

H. LAND USE

Existing Conditions

Existing Land Use

On-Site Uses

The following discussion identifies existing land use at the proposed project site, which comprises the West Los Angeles College (WLAC) campus and the alternative second access routes through the Baldwin Hills.

WLAC Campus

The WLAC campus is an approximately 72-acre site developed for educational use. On-site development supporting this use includes buildings, outdoor recreational facilities, surface parking lots, an internal circulation system, and other supporting infrastructure. Existing buildings house classrooms, libraries/research facilities, a gymnasium, administrative offices, and supporting uses such as a bookstore, childcare facility, minimal food processing, and maintenance and operational plants. As described in Chapter III, Project Description, although most of these buildings are permanent structures, a substantial number are temporary structures. Outdoor recreational facilities include a football track and field, tennis courts, basketball courts, a baseball field, and a hammer throwing field.

The campus development pattern focuses the major academic buildings around the campus core, located within the east side of the site, west of Sophomore Drive and north of D Streets. Additional educational buildings and administrative and other supporting uses are clustered within the northwest section of the site. Indoor and outdoor athletic facilities and surface parking lots are the predominant uses within the west and south sides of the site. A plant facilities building is also located near the southwest corner of the site. The developed campus is enclosed within Freshman Drive on the west, Sophomore Drive on the east and north, and Stocker Street on the south.

The WLAC facilities are primarily used by students of the College and staff for curricular use. However, the campus is generally open, and some of the facilities are also used for noncurricular use by other parties. For example, the gymnasium and athletic fields are used for local sporting events such as high school baseball games, local soccer league games. Classroom and other building facilities are also used occasionally by parties other than the WLAC. An existing settlement agreement between the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) and the City of Culver City (September 10, 1993) limits noncurriculum use of the gymnasium to the hours of 6 AM to 11 PM on Sunday and weekdays and 6 AM to midnight on Friday and Saturday. Evening noncurricular use that exceeds 75 percent of the occupancy load of the gymnasium and will operate later than 10 PM may not be scheduled for more than 2 consecutive nights from Sunday through Thursday and no more than 3 consecutive nights throughout the week including Friday and Saturday.

Baldwin Hills

The project proposes to construct a second access road generally through the Baldwin Hills. As shown in **Figure III-6**, there are three potential routes (Alternatives A, B, and C). A portion of Alternative A also traverses the southern portion of Culver City Park, along an existing park roadway and through an area referred to as the Bone Yard. This area contains inactive oil wells and is currently used by the City as a storage area, but is planned for remediation and conversion into useable park space. A portion of Alternative B includes Hetzler's Road, which traverses the Vista Pacifica Scenic Site, a 68-acre open space area including a scenic view point.

Adjacent and Surrounding Uses

Figure IV-1 identifies existing land use in the vicinity of the proposed project site. The WLAC campus is bordered by to the west by multi-family residential developments (west of Freshman Drive). Immediately south

of the site is an electricity power-line easement south of and parallel to Stocker Street. Just south of the easement are single-family residences. The northern and eastern sides of the campus are backed by the Baldwin Hills Oil Fields.

The proposed second access road alternatives are surrounded primarily by undeveloped land and oil production facilities within the Baldwin Hills oil fields. A portion of Alternative A also traverses the southern portion of Culver City Park, along an existing park roadway and through an area referred to as the Bone Yard. This park roadway is immediately adjacent to open parkland and just north (and uphill) of a playground. The Bone Yard area contains inactive oil wells and is currently used by the City as a storage area. A portion of Alternative B includes Hetzler's Road. Uses surrounding this portion of the road are open spaces within the Vista Pacifica Scenic Site and water storage tanks.

The WLAC campus is set between urban development of Culver City to the west and south and non-urban land within the Baldwin Hills to the east and north (within unincorporated Los Angeles County). Culver City land uses are predominantly residential, with an industrial and commercial corridor and Ballona Creek west of the campus, along the west side of Jefferson Boulevard, and a commercial concentration southwest of the campus along the east side of Jefferson Boulevard and south of Overland Avenue.

The Baldwin Hills is an approximately 2-square mile area, the largest remaining "open space" area within urban Los Angeles County. Its topography is characterized by ridgelines and steep canyons. Much of this area has been and continues to be used for oil and gas production and processing uses. The Baldwin Hills also includes about 450 acres of parkland providing active and passive recreational facilities. These parks are the Kenneth Hahn State Recreational Area (319 acres), Vista Pacifica Scenic Site (68 acres), Norman O. Houston Park (4 acres), Ladera Ball Fields (31 acres) and Culver City park (30 acres). As described further below under Land Use Plans, Policy and Zoning, the State of California Resources Agency has prepared a Master Plan for future development of the Baldwin Hills area as a regional park.

Land Use Plans, Policy, and Zoning

The proposed project is located within unincorporated Los Angeles County adjacent to Culver City and within its Sphere of Influence. The applicable land use designations and planning goals set forth in the County of Los Angeles and Culver City General Plans are discussed below, along with the site's existing zoning as per the Los Angeles County Zoning. Also described below are the relevant aspects of the Baldwin Hills Park Master Plan, as it covers the area immediately adjacent to the College and is the area through which a second access road is planned as part of the proposed project. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has determined that the proposed project is not regionally significant (January 23, 2003 NOP comment letter), and therefore does not warrant review of the project's consistency with SCAG policies set forth in its Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide.

County of Los Angeles General Plan

The Los Angeles County General Plan sets forth land use planning and policy to guide future development in the County and provides a framework of strategies to address countywide issues and goals. The General Plan Land Use Policy Map designation for the WLAC campus is P (Public and Semi-Public Facilities). The second access road alternatives are located within the O (Open Space) designation that covers the Baldwin Hills. The General Plan Land Use Policy Map states that the Open Space designation includes "both public and privately owned lands committed to long term open space use, and lands intended to be used in a manner compatible with open space objectives."

The General Plan Land Use Element identifies the following applicable goals:

- To provide for land use arrangements that take full advantage of existing public service and facility capacities.

- To maintain and enhance the quality of existing residential neighborhoods.
- To coordinate land use with existing and proposed transportation networks.
- To encourage high quality design in all development projects, compatible with, and sensitive to, the natural and manmade environment.
- To foster compatible land use arrangements that contribute to reduced energy consumption and improved air quality.
- To encourage more efficient use of land, compatible with, and to, natural ecological, scenic, cultural and open space resources.

At the time the College was founded, the Los Angeles County Highway Plan, a sub-element of the Transportation Element of the County General Plan, indicated for Stocker Street to provide an intermediate route for east-west traffic. While some of the route was constructed much remained undeveloped. In 1997, the County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution Plan Amendment 96164-(2) which amended the County Highway Plan to delete the proposed extension of Stocker Street between La Cienega Boulevard westerly to Culver City. At the time this amendment was being considered, the College expressed concerns about a need for a second means of access to the campus. In response to this concern, Resolution Plan Amendment 96164-(2) amended the Transportation Element of the General Plan, adding Policy 13.1 which states “In coordination with Culver City, consider provision of secondary and emergency access to West Los Angeles College when developing plans for open space or other use of adjacent areas of the Baldwin Hills.

County of Los Angeles Zoning

The West Los Angeles College campus area falls within two different County Zoning land use designations: R-1 (Single Family Residential) and A2 – Agricultural Zoning classifications). The R-1 Zone covers the southwest portion of the site, near Overland Avenue. The remainder of the campus lies with in the A-2 Agricultural zone.

The R-1 Zoning classification does not allow post-secondary schools (Los Angeles County Planning and Zoning Code 22.20.100). The A-2 Zone allows private Colleges and Universities subject to the approval of a Conditional Use Permit (Los Angeles County Planning and Zoning Code 22.24.150). The Conditional Use Permit process would set the appropriate development standards based upon an approved Facilities Master Plan.

The Los Angeles Community College District is a “superior agency” to the County of Los Angeles and therefore development of the College campus may be exempt from local land use regulations including the County’s planning policy and zoning regulations.

Culver City General Plan

Although the WLAC campus is not located within Culver City, portions of the second access routes considered under Alternatives A and B are located within the City. In addition, the WLAC campus and other portions of the access road alternatives are located within the City of Culver City’s “Sphere of Influence,” as established by the Los Angeles County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). The Sphere of Influence is considered within the Culver City General Plan for purposes of addressing land use compatibility, coordinating land use policy with adjacent jurisdictions, and proposing land use policy for areas of potential annexation.

The City of Culver City General Plan designates the WLAC campus as Open Space with a School overlay. The second access road alternatives are primarily within areas designated by the Culver City General Plan as Open Space and within the Blair Hills/Baldwin Hills focused special study area. The northern portion of Alternative B traverses a residentially designated area.

If the campus were annexed into the City of Culver City, an appropriate zoning designation consistent with the City’s General Plan would be applied to the West Los Angeles College campus area. The appropriate zoning

designation would allow private schools, colleges and universities subject to City land use permit approval. In the City of Culver City, private educational institutions are required to obtain a Conditional Use Permit or a special land use permit (such as a Planned Unit Development – PUD) for project approvals. Under this permit process, development standards (such as building heights, site coverage, and other design conditions) are determined based on an overall Facilities Master Plan.

The following Culver City General Plan Land Use Element includes the following goals:

- Residential neighborhoods that offer residents the qualities of a peaceful, small-town environment.
- Economic vitality that serves the community and protects the quality of life.
- An open space, urban forest, urban design network that links neighborhoods and business, and instills civic pride.
- A community that provides recreational, historical and cultural opportunities.
- Clear and consistent guidance for balanced growth.
- Ample and efficient City services and infrastructure.

Baldwin Hills Park Master Plan

The California Department of Parks and Recreation and Baldwin Hills Conservancy have prepared a conceptual Master Plan for the Baldwin Hills area (May 2002). The purpose of the Baldwin Hills Park Master Plan is to serve as a guide for future natural open space and parkland acquisition and improvements, facility development and habitat restoration within the Baldwin Hills, and for connections to trails, parks, and other public facilities. The area covered by the plan encompasses over 2 square miles (1,400 acres) and, as described above, represents the largest remaining "open space" area within urban Los Angeles County. The Plan envisions preservation and restoration of natural habitat along with the development of active and passive recreational facilities, and educational and cultural facilities. See Section V.L, Recreation and Parks, for further description of proposed recreational facilities.

Thresholds of Significance

The proposed project would result in a significant land use impact if:

- It introduces new land uses that are incompatible with surrounding uses; or
- It substantially conflicts with an applicable land use plan, policies, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Project Impacts

Under the proposed WLAC Facilities Master Plan (FMP), additional educational and related facilities would be developed at the WLAC campus. As described in greater detail in Section III, Project Description, proposed uses include additional classroom space, laboratories, administrative offices, athletic facilities, exhibition space, and parking facilities. The project would increase development at the campus from 419,315 gross square feet to 792,037 gross square feet, excluding parking structures. The proposed development of new facilities and improvements to existing facilities would accommodate an anticipated enrollment increase from 6,436 full time equivalent (FTE) students in 2002 to 15,342 FTE students in 2022. A second access road to the campus may be required to accommodate the campus buildout by 2022.

Land Use Compatibility

This discussion assesses the potential for the proposed project to result in land use compatibility issues as a result of: (1) on-campus development and increased activity at the campus; and (2) construction and operation of the access

roads. The proposed uses are considered incompatible if their physical effects substantially impair the ability of surrounding land uses to continue their existing function.

The proposed on-campus development would result in an intensification of educational and related uses at an existing college campus. As described above, the campus is surrounded by the Baldwin Hills oil fields to the north and east and residential uses to west and south. The area within the Baldwin Hills oils fields immediately adjacent to the site is predominantly vacant. The adjacency of the College campus to the oils fields does not currently create compatibility issues. Full buildout of the College under the FMP would not affect the continued operation of the oil fields, and the oil field is not expected to generate off-site effects that would conflict with campus operations. Therefore, the proposed intensification of educational facilities is not expected to generate compatibility issues with surrounding uses to the north and east of the campus.

With respect to surrounding residential uses to the west and south of the campus, the proposed project's physical effects with the potential to create compatibility issues are limited to noise and nighttime lighting. The potential for compatibility issues with surrounding residential uses is reduced by intervening features such as landscaping along the perimeter of the campus, the width of perimeter roadways (Freshman Drive and Stocker Street to the west and south of the campus, respectively), a vegetated electrical power-line easement along the south side of Stocker Street, and elevation differences (the residential uses along the south side of Stocker Street and the west side of Freshman Drive are at a lower elevation than the intervening perimeter roadbeds). The proposed project would not result in on-campus activities or facilities that would substantially increase noise or lighting at residential uses south of the campus during Phase I (to 2015) and Phase II (2015 to 2022), or west of the campus during Phase I. As described in Section V.A, Aesthetics, Phase II of the proposed project includes the installation of lighting for the football field, six new tennis courts, and the baseball and softball fields along the western edge of the campus. Mitigation measures are identified to assure that this lighting will be designed with consideration of spill-over effects and to restrict the use of this lighting to 10 p.m. on weekdays and 11 p.m. on weekends. Activities at these fields may also generate increased noise levels at residential uses west of Freshman Drive. However, these noise increases would not result in unacceptable interior noise levels for residential uses as per the Los Angeles County Noise Code, and would be limited to the operational hours of these fields, as determined by the lighting hours, as well as by the noise mitigation measures. Although there may be lighting and noise impacts on residential uses west of Freshman Drive during Phase II, with the mitigation measure that will restrict the operational hours of athletic facilities along Freshman Drive (see Section V.A), these impacts would not substantially impair the function of residences west of the campus. Therefore, with these mitigation measures, the proposed project would not result in a significant land use compatibility impact on surrounding residential uses to the west and south of the campus.

Although a specific alignment for the new second access road has not yet been determined, three general alignments are presently under consideration (Alternatives A, B, and C). All of these alternatives would traverse the Baldwin Hills Oil Fields. It is assumed that as part of detailed engineering for these roadways, a specific alignment that avoids existing oil wells would be designed. As such, conflicts between the new roadway and existing oil wells are not expected. A portion of Alternative A also passes through the southern portion of Culver City Park, along an existing park roadway and through an area referred to as the Bone Yard. The introduction of through-traffic along the existing roadway, along with the associated noise and safety issues, has the potential to alter the characteristics of the park setting that are intrinsic to its function as a park. This potential is to some degree reduced by the grade differential between the roadway and the playground area to the south along with the fact that the north side of the roadway is bordered by a steep hillside with no sidewalk or other facilities. In its April 3, 2003 comment letter on the Revised Notice of Preparation for this EIR, the City of Culver City has stated that it plans to convert the Bone Yard into useable space and has initiated a process towards that end. Given the potential conflicts associated with the use of an internal park roadway for through traffic and the construction of a new road through an area planned as useable park space, Alternative A would result in the potential for significant land use compatibility issues with respect to Culver City Park.

A portion of Alternative B includes Hetzler's Road, which traverses the Vista Pacifica Scenic Site, a 68-acre open space area including a scenic view-point. It is assumed that roadway modifications under this Alternative would maintain the turnout for scenic overlook. Therefore, the introduction of traffic along this road would not conflict with the Scenic Site. It would enhance its use by bringing more visitors to the site, as described in Section V.L, Recreation and Parks.

Alternatives A, B, and C may pass through areas of the Baldwin Hills oil fields that may be developed with park facilities in the future, as envisioned in the Baldwin Hills Park Master Plan. The potential for conflicts with planned park facilities identified in the Baldwin Hills Park Master Plan are discussed below, under the heading Consistency with Land Use Planning, Policy, and Zoning.

Consistency with Land Use Planning, Policy, and Zoning

County of Los Angeles General Plan

The development of additional educational uses at the WLAC under the proposed project would be consistent with the General Plan Land Use Policy Map designation for the WLAC campus of P (Public and Semi –Public Facilities). The development of a second access road through the O (Open Space) designation that covers the Baldwin Hills is not considered inconsistent with this designation because, as described further below, these roads would not conflict with the open space and recreational objectives for this area, as set forth in the Baldwin Hills Park Master Plan.

The following reviews the proposed project as it relates to each of applicable goals set forth in the Los Angeles County General Plan. Overall, the proposed project is generally consistent with these goals.

Goal: To provide for land use arrangements that take full advantage of existing public service and facility capacities.

Consistent. The proposed project would accommodate projected increased demand for community college services by taking advantage of land capacity at an existing college campus. In addition, as described in Sections V.K, Public Services, and V.N, Utilities, the public service and utility capacities in the area are generally adequate to accommodate the anticipated demands generated by the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with this goal.

Goal: To maintain and enhance the quality of existing residential neighborhoods.

Partially Consistent. The proposed project is consistent with this goal in that it would provide the surrounding residential area with improved and increased community college educational facilities, improved athletic facilities, and a new community facility. However, as described above, the proposed project would result in the potential for localized aesthetic and noise impacts on those residential units closest to the campus along the west side of Freshman Drive as well as increased traffic along major roadways within the area.

Goal: To coordinate land use with existing and proposed transportation networks.

Partially Consistent. The proposed project would be consistent with this goal in that it would increase the use of an existing college campus that is served by a network of freeways and local roads as well as transit lines (the WLAC campus is served by a number of Culver City Bus and Los Angeles County MTA bus lines). However, to the extent that the anticipated project generated traffic levels, in combination with long term traffic growth projections, would not be adequately accommodated by these roads, the proposed project would not be consistent with this goal. As described in Section V.M, Traffic, a traffic study was conducted to examine the potential effects of the proposed project on the surrounding street network. A total of 31 intersections were analyzed. The traffic study identified significant traffic impacts in year 2015 (end of Phase I) at eight

intersections during the a.m. peak period and at five intersections during the p.m. peak period. The analysis for year 2022 (end of Phase II, including construction of the second access road) identified significant traffic impacts at 10 to 12 intersections for the three alternatives roadway alignments during the a.m. peak period and at 7 to 9 intersections during the p.m. peak period. Feasible mitigation measures are not available for most of these impacts.

Goal: To encourage high quality design in all development projects, compatible with, and sensitive to, the natural and manmade environment.

Consistent. As described in Section III, B, Master Plan Design Concepts, the proposed Facilities Master Plan includes design guidelines for the site's architectural, landscape, and hardscape elements aimed at achieving a high quality design of the physical environment at the campus. Therefore, the Facilities Master Plan is consistent with this goal.

Goal: To foster compatible land use arrangements that contribute to reduced energy consumption and improved air quality.

Partially Consistent. The proposed project would not alter land use patterns but would intensify the use of an existing college campus. The purpose of the project is to accommodate local demand for community college services. To the extent that the increased capacity of this community college accommodates demand for these services locally, it may reduce vehicle miles traveled in the region, and thereby reducing energy consumption and benefiting regional air quality. This would be consistent with the above goal. However, as described in Section V.B., Air Quality, a worst-case analysis for construction impacts concluded that significant unavoidable construction air quality impacts would occur. This aspect of the project construction would not be consistent with this goal.

Goal: To encourage more efficient use of land, compatible with, and to, natural ecological, scenic, cultural and open space resources.

Consistent. The proposed project accommodates projected increases in demand increased for community college services by increasing the capacity of an existing developed campus. This results in a more efficient use of the College property. In addition, the proposed project is not expected to result in significant unavoidable impacts on natural ecological resources (see Section V.C), scenic resources (see Section V.A), cultural resources (see Section V.D), or open space resources. Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with this goal.

County of Los Angeles Zoning

As described above, the WLAC campus includes areas within R-1 and A-2 zoning designations. The R-1 Zoning classification does not allow post-secondary schools. A college use within the R-1 Zone would require rezoning of that portion of the site to an appropriate land use zone consistent with the County General Plan, such as IT (Institutional). The zone change would require public hearings before the Regional Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. The A-2 Zones allows private Colleges and Universities subject to the approval of a Conditional Use Permit (Los Angeles County Planning and Zoning Code 22.24.150 Uses subject to permits). The Conditional Use Permit process would set the appropriate development standards based upon an approved Facilities Master Plan. The CUP would require a hearing before the Regional Planning Commission.

The existing zoning of the College property is not consistent with its land use designation (P, Public Facilities). Rezoning the site to a designation that allows college uses and is consistent with the Public Facilities designation would help to bring the zoning into conformance with the General Plan. Therefore, this rezoning would not result in a significant land use impact from a land use planning perspective. The impacts of the project that would be

allowed to occur under this rezoning, if required, are the subject of this EIR. As described above in Chapter IV, Environmental Setting, the Los Angeles Community College District is a “superior agency,” and therefore the project may be exempt from local land use regulations including the County’s planning policy and zoning regulations.

Culver City General Plan

Most of the goals set forth in the General Plan Land Use Element, with their supporting objectives and policies, are not directly applicable to the proposed project. The proposed project would not interfere with the attainment of the City’s general’s goals (see above, under Land Use Compatibility, for discussion of conflicts with plans for Culver City Park). The project’s relationship to these goals is described as follows:

Goal: Residential neighborhoods that offer residents the qualities of a peaceful, small-town environment.

Although the proposed project generally would not affect existing residential neighborhoods that offer a peaceful, small-town environment, it would result in the potential for localized aesthetic and noise impacts on those residential units closest to the campus along the west side of Freshman Drive.

Goal: Economic vitality that serves the community and protects the quality of life.

This goal is generally not applicable to the proposed project because it does not involve a commercial use. However, to some extent, the increase in the number of students and faculty at the campus may generate existing business for commercial uses in the area.

Goal: An open space, urban forest, urban design network that links neighborhoods and business, and instills civic pride.

This goal is generally not applicable to the proposed project.

Goal: A community that provides recreational, historical and cultural opportunities.

The proposed project would help further this goal in that it would provide additional and improved recreational facilities at the campus, which would at times be used by local athletic leagues and schools for sports events.

Goal: Clear and consistent guidance for balanced growth.

This goal is generally not applicable to the proposed project.

Goal: Ample and efficient City services and infrastructure.

This goal, along with its supporting objectives and policies, addresses the provision and improvement of City services and as such is generally not applicable to the proposed project. The proposed project would not substantively affect existing public services and utilities, as described in Sections V.K and V.N of this EIR.

Baldwin Hills Park Master Plan

The proposed improvements to the WLAC campus would not conflict with the Baldwin Hills Park Master Plan since the Park Master Plan does not envision recreational facilities adjacent to the campus. As described above, a portion of the Alternative B second access road would involve use of an existing road that provides access to the scenic overlook within the Vista Pacifica Scenic Site. The Park Master Plan envisions improvements to this scenic overlook including a restaurant/visitor center. The use of this roadway as a second access for the college

would not interfere with the ability to access the overlook and may help to further the plan for improved facilities by providing certain roadway improvements and bringing more visitors to the site.

Cumulative Impacts

Section IV, Environmental Setting, provides a list of related projects that are planned or are under construction in the project area. There are no projects that are proposed adjacent to the campus, and therefore, the proposed project in combination with these related projects is not expected to raise cumulative land use issues.

Mitigation Measures

The above analysis identified one potentially significant land use compatibility impact and no significant impacts with respect to the project's consistency with land use plans and policy. The one potentially significant impact would occur during Phase II if the Alternative A second access route is selected. For the reasons described above, this route may result in a significant compatibility impacts with Culver City Park. The following mitigation measures would help to reduce this impact.

- LU-1** Should the College elect Alternative A for the second access route, the College shall coordinate with the City of Culver City to identify potential alignments and/or traffic calming measures that would minimize potential conflict with existing and planned Culver City Park uses.

Significant Project Impacts After Mitigation

Although the mitigation measure identified above would help to reduce the potential for significant land use compatibility impacts on Culver Park, until a specific alignment is selected and measures are identified that can adequately reduce impacts on the Park, this impact is considered a significant unavoidable land use impact. This impact would occur during Phase II if second access Alternative A is selected.