, Energy Consumption Data Management System, http://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/elecbycounty.aspx (accessed July 2, 2012).
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XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

As described in Section IV (Biological Resources), the proposed project would not adversely affect biological resources. The proposed project would not involve changes to the physical environment. Further, the proposed project would not involve alteration of the existing structures or gardens on the project site nor would it involve construction activities of any kind. Therefore, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact on biological or cultural resources.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project would not result in new construction or alteration of existing structures at the project site. Further, the proposed project would not cause a substantial increase in traffic, nor would it induce substantial population growth. Both population based and footprint based impacts would be less than significant. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not be cumulatively considerable and cumulative impacts would be ***less than significant***.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant w/Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The proposed project would not result in any significant environmental impacts. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in substantial adverse effects on human beings, resulting in a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

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ATTACHMENT II

PROPOSED OPERATIONAL CHANGES TO THE VIRGINIA ROBINSON GARDENS

Findings of Fact/ Statement of Overriding Considerations

Prepared for
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May 2014

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INTRODUCTION

This document presents the Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations that must be adopted by the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors (County) pursuant to the requirements of Sections 15091 and 15093, respectively, of the *California Environmental Quality Act* Guidelines (CEQA Guidelines) prior to the approval of the Proposed Operational Changes to the Virginia Robinson Gardens project (proposed project).

This document is organized as follows:

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Chapter 2 Presents the CEQA Findings of the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR).

Chapter 3 Presents a Statement of Overriding Considerations that is required in accordance with Section 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines for significant impacts of the proposed project that cannot be mitigated to a less-than-significant level.

To meet the current primary goals of the Virginia Robinson Gardens, the proposed project includes revisions to the operational characteristics and public accessibility of the project site, requiring modifications to the operational limitations established in the 1980 EIR.

The following operational revisions are proposed:

- **Days open to the public:** Monday to Saturday (6 days per week); Closed Sundays; Open holidays, with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Years Day
- **Hours for public use:** 6.5 hours per day (9:30 AM to 4:00 PM)
- **Number of patrons in attendance:** Maximum of 100 visitors per day with advanced reservations, in any combination of the currently allowed uses (tours, classes/seminars, commercial filming, etc.)
- **Types of events:** Public programs to conform to new day/hours and number of participants allowed; however, subject matter for seminar/classes to be determined at the discretion of the Park Superintendent based on how well the classes interpret the historical collections of Mrs. Robinson. This includes continuation of the use of the site for tours of the grounds for biology, botany, and horticulture groups.
- **Special Uses:** Limited to four per year, with expanded themes. Themes would be determined at the discretion of the Park Superintendent. Programs must continue to focus on the historical interpretation of the facility.
- **Parking:** All parking requires advanced reservation, as follows:
  - > Parking required on the property (22 spaces, upper parking lot, entrance off Elden Way)
  - > No street parking permitted on Elden Way. With advanced reservation, allow visitors to walk to the gardens from nearby public streets pursuant to street signs; visitors could also walk to the gardens from public transportation (primarily buses, but also to include taxi)

> Allow visitors to be dropped off at the entrance to the gardens (e.g., via the City of Beverly Hills free ride for disabled residents)

> Overflow visitor parking and staff/volunteer parking, accessed from Cove Way (20 cars)

CEQA FINDINGS

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the potential impacts that were identified in the SEIR and the findings that are required in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15091.The possible findings for each significant and/or potentially significant adverse impact are as follows:

(a) Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into the project which avoid, substantially lessen, or reduce the magnitude of the significant environmental effect as identified in the EIR ("Finding 1").

(b) Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the findings. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency ("Finding 2").

(c) Specific economic, social, or other considerations make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives in the EIR ("Finding 3").

CEQA requires that the lead agency adopt mitigation measures or alternatives, where feasible, to avoid or substantially reduce significant environmental impacts that would otherwise occur as a result of a project. Project modification or alternatives are not required, however, where they are infeasible or where the responsibility for modifying the project lies with some other agency (CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(3)).Public Resources Code Section 21061.1 defines "feasible" to mean "capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social and technological factors." State CEQA Guidelines Section 15364 adds another factor: "legal" considerations (see also *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* [Goleta II] [1990] 52 Cal.3d 553, 565 [276 Cal. Rptr. 410].)

Only after fully complying with the findings requirement can an agency adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations (*Citizens for Quality Growth v. City of Mount Shasta* [1988] 198 Cal.App.3d 433, 442, 445 [243 Cal. Rptr. 727]). CEQA requires the Lead Agency to state in writing the specific rationale to support its actions based on the Final EIR and/or information in the record. This written statement is known as the Statement of Overriding Considerations. The Statement of Overriding Considerations provides the information that demonstrates the decision-making body of the Lead Agency has weighed the benefits of the project against its unavoidable adverse effects in determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits of the project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse effects may be considered "acceptable."

The California Supreme Court has stated that, "the wisdom of approving any development project, a delicate task which requires a balancing of interests, is necessarily left to the sound discretion of the local officials and their constituents who are responsible for such decisions. The law as we interpret and apply it simply requires that those decisions be informed, and therefore balanced." (Goleta II, 52 Cal.3d 553, 576 [276 Cal. Rptr. 401].)

This document presents the County of Los Angeles findings as required by CEQA, cites substantial evidence in the record in support of each of the findings, and presents an explanation to supply the logical step between the finding and the facts in the record (CEQA Guidelines Section 15091).

Additional facts that support the findings are set forth in the Draft SEIR, the Final SEIR, Board letter to the County Board of Supervisors, and the record of proceedings.

Table 2-1 (CEQA Findings for the Proposed Operational Changes to the Virginia Robinson Gardens project) summarizes the potentially significant impact identified in the SEIR, as currently proposed for certification and adoption of the proposed project.

Table 2-1 CEQA Findings for the Proposed Operational Changes to the Virginia Robinson Gardens SEIR

Impact Summary		*Findings*
Transportation/Traffic		
Under Existing plus Project Conditions, operation of the proposed project would result in an exceedance of the City of Beverly Hills Local Street threshold that restricts the percentage increase of ADT on roadways with a current ADT less than 2,000 to 16 percent. As the proposed project will not change operations substantially during weekdays, the increase in traffic volumes along Elden Way during weekday operation would not be substantial and would not result in an increase that would exceed the City's Local street threshold. However, based on the current ADT on Saturday along Elden Way, the additional project trips anticipated on Saturdays would result in an increase greater than the City's threshold of 16 percent, resulting in a significant impact, by percentage .However, this impact would not create an operational impact along Elden Way or the surrounding intersections.	It was determined that the increase in ADT along Elden Way on Saturdays would exceed the established City of Beverly Hills threshold (16 percent) for roadways with an existing ADT less than 2,000.This would result in a significant impact, by percentage, but would not cause degradation to roadway operations. Mitigation analyzed, including off-site parking opportunities, would not reduce the identified impact to less-than significant.	Finding. The County finds that, although mitigation that included off-site parking opportunities was analyzed to reduce the ADT along Elden Way on Saturdays, this was determined to be infeasible and there is no additional feasible mitigation available to reduce the identified impact. Further, the proposed project would not cause degradation in roadway operations, rather it would exceed the established threshold.

STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

Section 15093 of the CEQA guidelines states:

(a) CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable."

(b) When the lead agency approves a project which will result in the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the final EIR but are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency shall state in writing the specific reason to support its actions based on the final EIR and/or other information in the record. The statement of overriding considerations shall be supported by substantial evidence in the record.

(c) If an agency makes a statement of overriding considerations, the statement should be included in the record of the project approval and should be mentioned in the notice of determination.

The County proposes to adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations regarding the significant traffic impact (limited to occasional Saturdays) of the proposed project. The anticipated economic, social, and other benefits or other considerations of the proposed project to support the decision to proceed with the project even though one occasional project-specific impact is not mitigated to a less-than-significant level are discussed below.

II. SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS

The County is proposing to approve the proposed project and has prepared a SEIR required by CEQA. Even with mitigation explored for the project, the following impact is unavoidable because it has been determined that no further feasible mitigation is available.

Transportation/Traffic

- Under Existing plus Project Conditions, on Saturdays, the proposed project would generate ADT in exceedance of the percentage threshold established by the City of Beverly Hills for Local Streets. The impact would be significant and unavoidable.
- Under Opening Year (2014) plus Project Conditions, on Saturdays, the proposed project would generate ADT in exceedance of the percentage threshold established by the City of Beverly Hills for Local Streets. The impact would be significant and unavoidable.

III. FINDINGS

The County has evaluated feasible mitigation with respect to the project's impacts. However, the County has rejected this mitigation as infeasible because the off-site parking opportunities are either unavailable or would not achieve the project objectives or other environmental, economic, and social considerations.

IV. OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

Specific economic, social, or other considerations outweigh the traffic impact identified for the proposed project. The overriding consideration for proceeding with the proposed project, in lieu of the project-specific, traffic impact on limited Saturdays is described below.

1. Mrs. Virginia Robinson's Last Will and Testament specifies that her household items (those not donated to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art) should be left and maintained in her home for display purposes in connection with the arboretum. The Will goes on to state that "The development and plantings of the estate represent many years of thought and effort on the part of … Harry W. Robinson and myself. It is my desire that said estate be perpetuated as an arboretum or botanic garden for the benefit of the general public …"

   The important element here is the desire of Mrs. Robinson to have the property used as an arboretum for the enjoyment of the visitors and the "benefit of the general public." At present, it is very difficult for the general public to make good use/visitation of the garden due to the restricted hours and days of operation and the tendency for individuals and families to have conflicting work/school schedules. The proposed project promotes both the letter and intent of Mrs. Robinson in leaving the property to the County for the *benefit* and enjoyment of the *general* public by making it more accessible while simultaneously being a good neighbor to both the City of Beverly Hills and those residents on Elden Way.

2. Furthering the detail of the Will, the Grant Deed specifies that the property "…shall at all reasonable times be open and available for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public as an arboretum garden." While being open four days per week, Tuesday – Friday, may have been deemed sufficient at the time of the 1980 EIR, there is a sound argument to say that the property is not open at reasonable and sufficient times for the general public, thirty-four years later in 2014.

   For example, employed adults interested in the gardens or the advancement of botanical issues (who would be a targeted audience both of Virginia Robinson herself via the language in the Will and by the operating objectives of the Gardens currently) are hindered by the limited hours (presently closed every weekend) and are thus less likely to be able to visit the property under the current arrangement. Further, school-aged children and families are unable to visit the property under the current operating hours as many have working parents and/or have school and after-school activities that conflict with the early weekday closing time. There is a reasonable argument that Mrs. Robinson and the operating objectives (as noted above) desired attendance by young children to encourage interest in nature, the gardens, as well as the historical nature of the overall property and Mrs. Robinson's collections.

3. The proposed project supports the Department of Parks and Recreation's Mission which seeks to "… provide quality recreational opportunities through … cultural programming by developing and maintaining County parks, gardens …"Virginia Robinson Gardens supports the provision of recreational opportunities, substantial historic and cultural programming as well as the continued provision of acres of gardens reflective of the Robinson's world travel.

4. The proposed project supports the overall County Vision which states, "[o]ur purpose is to improve the quality of life in Los Angeles County by providing responsive, efficient and high quality public services that promote the self-sufficiency, and well-being and prosperity of businesses and communities." The continued use of the property as a public garden supports the County's stated objective to provide high quality public services as well as support the community surrounding the gardens, by addressing their concerns regarding neighborhood traffic

and maintaining a high quality of life by way of a compromise on the operating hours and the number of special events.

5. In addition to the specifics of the Will and the Grant Deed noted in 1 and 2 above, the project will result in overarching support of both the Robinsons' philanthropy and desire for continued education of the botany reflective of their world travels.
6. The property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1978) and was designated as a landmark by the City of Beverly Hills in January, 2013.Overly restricting visitation, especially on Saturdays, to such places could be considered contradictory to the overall mission of such designations.
7. The mission of Virginia Robinson Gardens states, "[t]he purpose of the Virginia Robinson Gardens is to preserve and promote this historically significant first estate of Beverly Hills for the education and enjoyment of the general public." By allowing up to forty vehicle trips on Saturdays, the County is able to better provide for the enjoyment of the general public since the vast majority of visitors will arrive in a personal vehicle.

Attachment III

AMENDMENT No. 1 TO THE
FRIENDS OF ROBINSON GARDENS SUPPORT AGREEMENT
by and between
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES and THE FRIENDS OF ROBINSON GARDENS

THIS AMENDMENT No. 1 TO THE **FRIENDS OF ROBINSON GARDENS SUPPORT AGREEMENT** is made and entered into this _____day of _____, 2014,

BY AND BETWEEN

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
a political subdivision of the State
of California, hereinafter referred
to as the "County",

AND
FRIENDS OF ROBINSON GARDENS INC,
California public nonprofit benefit
corporation, hereinafter referred to as
"Friends,"

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the parks and recreation services of the County can be expanded and improved with the assistance of private individuals and organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Friends has for many years raised and contributed funding for the operation for the Virginia Robinson Gardens, ("Gardens"), the property comprising the Gardens and the construction of improvements to benefit the Gardens and the public; and

WHEREAS, County and Friends desire to cooperate in providing funding and programs for the benefit of the public; and

WHEREAS, the County Board of Supervisors is authorized pursuant to Government Code Section 26227 to contract for programs that serve public purposes; and

WHEREAS, the County Board of Supervisors by its action on April 5, 1988, has authorized the Director to contract with nonprofit support organizations in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth herein to render services; and

WHEREAS, the County Board of Supervisors certified and adopted an Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") on June 10, 1980 which established operational regulations and schedule, limiting the operation and public accessibility allowed at the Gardens for guided tours, classes and seminars, and special events, as well as number of employees at the project site; and

WHEREAS, the County wishes to amend the operation and public accessibility of the Gardens, requiring modifications to the operational limitations established in the 1980 EIR and the 1998 Support Agreement as described in the Supplemental EIR.

WHEREAS, Friends are qualified by reason of experience, interest and organization to provide the services contemplated by this Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing and the terms, all of Section 4 in its entirety is deleted and amended as follows:

4. <u>SERVICES OF COUNTY</u>

4.01 As provided for in Appendix E of the County Fiscal Manual entitled "Departmental Foundations/ Support Groups", County on an as-needed basis will assist Friends in their efforts to perform the services set forth in Section 3 hereinabove by providing staff support, use of office space, storage facilities, materials, and equipment based on the priorities established by the Superintendent and to the extent that same is available as reasonably determined by the Superintendent. Specifically the County shall provide staffing for the following duties:

4.01.01 Secretarial duties for miscellaneous clerical support shall included filing, updating and coordinating mailing lists and data files, assisting with periodic mailing, retrieving messages from the Friends voice mail and directing said messages to the appropriate person(s) once per day or as soon as possible thereafter.

4.01.02 Personnel for set up and take down of tables, chairs, and umbrellas for Friends meetings and special events.

4.01.03 Monitoring of Friends to ensure that activities are in the best interest of the County and the public pursuant to Appendix E of the County Fiscal Manual regarding Departmental Foundations and Support Groups.

4.01.04 Monitoring of all construction, restoration, and preservation projects approved by the Director.

4.02 Friends use of resources provided by County shall be scheduled by the Superintendent.

4.03 County shall have no duty of payment, obligation or liability to Friends employees, officers, agents, or vendors or subcontractors. County shall have no duty of payments under this Agreement other than as set forth in this Section.

4.04 Friends shall have access to Gardens during normal days and hours of operation as determined by the Superintendent.

4.05. Notwithstanding the above, the operating schedule shall comply with the project description of the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report as follows:

4.05.01 Days Open to the Public:

- Monday to Saturday
- Closed Sunday
- Open on holidays, with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Years Day. Generally, operating hours would follow the County holiday schedule meaning, for example, that if a holiday falls on a Sunday and is observed on a Monday, Virginia Robinson Gardens would be closed on Sunday and open on Monday.

4.05.02 Hours for Public Use:

- 6 ½ hours per day (9:30 AM to 4 PM)

4.05.03 Number of Patrons in Attendance With Advanced Reservations:

100 visitors per day for docent tours, seminar/classes, or commercial filming (video only, no motion picture) or a combination of any of these activities.

4.05.04 Type of Events

Public programs to conform to new day/hours and number of participants allowed; however, subject matter for seminar/classes to be determined at the discretion of the Superintendent based on how well the classes interpret the historical collections at the facility. Also to include tours of the grounds for biology, botany, and horticulture groups.

4.05.05 Commercial Filming

Commercial filming would conform to the restrictions listed in this section.

4.05.06 Special Uses

Special uses limited to four per year with expanded themes to include, but not be limited to:

- Extend Garden Tour to two consecutive days to allow greater overall attendance.
- Offer public tours in the evening with a meal served with or without tables.
- Offer public tours for donors during daylight hours featuring seasonal aspects of the garden or recent restoration projects.
- Offer performing arts in the garden, such as classical music, theatre, or poetry readings.

- Offer temporary exhibits to feature and interpret the many artifacts in the collections at Virginia Robinson Gardens.

For Special Uses, themes would be determined at the discretion of the Superintendent. Programs must continue to focus on the historical interpretation of the facility, such as the non-living and living collections housed at the facility, the gardens, etc.

For Special Uses, there are no restrictions on the number of guests or hours/day of operations; however, tickets are sold to regulate the number of visitors to assure safety and a quality experience. Additionally, the event voluntarily complies with city ordinances, which require no amplified music after 10:00 PM, and valet service must obtain city parking permits for use of public streets to avoid overlapping events with surrounding neighbors.

4.05.06 Parking

With advance reservations:

- Parking required on the property (22 spaces, upper parking lot entrance off Elden Way)
- No street parking permitted
- With advance reservation, allow visitors to walk to the gardens from nearby public streets pursuant to street signs; visitors could also walk to the gardens from public transportation (primarily buses, but also to include taxi)
- Allow visitors to be dropped off at the entrance of the gardens (e.g. via the City of Beverly Hills free ride for disabled residents)

- Overflow visitor parking (valet) and staff/volunteer parking allowed on the lower tennis court, accessed from Cove Way (20 cars)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, Friends has executed this Amendment No. 1 to the Agreement, or caused it to be duly executed, and the County pursuant to Section 25.10 of the Agreement has authorized this Amendment No. 1 to be executed by the Director of Parks and Recreation on the day and year first above written.

FRIENDS OF ROBINSON GARDENS, INC.

By_____
Kerstin Royce, President

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

By_____
Russ Guiney, Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

JOHN KRATTLI
County Counsel

By Christina A. Salseda
Christina A. Salseda, Principal Deputy