

DRAFT INITIAL STUDY / MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Volume I

New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse

For the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles

LEAD AGENCY:

**Judicial Council of California
Administrative Office of the Courts
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102-3688**

PREPARED BY:

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

µg/m ³	micrograms per cubic meter
AB	Assembly Bill
ABAG	Association of Bay Area Governments
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AOC	Administrative Office of the Courts
APN	County of Los Angeles assessor's parcel number
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
BAAQMD	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
BGS	below ground surface
BGSF	building gross square feet
BMP	best management practice
CAA	Clean Air Act
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDC	California Department of Conservation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game
CHRIS	California Historic Research Information System
CM	Commercial Manufacturing Zone
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CUP	conditional use permit
CWA	Clean Water Act
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DGSF	departmental gross square feet

DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
GHG	greenhouse gas
gpm	gallons per minute
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
IESNA	Illuminating Engineering Society of North America
IRWP	Incremental Recycled Water Program
JWPCP	Joint Water Pollution Control Plant
LARA	Los Angeles Integrated Waste Management Authority
Ldn or DNL:	Day-Night Average Sound Level
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LID	low-impact development
LOS	level of service
LUFT	leaking underground fuel tanks
M-2	Light Manufacturing Zone
MADF	Main Adult Detention Facility
MND	mitigated negative declaration
mgd	million gallons per day
mph	miles per hour
MWD	Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
HCM	highway capacity manual
NOx	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NRCS	National Resources Conservation Service
PM2.5	particulate matter that is 2.5 microns or less in diameter
PM10	particulate matter that is 10 microns or less in diameter
PPV	peak particle velocity

R-3	Multiple Residential Zone
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
RMS	root square mean (in noise, refers to amplitude or voltage)
ROG	reactive organic gases
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SCWA	Los Angeles County Water Agency
SERRF	Southeast Resource Recovery Facility
SLIC	Spills, Leaks, Investigative Cleanup
SRFD	Southeast Los Angeles Fire Department
SUSMP	Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
UBC	Uniform Building Code
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Service
UST	underground storage tank
VdB	vibration decibels
WSA	Water Supply Assessment
WTP	wastewater treatment plant
O3	Ozone

CHAPTER 1

Initial Study – Overview

- 1. Project Title:** New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse,
Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles
- 2. Lead Agency Name and Address:** Judicial Council of California
Administrative Office of the Courts
2860 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95833
- 3. Contact Person and Phone Number:** Laura Sainz, Environmental Program Manager
Office of Court Construction and Management
California Administrative Office of the Courts
(916) 263-7992
- 4. Project Location:** 4070-4100 Ardmore Avenue and
4095-4101 Firestone Boulevard
City of South Gate, CA
APNs 6210-005-055, -057, -058, and -059
- 5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:** California Administrative Office of the Courts
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688
- 6. General Plan Designation(s):** Commercial and Industrial
- 7. Zoning Designation(s):** M2 (Light Manufacturing)
CM (Commercial Manufacturing)

CHAPTER 2

Project Description

Introduction

The Judicial Council of California (Judicial Council) is the rule-making arm of the California court system. It was created by an amendment to article VI of the California Constitution in 1926. In accordance with the California Constitution and under the leadership of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of California, the Judicial Council is responsible for ensuring the "consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice." The Judicial Council's staff agency, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), is responsible for implementing the Judicial Council's policies. In that role, the AOC is responsible for implementation of the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002, the landmark legislation that shifted the governance of courthouses from California counties to the State of California.

Following the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002, the AOC conducted a survey to assess the physical condition of the state's courthouses. The survey showed that 90 percent of courthouses need improvements to protect the safety and security of the employees, visitors, and jurors who are served by California's courts. In October 2008, the Judicial Council identified 41 "Immediate and Critical Needs" courthouse projects to prioritize future courthouse construction and renovation. The 41 projects are located in 34 counties across the state.

Also in 2008, Senate Bill (SB) 1407 was passed by the state legislature and signed by the Governor. SB 1407 identified funding to address the physical condition of the state's courthouses. The funding identified is made up of court fines and fees and does not draw from the state's general fund.

The proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) is one of the 41 "Immediate and Critical Needs" projects identified by the Judicial Council in 2008. For the Proposed Project, the AOC would consolidate the existing Huntington Park Courthouse and the former South Gate Courthouse to this area by constructing a new courthouse in the City of South Gate for the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles (Superior Court). The proposed new courthouse would be a three-story (approximately 35 feet in height) facility with approximately 118,000 gross building square feet that would comprise nine courtrooms, surface parking, and secure underground parking spaces, and new landscaping.

Statutory Authority and Requirements

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and pursuant to Section 15063 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, the Judicial Council typically acts as the lead agency for courthouse projects.¹ The Judicial Council has delegated this authority to the AOC. In its evaluation of a Proposed Project, the AOC must consider a project's potential environmental impacts by preparing the appropriate environmental documentation as specified by CEQA. If the AOC finds no evidence that the project (either as proposed, or as modified to include mitigation measures) may cause a significant physical effect on the environment, then the AOC will (1) find that the Proposed Project would not have a significant effect on the environment and (2) adopt a Negative Declaration (or Mitigated Negative Declaration) for the Proposed Project. Alternatively, if the AOC finds evidence that any aspect of the Proposed Project may cause a significant effect on the environment (even after the addition of mitigation measures), the AOC will determine that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is necessary to analyze project-related and cumulative environmental impacts. The AOC may decide to prepare a Negative Declaration (or Mitigated Negative Declaration) rather than an EIR only if "there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record before the lead agency" that significant effects may occur.²

This document is an Initial Study. The purpose of this document is to provide an environmental basis for (1) the level of CEQA review for the Proposed Project (*i.e.*, a Negative Declaration or an EIR), and (2) any subsequent discretionary actions the AOC may take on the Proposed Project. The final document is not a policy document and its approval and/or certification by the AOC neither presupposes nor mandates any actions on the part of other agencies from whom permits and/or other discretionary approvals would be required for the Proposed Project.

This document is also subject to public review. During the public review period, stakeholders, public agencies, and the general public may provide written comments to the AOC on environmental issues relative to the Proposed Project. The AOC will include all comments received and provide written responses in the final CEQA document.

Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines identifies specific requirements for an Initial Study, including the following:

- A description of the Proposed Project, including the location of the Proposed Project
- A description of the environmental setting
- The identification of environmental effects by use of a checklist, matrix or other method, provided that entries on a checklist or other form are briefly explained to indicate that there is some evidence to support the entries
- A discussion of ways to mitigate significant effects identified, if any
- An examination of whether the Proposed Project is compatible with existing zoning, plans, and other applicable land use controls
- The name of the person or persons who prepared or participated in preparation of the Initial Study

¹ *California Public Resources Code*, Sections 21000-21177.

² *California Public Resources Code*, Section 21080.

Incorporation by Reference

Pertinent documents used in the development of this Initial Study have been cited and incorporated in accordance with Sections 15148 and 15150 of CEQA Guidelines, to eliminate the need for inclusion of voluminous engineering and technical reports as appendices. This Initial Study has incorporated by reference the City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General Plan).³

The Proposed Project

The AOC proposes to construct a three-story, approximately 118,000-gross-building-square-foot courthouse containing nine courtrooms in the City of South Gate for the Superior Court.⁴ The Proposed Project would also include surface parking and secured, underground spaces. The new courthouse would consolidate two court facilities: the existing Huntington Park Courthouse, which has six courtrooms, and the former South Gate Courthouse, which had three courtrooms. The proposed new courthouse would also have 95 non-judicial staff and 45 County of Los Angeles staff. The proposed new facility would provide a full range of services, including civil trials, criminal trial processing, deliberation rooms, holding areas for in-custody detainees, and building facility support space. It would also include court administration space, including the court clerk, court security operations, jury assembly areas and public space.

Existing Setting

The Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, is one of the largest trial court systems in the nation, with more than 600 judicial officers serving approximately 9.8 million County of Los Angeles residents. The court operates in approximately 52 facilities, including leased facilities, with approximately 600 courtrooms across the 4,000-square-mile County of Los Angeles. These facilities represent about 30 percent of all courtrooms and total court-occupied area in the state. In 2006, approximately 2.7 million cases were filed in this court, representing 30 percent of all cases filed in the state of California. In addition to the 600 judicial officers, the Superior Court employs more than 5,400 staff.

The Superior Court is divided into 12 geographical districts, except for the Juvenile and Mental Health Courts, which have county-wide jurisdiction. The Southeast Court District is one of the 12 districts. The Southeast Court District comprises six existing courthouses: Huntington Park, Whittier, Bellflower, Norwalk, Downey, and Los Padrinos (juvenile only). With the exception of mental health and juvenile cases, this court serves more than 30 communities in southeast Los Angeles County. The proposed new courthouse would serve the communities of Huntington Park and South Gate, as well as other surrounding communities.

³ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

⁴ Gross building square footage is the sum of all areas on all floors of a building measured from the exterior faces of exterior walls, including areas such as circulation passages and shafts and mechanical space. Square footage of space (“departmental building square feet,” or simply “square feet”) devoted to active program space within the building makes up only a portion of any given building.

The Proposed Project would affect two courthouse facilities:

1. Huntington Park Courthouse

The existing Huntington Park Courthouse is located in the City of Huntington Park and is part of a larger campus of buildings that includes the city hall, police department, county health department, and a public library. The courthouse is a small, two-story building that was constructed in 1954. It has six courtrooms and is only partially occupied by the court. The building is considered physically and functionally deficient for courthouse operations due to the following issues:

- Judicial officers and staff do not have secure parking
- Judicial officers and staff do not have secure routes from the parking area into the courthouse and must walk through public hallways to their chambers and offices
- On-site parking is not adequate to accommodate all court users, visitors, staff and judicial officers
- The courthouse building is surrounded by public areas, including a neighborhood park, and its perimeter cannot be secured
- The building is not compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Due to overall space deficiencies, problems with ADA accessibility, and security issues, only civil, traffic, and small claims matters have been processed at this facility since July 19, 2004.

2. Former South Gate Courthouse

The former South Gate Courthouse was closed in mid-2004. It had three courtrooms, but was severely overcrowded and had major security issues. Until its closure in 2004, the former South Gate Courthouse provided needed court services to the Southeast Court District and, in particular, to the residents of the City of South Gate. The building that housed the former courthouse is still vacant. Since the closure of the South Gate Courthouse, criminal cases cannot be processed locally for the City of Huntington Park, City of South Gate, and some of the other neighboring communities of southeast Los Angeles County.

Project Site, Layout, and Vicinity

The Proposed Project site is located in the City of South Gate. The City of South Gate is located approximately twelve miles from downtown Los Angeles, directly south of the City of Huntington Park. The City of South Gate was incorporated in 1923 and is approximately seven and one-half square miles in size. The City of South Gate is the 16th largest in the County of Los Angeles, with a population of approximately 100,000 residents. The site for the Proposed Project is located on two contiguous parcels at 4070-4100 Ardmore Avenue and 4095-4101 Firestone Boulevard, in the City of South Gate, County of Los Angeles, California (Figure 2-1, *Regional Vicinity Map*, and Figure 2-2, *Local Vicinity Map*). The County of Los Angeles assessor's parcel numbers (APNs) for the properties are 6210-005-055, 6210-005-057, 6210-005-058, and 6210-005-059. Two conceptual site plans are being considered for the Proposed Project: (1) Scheme A provides for the public entrance and a drop-off area on the west side of the proposed courthouse and the Sallyport on the east side, and (2) Scheme B provides for the public entrance



FIGURE 2-2
Local Vicinity Map

and a drop-off area on the south side of the proposed courthouse and the Sallyport on the west side (Figure 2-3, *Conceptual Site Plan, Scheme A*, and Figure 2-4, *Conceptual Site Plan, Scheme B*). The Sallyport allows for secure transportation of litigants to and from the courthouse. No release of prisoners would occur at the site. The final layout would provide landscaping, including a planting edge along the western boundary of the Proposed Project adjacent to the backyards of residences located on San Miguel Avenue. The planting edge may consist of landscaped berms, trees, hedges, vine covered walls, or similar features to provide a visual buffer between the courthouse and the residential lots.

The property is bound by Ardmore Avenue on the north, Firestone Boulevard on the south, San Miguel Avenue on the west, and private warehouse or storage buildings that face Otis Street on the east. In addition, San Vincente Avenue traverses the center of the Proposed Project site. Train tracks are located directly north of Ardmore Avenue between Ardmore Avenue and Independence Avenue. The property consists of four contiguous parcels arranged in an L-shaped pattern, totaling approximately nine acres, which are currently developed with seven buildings constructed between 1956 and 1996 (existing buildings) with surrounding paved yards and parking areas. The existing buildings total approximately 328,623 square feet in area and are generally described as office, warehouse, and storage buildings. The existing buildings are single-story structures of various construction types including wood frame, concrete block, and sheet metal siding. The western portion of the property is currently owned and occupied by Leggett & Platt, a manufacturer of mattress components. The warehouse on this property is a two-story reinforced concrete structure. The eastern portion of the property is owned by Masco Building Products. One tenant is present on the Masco Building Products parcel: Pan American Auto Sales, a used-car lot located at the southern end of the parcel. Pacific Clothing, a cutter and processor of fabrics, recently occupied the northern end of the parcel, but has since left; this parcel and the central part of the Masco Building Products parcel are currently unoccupied.

According to the South Gate General Plan community design element, the Proposed Project area is located within the Firestone Industrial District.⁵ Moreover, the existing City of South Gate zoning districts that cover the project consist of the following: M-2 (Light Manufacturing Zones) and CM (Commercial Manufacturing Zone). Both M-2 and CM zones within the Proposed Project area are compatible for mixed-use development. In addition, the South Gate General Plan community design element lists civic/institutional development as a highly desired use within the Firestone Industrial District.⁶ With the exception of heavy manufacturing, all uses would require a conditional use permit (CUP). In addition, residential uses and schools are prohibited within this zoning. Industrial development is located adjacent to the Proposed Project site on the east, South Gate Middle School and commercial land uses are located directly across Firestone Boulevard, to the south, and residential development is located adjacent to the west boundary of the Proposed Project site. South Gate Middle School and the residential properties are zoned as R-3 (Multiple Residential) and the commercial land uses are zoned as CM (Commercial Manufacturing Zone).

⁵ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development and Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

⁶ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development and Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

LEGEND



Proposed Project Boundary



0 75 150 225 Feet



FIGURE 2-3
Conceptual Site Plan, Scheme A

LEGEND



Proposed Project Boundary



0 75 150 225 Feet



FIGURE 2-4
Conceptual Site Plan, Scheme B

Proposed Project Design Principles and Objectives

The AOC's proposed courthouse design would conform to the specifications of the *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*:⁷

- Court buildings shall represent the dignity of the law, the importance of the activities within the courthouse, and the stability of the judicial system.
- Court buildings shall represent an individual expression that is responsive to local context, geography, climate, culture, and history and shall improve and enrich the sites and communities in which they are located.
- Court buildings shall represent the best in architectural planning, design, and contemporary thought, and shall have requisite and adequate spaces that are planned and designed to be adaptable to changes in judicial practice.
- Court buildings shall be economical to build, operate, and maintain.
- Court buildings shall provide a healthy, safe, and accessible environment for all occupants.
- Court buildings shall be designed and constructed using proven best practices and technology with careful use of natural resources.

The AOC would also apply the following codes and standards to the Proposed Project:

1. California Building Code (edition in effect as of the commencement of the schematic design phase of the Proposed Project)
2. California Code of Regulations, Title 24
3. California Energy Code
4. ADA and ADA Accessibility Guidelines (Section 11)
5. Division of the State Architect's Access Checklist

The Proposed Project would implement sustainable elements throughout its design, operation, and maintenance. Pursuant to the *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*, courthouse projects shall be designed for sustainability and, at a minimum, to the standards of a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification rating. The Proposed Project would be designed to the LEED specifications and the AOC would seek a LEED Silver rating by the U.S. Green Building Council.⁸ The Proposed Project would be designed to incorporate low-impact development (LID) standards for water management. The City of South Gate is proposing LID standards similar to those of the County of Los Angeles, and these are anticipated to be approved prior to the initiation of construction for the Proposed Project. The AOC will evaluate these standards and anticipates compliance to the extent feasible.

The AOC would implement the Proposed Project in compliance with standard conditions and requirements for state and/or federal regulations or laws that are independent of CEQA compliance. The standard conditions and requirements serve to prevent specific resource impacts. Typical standard conditions and requirements include the following:

⁷ Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. [Updated 21 April 2006] Reissued 1 March 2010 with Amendment 1. *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*. San Francisco, CA.

⁸ U.S. Green Building Council. "LEED Rating Systems." Available at: <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=222>

1. The California Building Code
2. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
3. Public Resources Code Section 5097 for the discovery of unexpectedly encountered human remains
4. South Coast Air Quality Management District rules
5. Migratory Bird Treaty Act recommendations

Using the *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*, the Proposed Project would incorporate specific design elements into the construction and operation to reduce to below a level of significance any potential environmental effects. For example, the parties constructing and/or operating the Proposed Project would use best management practices (BMPs) and technologies aimed at conserving natural resources and limiting operating costs over the life of the building. Because the AOC is incorporating these design features into the Proposed Project, the design features do not constitute mitigation measures as defined by CEQA.

Project Construction Schedule and Activities

The Proposed Project includes a three-story, 118,000-building-gross-square-foot courthouse facility surrounded by landscaping and parking. A parapet or penthouse would be constructed on top of the building to conceal mechanical equipment. The design would be consistent with other facilities recently constructed by the AOC, and would include location-specific considerations. Design criteria for the Proposed Project are taken from the *California Trial Court Facilities Standards* approved by the Judicial Council in 2006.⁹

The AOC plans to acquire the proposed courthouse site from the County of Los Angeles in 2011. Construction of the Proposed Project would begin in 2013 and would be completed by mid to late 2015. The Proposed Project would be completed in approximately 24 months seven construction phases: 1) demolition, 2) mass site grading, 3) excavation (for the basement level), 4) fine site grading, 5) paving, 6) construction, and 7) architectural coatings. Approximately nine acres would be scheduled for construction. No more than two and one-quarter acres would be disturbed daily during grading, and approximately 30,000 cubic yards of soil would be exported off site.

It is anticipated that construction of the Proposed Project may require the type of equipment described in Table 2-1, *Anticipated Construction Equipment*. The information contained in Table 2-1 will be used in the assessment of potential construction impacts to air quality, ambient noise levels, and traffic and circulation for the Proposed Project.

⁹ Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. [Updated 21 April 2006] Reissued 1 March 2010 with Amendment 1. *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*. San Francisco, CA.

**TABLE 2-1
ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT**

Type of Equipment/Vehicle	Quantities (Approximate)	Approximate Duration of On-Site Construction Activity (days)
Concrete/industrial saw	1	21
Rubber tired dozer	1	64
Tractors/loaders	1	456
Tractors/loaders	1	21
Water truck	1	521
Grader	1	43
Cement and mortar mixers	4	22
Pavers	1	22
Paving equipment	1	22
Rollers	1	22
Welders	3	370
Forklifts	2	370
Cranes	1	370
Generator sets	1	370

The Proposed Project would include the construction of a courthouse building, including secure parking; installation of a Sallyport; modification of utilities; construction of a surface parking lot; and implementation of site improvements. There would be no off-site construction staging areas, but construction personnel would park in nearby off-site parking areas. The AOC anticipates that a small number of construction workers would access the site during construction. The small number of worker vehicles accessing the site during construction would park on site or in plentiful nearby parking (public street parking and nearby parking lots). When possible, workers would carpool to the site and would report to a designated on-site staging area. The construction contractors would install fencing around the perimeter of the construction area.

The AOC would implement BMPs and other measures throughout the construction phase to avoid or minimize potential impacts. BMPs and other measures include the following:

- General measures:
 - Designate a contact person for public interaction.
 - Inform the community through the use of a website that identifies the upcoming work and potential impacts to the surrounding communities.
- Storm water, water quality, and soil erosion management measures:
 - The AOC's construction contracts would include provisions that require the AOC's contractor to obtain the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB's) approval of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Prior to the start of construction, the AOC would ensure the preparation of a SWPPP and the RWQCB's approval of the plan.

- The construction contractor would incorporate BMPs consistent with the guidelines provided in the California Storm Water Best Management Practice Handbooks: Construction.¹⁰
- For construction during the rainy season, the construction contractor would implement erosion measures that may include mulching, geotextiles and mats, earth dikes and drainage swales, temporary drains, silt fence, straw bale barriers, sandbag barriers, brush or rock filters, sediment traps, velocity dissipation devices, and/or other measures.
- Wherever possible, the construction contractor would perform grading activities outside the normal rainy season to minimize the potential for increased surface runoff and the associated potential for soil erosion.
- Air quality management measures. The construction contractor would do the following:
 - Apply water or a stabilizing agent when necessary to exposed surfaces in sufficient quantity at least two times a day to prevent generation of dust plumes.
 - Moisten or cover excavated soil piles to avoid fugitive dust emissions.
 - Discontinue construction activities that generate substantial dust blowing on unpaved surfaces during windy conditions.
 - Install and use a wheel-washing system to remove bulk material from tires and vehicle undercarriages before vehicles exit the Proposed Project site.
 - Cover dump trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials with tarps or other enclosures that would reduce fugitive dust emissions.
 - Ensure that all construction and grading equipment is properly maintained.
 - Ensure that construction personnel turn off equipment when equipment is not in use.
 - Ensure that all vehicles and compressors utilize exhaust mufflers and engine enclosure covers (as designed by the manufacturer) at all times.
 - When feasible, use electric construction power for construction operations, in lieu of diesel-powered generators to provide adequate power for man/material hoisting, crane, and general construction operations.
 - Suspend heavy-equipment operations during first-stage and second-stage smog alerts.
- Noise and vibration measures. The construction contractor would do the following:
 - Install sound barriers around the perimeter of the Proposed Project site when engaging in activities that would produce a prolonged noise exposure exceeding the ambient noise threshold of sixty-five dB.

¹⁰ California Stormwater Quality Association. 2003. *California Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbooks: Construction*. Menlo Park, CA. Available at: http://www.cabmphandbooks.com/Documents/Construction/Section_3.pdf

- Ensure that construction operations do not use impact pile drivers.
- When feasible, for construction operations use electric construction power in lieu of diesel-powered generators to provide adequate power for man/material hoisting, crane, and general construction operations.
- Designate a noise-disturbance coordinator who would respond to any complaints about construction noise generated by the Proposed Project. The disturbance coordinator would determine the cause of the noise complaint (*e.g.*, operating outside of permitted hours, bad muffler, *etc.*) and would implement reasonable measures to address the complaint.
- The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 states that if construction occurs during the nesting season (February 15 through August 31) in areas where native bird species have been identified and where tree removal is necessary. The construction contractor would do the following:
 - Retain a qualified biologist to conduct an intensive nest search in all trees slated for removal before construction begins; if nests with young are found, the AOC shall not remove any trees with active nests until the young have fledged or the nest(s) have been abandoned for other reasons. Ensure that construction operations do not use impact pile drivers.
 - Delay tree removal until August 31 to ensure reproductive success for native species, if any, using the Proposed Project site for nesting purposes.
 - Obtain a permit from the City of South Gate if construction activities involve planting, caring for, maintaining, removing, relocating, pruning or cutting and replacing public trees.

As previously noted, construction activities would include excavation, grading, framing, paving, and coating. All grading would be completed on site, and the construction contractor would reuse and store on site the maximum amount of material possible to minimize export. Excavation operations at the proposed courthouse site would export material to an off-site location and replace and compact the remaining material on site. Construction would commence no earlier than 8:00 a.m. and would typically cease no later than 6:00 p.m. on weekdays. Construction work might occur on Saturdays; if so, it would commence no earlier than 9:00 a.m. and cease no later than 6:00 p.m.

Required Approvals

Since the AOC is the lead agency for the Proposed Project, and is acting for the State of California on behalf of the Judicial Council of California, local government land use planning and zoning regulations do not apply to the Proposed Project. The AOC is responsible for approving the CEQA document and the Proposed Project. The State of California Public Works Board must also approve acquisition of the site for the Proposed Project.

References

California Public Resources Code, Section 21080.

California Public Resources Code, Sections 21000-21177.

California Stormwater Quality Association. 2003. *California Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbooks: Construction*. Menlo Park, CA. Available at:
http://www.cabmphandbooks.com/Documents/Construction/Section_3.pdf

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. [Updated 21 April 2006] Reissued 1 March 2010 with Amendment 1. *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*. San Francisco, CA.

U.S. Green Building Council. "LEED Rating Systems." Available at:
<http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=222>

CHAPTER 3

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The Proposed Project could potentially affect the environmental factor(s) checked below. The following pages present a more detailed checklist and discussion of each environmental factor.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forest Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology, Soils and Seismicity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology and Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Land Use Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise and Vibration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation and Traffic | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by Lead Agency)

On the basis of this Initial Study:

- 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 “potentially 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. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- 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, no further environmental documentation is required.

L F Sainz

Signature

Laura F. Sainz
Printed Name

April 22, 2011

Date

Administrative Office of the Courts
For

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

3.1 Aesthetics

<u>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</u>	<u>Potentially Significant Impact</u>	<u>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</u>	<u>Less Than Significant Impact</u>	<u>No Impact</u>
AESTHETICS — Would the Proposed Project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway corridor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Project (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to aesthetics that would require the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Aesthetics at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to the South Gate General Plan 2035,² California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Scenic Highway System,³ site reconnaissance, information contained in the Visual Resources Technical Report prepared for the Proposed Project (Appendix A, *Visual Resources Technical Report*), and a review of the site plans for the Proposed Project.

State CEQA Guidelines recommend consideration of the following four questions when addressing the potential for significant impacts to aesthetics.

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to aesthetics in relation to scenic vistas. Typically, a scenic vista is defined as a view of an area that is visually or aesthetically pleasing. Aesthetic components of a scenic vista often include (1) scenic quality, (2) sensitivity level, and (3) view access. An example of a scenic vista would be the area encompassing a lake or a parkland water amenity and the viewshed extending from the lake to the highest visible point surrounding the lake. An urban setting can also offer scenic vistas from such features as architectural style, landscaping, and/or the historical significance of a development. The skyline of downtown Los Angeles is an example of an urban

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

³ California Department of Transportation. Accessed on: 28 February 2011. “Officially Designated State and County Scenic Highways.” Available at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/schwy.htm>

setting that offers an aesthetically appealing view from surrounding areas. The City of South Gate does not identify any scenic vistas in or around the Proposed Project area. Neither the downtown Los Angeles skyline nor any other significant scenic vista is readily visible from the Proposed Project site or surrounding area under existing conditions. Therefore, the Proposed Project site is not considered to have a high level of sensitivity for scenic vista impacts.

Given the relatively level terrain of the surrounding urban area, the Proposed Project site is only visible from the immediate surrounding area. Under CEQA, an impact to scenic vistas is considered significant if a view of a public scenic vista, scenic resource, or public object of aesthetic significance is substantially impeded or obstructed from a public vantage point. Typically, views from a particular private vantage point are not protected. In *Topanga Beach Renters Assn. v. Department of General Services*, the Court of Appeal held, “[t]he issue is not whether [the project] will adversely affect particular persons, but whether [the project] will adversely affect the environment of persons in general.”⁴ There are no designated public scenic vistas, scenic resources, or public objects of aesthetic significance identified on, or in the vicinity of, the Proposed Project site. The existing buildings range in height and include structures of one and two stories. The Proposed Project would entail a three-story building; however, the total proposed square footage would be substantially less than what is currently on the site. The Proposed Project would not be substantially different in height or mass in comparison to the existing commercial and industrial structures in the vicinity. In addition, views would remain unchanged along the perimeter of the Proposed Project site, between buildings, on sidewalks, and in adjacent roadways. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to aesthetics related to scenic vistas. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (b) *Would the Proposed Project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway corridor?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to aesthetics in relation to causing substantial damage to scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway. The California Scenic Highway System, which was created with the enactment of the State Scenic Highways Law in 1963, preserves and protects scenic highway corridors from changes that would diminish their aesthetic value.⁵ Caltrans designates scenic highway corridors and determines highways that are eligible for the California Scenic Highway Program. The California Streets and Highways Code includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation or are designated as scenic highways. There are no officially designated state scenic highways or eligible state scenic highways within the vicinity of the Proposed Project site or within the City of South Gate. There are also no locally designated scenic highways within the City of South Gate. The County of Los Angeles (County) has only one officially state-designated scenic highway: State Route 2, also known as the Angeles Crest Highway; and two County-designated scenic highways: Mulholland Highway and Malibu Canyon–Las Virgenes Canyon Highway (Table 3.1-1, *State and County Designated Scenic Highways*).

⁴ *Topanga Beach Renters Assn. v. Department of General Services*. 1976. 58 Cal.App.3d 188, 195.

⁵ *California Streets and Highways Code*, Section 260–284.

**TABLE 3.1-1
STATE AND COUNTY DESIGNATED SCENIC HIGHWAYS**

Designation	Highway	Location
State Scenic Highway	Angeles Crest Highway, Route 2	From 2.7 miles north of Interstate 210 to the San Bernardino County Line
County Scenic Highway	Mulholland Highway	From State Route 1 to Kanan Dume Road From West of Cornell Road to East of Las Virgenes Road
County Scenic Highway	Malibu Canyon – Las Virgenes Highway	From State Route 1 to Lost Hills Road

SOURCES:

1. California Department of Transportation. [Updated 7 December 2007] Accessed on: 11 March 2011. "California Scenic Highway Mapping System." Available at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm
2. County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning, November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/generalplan#gp-existing>

The Proposed Project site would not be visible from any of the designated highways, as it is located more than ten miles from the closest designated highway. The Proposed Project area does not include any significant tree, rock outcropping, or historic building scenic resources. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to aesthetics related to substantial damage to scenic resources including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (c) *Would the Proposed Project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would not be expected to substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings. As noted in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, lands immediately adjacent to the Proposed Project site include manufacturing, commercial, and residential uses. The existing Proposed Project site is developed with older warehouse buildings and broken pavement. The Proposed Project would provide an updated building styled to meet the strict guidelines of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), including new paving for parking and new landscaping and hardscape, thereby upgrading the visual character of the existing site. As illustrated in the key viewpoints included the Visual Resources Technical Report,⁶ the Proposed Project site is primarily visible from existing sidewalk, adjacent streets, and from some residential, manufacturing, and commercial land uses located in the immediate area. The final Proposed Project design would provide landscaping, including a planting edge along the Proposed Project site's western boundary, adjacent to the backyards of residences located on San Miguel Avenue. The planting edge may consist of landscaped berms, trees, hedges, vine covered walls, or similar features to provide a visual buffer between the proposed courthouse and the residential lots.

The Proposed Project would be compatible with the existing community and does not include development of facilities or land uses that do not currently exist within the surrounding neighborhood. The Proposed Project would not degrade the visual character of the Proposed Project site and its surroundings, but would instead

⁶ Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *Visual Resources Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

enhance the visual character. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to aesthetics related to degradation of the existing visual character of the Proposed Project site or its surroundings. Project impacts would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (d) *Would the Proposed Project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to aesthetics related to the creation of a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the Proposed Project vicinity. The primary sources of light on the Proposed Project site include light emanating from building interiors that passes through windows, automobile headlights, and light from exterior sources (*i.e.*, street lighting, building illumination, *etc.*). Existing sources of light at the Proposed Project site also include light structures in nearby surface parking areas, and security lighting on buildings. The majority of existing building materials on the Proposed Project site are inherently non-reflective, although most buildings contain windows and a few metal finishing features. However, the existing buildings do not provide a significant source of glare during the daytime when sunlight is present. The Proposed Project would create a level of light and glare that is consistent with existing light and glare conditions at the Proposed Project site.

Any additional sources of nighttime light and glare (*i.e.*, from additional vehicle traffic) from implementation of the Proposed Project would be considered to be below the level of significance. The Proposed Project would not entail large expanses of reflective or mirrored building surfaces or glare-producing light fixtures. The primary sources of nighttime light and glare at the Proposed Project site would include light emanating from building interiors that passes through windows, light from the headlights of parked and traveling vehicles, and light from exterior sources. The Proposed Project would include some pedestrian, security, and parking lighting on site intended to enhance the visual character of the buildings and provide necessary pedestrian safety lighting for workers and visitors. The Proposed Project would also be LEED certified, and would incorporate low-level, downward-facing lights to illuminate the entrance of buildings, stairs, and areas adjacent to designated parking. Lighting placement and selection would be carefully considered to reduce the spillover of glare and light to adjacent land uses. There are residences located in the areas adjacent to the Proposed Project site, but they would not be adversely or significantly affected by the Proposed Project's safety lighting or building lighting. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to aesthetics related to the creation of a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the Proposed Project vicinity. Impacts from the Proposed Project to aesthetics would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

California Department of Transportation. Accessed on: 28 February 2011. "Officially Designated State and County Scenic Highways." Available at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/schwy.htm>

California Department of Transportation. [Updated 7 December 2007] Accessed on: 11 March 2011.
"California Scenic Highway Mapping System." Available at:
http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm

California Streets and Highways Code, Section 260–284.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/generalplan#gp-existing>

Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *Visual Resources Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

Topanga Beach Renters Assn. v. Department of General Services. 1976. 58 Cal.App.3d 188, 195.

3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

<u>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</u>	<u>Potentially Significant Impact</u>	<u>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</u>	<u>Less Than Significant Impact</u>	<u>No Impact</u>
<p>AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES — In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department 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.</p>				
<p>Would the Proposed Project:</p>				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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)]?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to agricultural and forest resources, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Agricultural resources at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to the California Department of Conservation (CDC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), The City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General Plan),² and the County of Los Angeles General Plan.³ Forest resources at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to Public Resources Code section 12220(g), the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Timberland Site Classifications,⁴ South Gate General Plan,⁵ and County of Los Angeles General Plan.⁶

¹ California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. 2004. *Important Farmland in California, 2002*. Sacramento, CA.

² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

³ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/generalplan#gp-existing>

⁴ California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 3 January 2002. *Timberland Site Class on Private Lands Zoned for Timber Production*. Technical Working Paper. Sacramento, CA.

State CEQA statutes define agricultural land as “prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or unique farmland, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture land inventory and monitoring criteria, as modified for California,” which is herein collectively referred to as “Farmland.”⁷

California Public Resources Code section 12220(g) defines forest land as “land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.” Public Resources Code section 4526 defines “timberland” as land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection as experimental forest land that is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of any commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. Commercial species shall be determined by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection for each district after consultation with the respective forest district committees.⁸

The State CEQA Guidelines recommend the consideration of the four following questions when addressing the potential for significant impacts to agricultural and forest resources.

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to agricultural resources in relation to the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. The South Gate General Plan community design element identifies the Proposed Project area within the Firestone Industrial District, which is a mixed-use district. According to the South Gate General Plan community design element, highly desired uses within the Firestone Industrial District are Civic/Institutional, Boulevard High, Office/Research and Development, Light Industrial/Flex and Open Space.⁹ Also according to the South Gate General Plan, the Proposed Project area is located within zones M-2 (Light Manufacturing Zone) and CM (Commercial Manufacturing Zone) in the Firestone Industrial District.¹⁰ The M-2 zones allow for compatible mixed uses that include commercial, industrial, and office areas.¹¹

⁵ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

⁶ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/generalplan#gp-existing>

⁷ *California Public Resources Code*, Sections 21000-21177, Section 21060.1(a).

⁸ *California Public Resources Code*. 2009. Section 4526, “Timberland.” Available at: <http://law.justia.com/codes/california/2009/prc/4521-4529.5.html>

⁹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

¹⁰ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

¹¹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

The most recent mapping of the City of South Gate for Farmland undertaken by the CDC FMMP was reviewed for the Proposed Project site.¹² Based on the review of the land-use designations and applicable Important Farmland map for the Proposed Project site, there are no Farmlands located in, or immediately adjacent to, the Proposed Project site. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to agricultural resources related to the conversion of Farmland. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (b) *Would the Proposed Project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to agricultural resources in relation to a conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. Based on an analysis of the South Gate General Plan community design and green city elements, there is no agricultural land use zoned within the jurisdiction of the City of South Gate. The Proposed Project site, which is privately owned, is located within the M-2 zone of the Firestone Industrial District. This zone is intended for mixed uses that would include manufacturing. Based on the review of the City of South Gate's land use classification (commercial and industrial), zoning designation, and Williamson Act contract status for the Proposed Project site, there would be no expected impacts to agricultural resources related to a conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (c) *Would the Proposed Project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land [as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)], timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production [as defined by Government Code section 51104(g)]?*

No Impact. As previously noted, local zoning at the Proposed Project site is manufacturing within an urban area. There are no areas zoned as forest land, timberland, or timberland production on or within the vicinity of the Proposed Project site.¹³ The City of South Gate is an urban area, and the Proposed Project would entail the development of a courthouse building. The proposed development at this site would be consistent with existing development and existing uses in the area, which include commercial and industrial buildings. As such, the Proposed Project would not conflict with zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land [as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)], timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production [as defined in Government Code section 51104(g)]. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to forest or timberland zoning, and no further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

¹² California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. 2004. *Important Farmland in California, 2002*. Sacramento, CA.

¹³ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. July 1961. Zoning Map of the City of South Gate. Available at: <http://www.sogate.org/download/index.cfm/fuseaction/download/cid/622/>

- (d) *Would the Proposed Project involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to agricultural and/or forest lands in relation to changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use, or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. The City of South Gate is a highly urbanized area. According to the South Gate General Plan community design and green city elements, both agricultural and forest resources are lacking within the Proposed Project area.¹⁴ In addition, based on a site visit and review of the most recent mapping of the City of South Gate for Farmland undertaken by the CDC FMMP, there is no Farmland on the Proposed Project site.¹⁵ Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to agricultural resources related to changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in the conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. 2004. *Important Farmland in California, 2002*. Sacramento, CA.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 3 January 2002. *Timberland Site Class on Private Lands Zoned for Timber Production*. Technical Working Paper. Sacramento, CA.

California Public Resources Code. 2009. Section 4526, "Timberland." Available at: <http://law.justia.com/codes/california/2009/prc/4521-4529.5.html>

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*, South Gate, CA.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Green City Element*. South Gate, CA.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. July 1961. Zoning Map of the City of South Gate. Available at: <http://www.sogate.org/download/index.cfm/fuseaction/download/cid/622/>

City of South Gate. 13 July 2010. *City of South Gate Municipal Code, Zoning Ordinance*. South Gate, CA.

¹⁴ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

¹⁵ California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. 2004. *Important Farmland in California, 2002*. Sacramento, CA.

County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Los Angeles, CA.

3.3 Air Quality

<u>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
AIR QUALITY — 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 Proposed Project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to air quality, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Air quality at the Proposed Project site was evaluated with regard to the County of Los Angeles General Plan,² the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS),³ the California Ambient Air Quality Standards,⁴ the Clean Air Act (CAA), and the Air Quality Impact Technical report prepared for the Proposed Project (Appendix B, *Air Quality Impact Technical Report*).⁵ The conclusions reflect guidelines established by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*.⁶

The Proposed Project site is located in SCAQMD's Southeast Los Angeles County Source Receptor Area 12, which is served by the Lynwood Monitoring Station, located approximately two miles southeast of the Proposed Project site at 11220 Long Beach Boulevard in the City of Lynwood. Criteria pollutants monitored at the Lynwood Monitoring Station include Ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less (PM_{2.5}), and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). This station does not monitor PM₁₀ or SO₂. The nearest, most representative monitoring station that gathers PM₁₀ and SO₂ data

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Los Angeles, CA.

³ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2008. *National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)*. Available at: <http://www.epa.gov/air/criteria.html>

⁴ California Air Resources Board. 2008. *California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS)*. Available at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/caaqs/caaqs.htm>

⁵ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2008. Federal Clean Air Act, Title I, “Air Pollution Prevention and Control.” Available at: <http://www.epa.gov/air/caa/>

⁶ South Coast Air Quality Management District. 1993. *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*. Diamond Bar, CA.

is located approximately eight miles northeast of the Proposed Project site in the Central Los Angeles County Subregion (No. 1) at 1630 North Main Street, Los Angeles. The potential for the Proposed Project to result in new or substantially more adverse significant impacts to air quality was evaluated in relation to five questions recommended for consideration by the State CEQA Guidelines.⁷

a) *Would the Proposed Project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?*

Less than Significant. Impacts to air quality related to whether the Proposed Project conflicts with or obstructs implementation of the applicable air quality plan would be expected to be below the level of significance.

The Proposed Project is located in the City of South Gate, which is located within the SCAQMD portion of the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB). Ozone (O₃) is the pollutant of greatest concern throughout the SCAB. No single source is responsible for most of the emissions of O₃ precursors, nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds; many sources are spread throughout the basin. The SCAB is designated as a federal-level nonattainment area for the O₃ and PM_{2.5} air quality standards, but the basin has recently improved from nonattainment to attainment with the NAAQS for both NO₂ and carbon monoxide CO.⁸ The SCAB is a state-level nonattainment area for the O₃ and PM_{2.5} air quality standards, and the County of Los Angeles is a state-level nonattainment area for the O₃, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}, based on the California Ambient Air Quality Standards.⁹

The most recent update to the SCAQMD Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) was prepared for air quality improvements to meet both state and federal Clean Air Act planning requirements for all areas under AQMP jurisdiction. This update was adopted by California Air Resources Board (CARB) for inclusion in the State Implementation Plan on September 27, 2007. The AQMP sets forth strategies for attaining the federal PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} air quality standards and the federal eight-hour O₃ air quality standard, as well as meeting state standards at the earliest practicable date. With the incorporation of new scientific data, emission inventories, ambient measurements, control strategies, and air quality modeling, this 2007 AQMP focuses on O₃ and PM_{2.5} attainments.

Existing air quality within the Proposed Project vicinity is characterized by a mix of local emission sources that include stationary activities, such as space and water heating, landscape maintenance, and consumer products; and mobile sources, including primarily automobile and truck traffic. Motor vehicles are the primary source of pollutants within the Proposed Project vicinity because they have the potential to generate elevated localized concentrations of CO, termed CO “hotspots.” Section 9.4 of the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* identifies CO as a localized problem requiring additional analysis when a project is likely to expose sensitive receptors to CO hotspots.¹⁰

⁷ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

⁸ South Coast Air Quality Management District. June 2007. *Final 2007 Air Quality Management Plan*. Diamond Bar, CA.

⁹ South Coast Air Quality Management District. June 2007. *Final 2007 Air Quality Management Plan*. Diamond Bar, CA.

¹⁰ South Coast Air Quality Management District. 1993. *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*. Diamond Bar, CA.

The SCAQMD evaluates the Proposed Project in terms of air pollution thresholds.¹¹ The Proposed Project would be considered significant if implementation of the Proposed Project were to result in daily operation, daily construction, or operation-related emissions that cause or exceed the SCAQMD thresholds of significance.

As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of this Initial Study, the Proposed Project would require construction and use of new facilities totaling approximately 118,000 building gross square feet, on a total site area of nine acres. Up to two and one-quarter acres of land area would be disturbed daily during construction. In addition, construction of the Proposed Project, as currently conceived, would occur daily for a period of approximately 24 months. Because the Proposed Project would require demolition and construction activities, implementation of the Proposed Project would be expected to create activity that would generate criteria pollutant emissions. In addition, during operation of the Proposed Project, criteria pollutant emissions would be generated daily from space and water heating and vehicle trips generated by employees, jurors, and visitors to and from the Proposed Project site. However, the analysis undertaken in the Air Quality Technical Report prepared for the Proposed Project indicates that criteria pollutant emissions would not be expected to exceed SCAQMD thresholds of significance.¹² Therefore, impacts to air quality associated with the Proposed Project in relation to its consistency with the applicable air quality plan would be expected to be below the level of significance. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: Although impacts would be expected to be below the level of significance and the Proposed Project would comply with all SCAQMD rules, including Rule 403 Fugitive Dust, the following mitigation measures have been provided to reduce emissions to the maximum extent feasible and to specify ways in which the Proposed Project would continue to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403 Fugitive Dust to reduce, prevent, or mitigate constructed-related emissions from the Proposed Project.

Measure Air-1

During construction, water or a stabilizing agent shall be applied to exposed surfaces in sufficient quantity to prevent the generation of dust plumes. Soil moistening shall be required to treat exposed soil during construction of the project to avoid fugitive dust emissions, ensure compliance with current air quality standards, and avoid contributions to cumulative increases in criteria pollutants. Prior to advertising for construction bids, the plans and specifications shall be reviewed by the Administrative Office of the Courts to ensure that the plans and specifications require the construction contractor to ensure that soil shall be moistened not more than fifteen minutes prior to the daily commencement of soil-moving activities and three times a day, or four times a day under windy conditions (when winds exceed twenty-five miles per hour as instantaneous gusts). Active construction operations shall utilize one or more of the applicable best available control measures to minimize fugitive dust emissions from each fugitive dust source type that is part of construction. The lead agency shall also ensure that the construction plans and specifications require ground cover to be replaced in disturbed areas as quickly as practicable, and that the Administrative Office of the Courts appoint a construction relations

¹¹ South Coast Air Quality Management District. 1993. *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*. Diamond Bar, CA.

¹² Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles County Courthouse Air Quality Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

officer to act as a community liaison concerning on-site construction activity, including addressing issues related to fugitive dust generation.

Measure Air-2

Moistening or covering of soil piles shall be required during construction to avoid fugitive dust emissions, ensure compliance with current air quality standards, and avoid contributions to cumulative increases in critical pollutants. Prior to advertising for construction bids for the project, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall ensure that the plans and specifications include the requirement for the construction contractor to ensure that excavated soil piles are watered hourly for the duration of construction or covered with temporary coverings.

Measure Air-3

During construction, track-out shall not extend twenty-five feet or more from an active operation, and track-out shall be removed at the conclusion of each workday. Track-out is defined by the South Coast Air Quality Management District as any bulk material that adheres to and agglomerates on the exterior surface of motor vehicles, haul trucks, and equipment (including tires) that have been released onto a paved road and can be removed by a vacuum sweeper or a broom sweeper under normal operating conditions. Prior to advertising for construction bids, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall ensure that the plans and specifications include the requirement for the construction contractor to ensure that the track-out shall not extend twenty-five feet or more from an active operation and that it would be removed at the conclusion of each workday. Street sweepers should also comply with South Coast Air Quality Management District Rules 1186 and 1186.1 and use reclaimed water, if available.

Measure Air-4

A wheel-washing system shall be installed and used to remove bulk material from tires and vehicle undercarriages before vehicles exit the project site. Washing of wheels leaving the construction site shall be required to avoid fugitive dust emissions, ensure compliance with current air quality standards, and avoid contributions to cumulative increases in criteria pollutants. The Administrative Office of the Courts shall ensure that the plans and specifications include the requirement for the construction contractor to clean adjacent streets of tracked dirt at the end of each workday or install on-site wheel-washing facilities.

Measure Air-5

All trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials shall be covered (*e.g.*, with tarps or other enclosures that would reduce fugitive dust emissions). All transport of soils to and from the project site shall be conducted in a manner that avoids fugitive dust emissions and ensures compliance with current air quality standards. Prior to advertising for construction bids, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall ensure that the plans and specifications for each element of the project include the requirement for the construction contractor to cover all loads of dirt leaving the site or to leave sufficient freeboard capacity in the truck to prevent fugitive dust emissions in transit to the disposal site.

Measure Air-6

Traffic speeds on unpaved roads shall be limited to fifteen miles per hour. Prior to advertising for construction bids the Administrative Office of the Courts shall ensure that the plans and specifications include the requirement for the construction contractor to limit traffic speed to fifteen miles per hour.

Measure Air-7

Heavy-equipment operations shall be suspended during first-stage and second-stage smog alerts. Prior to advertising for construction bids the Administrative Office of the Courts shall ensure that the plans and specifications include the requirement for the construction contractor to ensure heavy-equipment operations are suspended during first-stage and second-stage smog alerts.

Measure Air-8

All equipment shall be turned off when not in use. Engine idling of all equipment used during both construction and operation/maintenance shall be minimized and/or limited to no more than five minutes in accordance with state law. All equipment engines shall be maintained in good operating condition and in proposed tune per manufacturers' specifications. Prior to advertising for construction bids, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall ensure that the plans and specifications include the requirement for the construction contractor to ensure the construction equipment meet the aforementioned criteria. All on-site construction equipment shall be required to meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Tier 2 or higher emissions standards according to the following:

- April 1, 2010, to December 31, 2011: All off-road diesel-powered construction equipment greater than fifty horsepower shall meet Tier 2 off-road emissions standards. In addition, all construction equipment shall be outfitted with the best available control technology devices certified by California Air Resources Board. Any emissions control device used by the contractor shall achieve emissions reductions that are no less than what could be achieved by a Level 2 or Level 3 diesel emissions control strategy for a similarly sized engine as defined by California Air Resources Board regulations.
- January 1, 2012, to December 31, 2014: All off-road diesel-powered construction equipment greater than fifty horsepower shall meet Tier 3 off-road emissions standards. In addition, all construction equipment shall be outfitted with best available control technology devices certified by California Air Resources Board. Any emissions control device used by the contractor shall achieve emissions reductions that are no less than what could be achieved by a Level 3 diesel emissions control strategy for a similarly sized engine as defined by California Air Resources Board regulations.
- After January 1, 2015: All off-road diesel-powered construction equipment greater than fifty horsepower shall meet the Tier 4 emission standards, where available. In addition, all construction equipment shall be outfitted with best available control technologies devices certified by California Air Resources Board. Any emissions control device used by the contractor shall achieve emissions reductions that are no less than what could be achieved by a Level 3 diesel emissions control strategy for a similarly sized engine as defined by California Air Resources Board regulations. A copy of each unit's certified tier specification, best available control technology documentation, and California Air Resources Board or South Coast Air Quality Management District operating permit shall be provided at the time of mobilization of each applicable unit of equipment.

Measure Air-9

Wherever possible, contractors shall use materials that do not require painting or use pre-painted materials. To minimize emissions of volatile organic compounds, contractors shall use high-pressure, low-volume paint applicators with a minimum transfer efficiency of at least fifty percent and coatings and solvents with a volatile organic compound content lower than required under South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 1113, Architectural Coatings:

- Clear wood finishes: 275 grams/liter
- Floor coatings: 50 grams/liter
- Sealers: waterproofing sealers 100 grams/liter; sanding sealers 275 grams/liter; all other sealers 100 grams/liter
- Shellacs: clear 730 grams/liter; pigmented 550 grams/liter
- Stains: 100 grams/liter

Significance after Mitigation. Less than significant.

- b) *Would the Proposed Project violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?*

Less than Significant. Impacts to air quality related to a violation of any air quality standard or a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation would be expected to be below the level of significance.

Construction-related air quality impacts may result from combustion emissions from on-site construction and mobile equipment and from fugitive dust emissions from demolition, grading, and site preparation activities. The Proposed Project would be expected to entail several construction components, such as demolition, mass site grading, excavation, fine site grading, and paving. As previously noted, the total area that would be under construction is approximately nine acres, and the total daily area of disturbance would be up to two and one-quarter acres. Construction of the Proposed Project would be expected to last 24 months. However, the analysis undertaken in the Air Quality Technical Report for the Proposed Project indicates that impacts related to violating any air quality standard or contributing substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation would be below the level of significance.¹³

Operational phase impacts may occur from increased equipment emissions as a result of maintenance for new buildings and landscape, from increased emissions from new building support systems as a result of space and water heating, and from increased vehicle emissions generated from trips to and from the Proposed Project site. Once constructed, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in an increase in employees and visitors to the Proposed Project site, which would cause daily vehicle trips. Other sources of emissions during operation of the Proposed Project would be limited; therefore, the operational function of the Proposed Project as a new courthouse would not be expected to cause a new air quality violation.

¹³ Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles County Courthouse Air Quality Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

Therefore, impacts to air quality in relation to violating applicable air quality standards or contributing to an existing or projected air violation would be expected to be below the level of significance. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: Although impacts would be expected to be below the level of significance, incorporation of mitigation measures Air-1 through Air-9 would further reduce construction-phase criteria pollutant emissions to the maximum extent feasible. The mitigation measures would ensure and specify the ways in which the Proposed Project would continue to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403 Fugitive Dust to reduce, prevent, or mitigate particulate matter emissions from the construction phase of the Proposed Project.

Significance after Mitigation. Less than significant.

- c) *Would the Proposed Project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions, which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?*

Less than Significant. Impacts to air quality related to a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Proposed Project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard would be below the level of significance.

The Proposed Project site is located within the SCAB, which is designated as a nonattainment area according to the state and federal O₃ and PM_{2.5} air quality standards. During construction of the Proposed Project, primary emissions would include O₃ precursor emissions and particulate matter. O₃ precursor emissions from vehicles traveling to and from the Proposed Project site would be the primary source of impacts to air quality associated with operation of the Proposed Project. The analysis undertaken in the Air Quality Technical Report for the Proposed Project indicates that criteria pollutant emissions would be below the level of significance.¹⁴ No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: Although impacts would be expected to be below the level of significance, incorporation of mitigation measures Air-1 through Air-9 would further reduce construction-phase criteria pollutant emissions to the maximum extent feasible and ensure continued compliance with SCAQMD Rule 403 Fugitive Dust to reduce, prevent, or mitigate particulate matter emissions from the construction phase of the Proposed Project.

Significance after Mitigation. Less than significant.

- d) *Would the Proposed Project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

Less than Significant. Impacts related to the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations would be expected to be below the level of significance.

¹⁴ Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Air Quality Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

Construction of the Proposed Project would occur mainly within a roughly nine acre parcel bound by Ardmore Avenue on the north, Firestone Boulevard on the south, San Miguel Avenue on the west and private warehouse or storage buildings that face Otis Street on the east. Sensitive receptors may be exposed to construction emissions such as fugitive dust, combustion emissions, and diesel particulate matter. Operation of the Proposed Project may also expose sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the Proposed Project site to emissions from equipment and buildings as a result of building maintenance activities, space heating, and water heating, and to emissions from automotive combustion as a result of increased vehicle trips. However, the analysis undertaken in the Air Quality Technical Report for the Proposed Project indicates that criteria pollutant emissions would be below the SCAQMD localized emission thresholds, and impacts related to the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations would be expected to be below the level of significance.¹⁵ No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: Air-1 through Air-9 would reduce construction-phase criteria pollutant emissions to the maximum extent feasible and ensure compliance with SCAQMD Rule 403 Fugitive Dust to reduce, prevent, or mitigate particulate matter emissions from the construction phase of the Proposed Project.

Significance after Mitigation. Less than significant.

e) *Would the Proposed Project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?*

Less than Significant. Impacts related to objectionable odors would be expected to be below the level of significance. Construction of the Proposed Project would require the use of diesel-powered equipment. Odors associated with emissions from diesel equipment may be considered unpleasant by some people. Because approximately 118,000 square feet of buildings would be developed and diesel-powered equipment would be used daily during the construction phase, construction of the Proposed Project would be expected to result in impacts related to the creation of objectionable odors. However, these construction-related impacts to air quality would be expected to be below the level of significance because the use of diesel-powered equipment would occur only temporarily during the construction period. In addition, the Proposed Project would implement best management practices and mitigation measures during the construction of the Proposed Project that would further reduce the potential impact. Therefore, with regard to the potential to create objectionable odors during construction, expected impacts from the Proposed Project would be below the level of significance.

The Proposed Project would operate as a courthouse and, as such, the operation of the Proposed Project would not be expected result in objectionable odors. Therefore, impacts from the Proposed Project to air quality standards in relation to creation of objectionable odors would be below the level of significance. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

¹⁵ Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Air Quality Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

References

- California Air Resources Board. 2008. *California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS)*. Available at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/caaqs/caaqs.htm>
- California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.
- County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Los Angeles, CA.
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- South Coast Air Quality Management District. 1993. *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*. Diamond Bar, CA.
- South Coast Air Quality Management District. June 2007. *Final 2007 Air Quality Management Plan*. Diamond Bar, CA.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2008. *National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)*. Available at: <http://www.epa.gov/air/criteria.html>

3.4 Biological Resources

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES— Would the Proposed 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact on biological resources, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Biological resources at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to the County of Los Angeles General Plan and the City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General Plan);² the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) data;³ a query of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB)⁴ for the U.S. Geological Service (USGS) 7.5-minute

¹ California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Green City Element*, South Gate, CA.

³ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Habitat and Resource Conservation. [Updated 1 October 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. “Wetlands Mapper.” Web site. Available at: <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/Mapper.html>

⁴ California Department of Fish and Game. 2002. *Rarefind 4: A Database Application for the Use of the California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Data Base*. Sacramento, CA.

series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle in which the Proposed Project is located;⁵ and a review of published and unpublished literature germane to the Proposed Project.

State CEQA Guidelines recommend the consideration of the following six questions when addressing the potential for significant impacts to biological resources.

- a) *Would the Proposed Project have a substantial adverse effect on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species?*

No Impact: Implementation of the Proposed Project would not be expected to significantly impact, either directly, indirectly, or through habitat modifications, any endangered, threatened, or rare species as listed in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.^{6,7} Sensitive plant species are those that are proposed, are candidates, or are listed as threatened or endangered by the USFWS or the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and those plants that are considered sensitive species by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). According to the South Gate General Plan, there are no known threatened or endangered species and there is very sparse wildlife in the Proposed Project area, though migratory or native birds may be found in natural areas, such as South Gate Park or areas around the Los Angeles River.⁸ The Proposed Project would replace and consolidate the existing Huntington Park Courthouse and the former South Gate Courthouse. The Proposed Project site is currently developed with eight buildings, generally described as office, warehouse, and storage buildings, and surrounding paved yards and parking areas. The Proposed Project site does not contain any native flora. The surrounding property is largely characterized by industrial, commercial, and residential properties with a school located to the south.⁹

A search of the CNDDDB using Rarefind 4 was conducted using a five-mile buffer. The search was performed to develop a preliminary list of sensitive species and biological resources that could potentially occur in the Proposed Project vicinity (Table 3.4-1, *Federally Listed and State-listed Species with the Potential to Occur within the Proposed Project Vicinity*). No sensitive plant or animal species have been documented on the Proposed Project site, as many of the species noted have been extirpated. In addition, the Proposed Project site contains no native vegetation capable of supporting wildlife. Therefore, no impact would be expected to occur. No further analysis is warranted.

⁵ U.S. Geological Survey. [Updated 4 April 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. "Map Locator." Web site. Available at: http://store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/usgs/maplocator/%28xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd&layout=6_1_61_48&uiarea=2&ctype=areaDetails&carearea=%24ROOT%29/.do

⁶ *California Code of Regulations*, Title 14, Section 670.2 or 670.5.

⁷ *Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 50, Sections 17.11 and 17.12.

⁸ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. "Conservation Enhancement of Natural and Biological Resources." *South Gate General Plan 2035, Green City Element*. South Gate, CA.

⁹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. "Existing Land Use Conditions." *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

**TABLE 3.4-1
FEDERALLY LISTED AND STATE-LISTED SPECIES WITH THE POTENTIAL TO
OCCUR WITHIN THE PROPOSED PROJECT VICINITY**

Species	Status	Habitat	On-site Potential
Brand's star phacelia (<i>Phacelia stellaris</i>)	FC, CNPS 1B.1	Freshwater marsh, marsh, swamp, wetland	L
California orcutt grass (<i>Orcuttia caliornica</i>)	FE, SE, CNPS 1B.1	Chenopod scrub, coastal bluff scrub, coastal scrub	L
Coast (San Diego) horned lizard (<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>)	CSC	Coastal bluff scrub, coastal scrub	L
Prostrate vernal pool navarretia (<i>Navarretia prostrata</i>)	CNPS 1B.1	Coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland, vernal pool, wetland	L
Southern tarplant (<i>Centromadia parryi ssp. australis</i>)	CNPS 1B.1	Alkali playa, brackish marsh, chaparral, coastal scrub, lower montane coniferous forest, marsh and swamp, Mojavean desert scrub, wetland	L
Southwestern willow flycatcher (<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>)	FE, SE	Aquatic, artificial flowing waters, artificial standing waters	L

KEY:

CNPS 1B.1 = California Native Plant Society Rare
 CSC = Species of Special Concern (California Department of Fish and Game)
 FC = federal candidate
 FE = federally endangered
 L = low potential to occur on-site
 SE = state endangered

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (b) *Would the Proposed Project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not be expected to have an effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the CDFG or USFWS. The Proposed Project site is currently developed, located in an urban environment, and does not contain any riparian habitat or other natural habitat as designated by the CDFG and USFWS. Therefore, no impact to riparian or other natural habitat would be expected to occur. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (c) *Would the Proposed Project 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?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not be expected to have an 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. As determined by a review of the USGS 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle in

which the Proposed Project is located, and review of the National Wetlands Inventory Map for the South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle, it was determined that no blue-line drainages or wetlands that would support riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities are present within the Proposed Project site.^{10,11} The Proposed Project site is currently developed and located in an urban setting and does not contain any wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.¹² Therefore, no impact would occur, and no further study of this issue is required.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (d) *Would the Proposed Project 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?*

No Impact: Implementation of the Proposed Project would not be expected to interfere with the movement of a 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. The Proposed Project site is urbanized and developed with paved asphalt, buildings with non-native landscaping; eight buildings, generally described as office, warehouse, and storage buildings; surrounding paved yards and parking areas. The Proposed Project site does not contain any watercourse for wildlife movement. The non-native trees located on the site could be used as a greenbelt for avian species migrating through the area, as they are immediately adjacent to industrial and commercial developments that do not provide any other appropriate habitat for plants or wildlife.¹³

The perimeter of the Proposed Project site includes landscaping with large, non-native trees that are suitable for nesting birds. Overwintering and migrating avian species, such as the Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), could potentially use this habitat for nesting and foraging; therefore, the trees are an important habitat for migratory, non-game, native bird species that are protected by international treaty under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.¹⁴ Interfering with this habitat by disturbance or removal of the trees could result in a significant impact. However, if construction occurs during the nesting season (February 15 through August 31) in areas where native bird species have been identified and where tree removal is necessary, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) shall implement best management practices (BMPs) to minimize potential impacts to below the level of significance, including the following:

- Retain a qualified biologist to conduct an intensive nest search in all trees slated for removal before construction begins; if nests with young are found, the AOC shall not

¹⁰ U.S. Geological Survey. [Updated 4 April 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. "Map Locator." Web site. Available at: http://store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/usgs/maplocator/%28xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd&layout=6_1_61_48&uiarea=2&ctype=areaDetail&carearea=%24ROOT%29/.do

¹¹ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Habitat and Resource Conservation. [Updated 1 October 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. "Wetlands Mapper." Web site. Available at: <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/Mapper.html>

¹² U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Habitat and Resource Conservation. [Updated 1 October 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. "Wetlands Mapper." Web site. Available at: <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/Mapper.html>

¹³ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Habitat and Resource Conservation. [Updated 1 October 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. "Wetlands Mapper." Web site. Available at: <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/Mapper.html>

¹⁴ *Code of Federal Regulations*. 1972. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1344.

remove any trees with active nests until the young have fledged or the nest(s) have been abandoned for other reasons. Ensure that construction operations do not use impact pile drivers

- Delay tree removal until August 31 to ensure reproductive success for native species, if any, using the site for nesting purposes

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(e) *Would the Proposed Project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not be expected to conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. The City of South Gate Public Works Department is responsible for its tree preservation and protection policy. The Municipal Code defines a public tree as any single or multi-stemmed plant normally reaching heights of fifteen feet or more in maturity, regardless of its current level of maturity, with one-half or more of its trunk or branches on or above public property.¹⁵ No person, except for a person undertaking official business for the City of South Gate, shall plant, remove, relocate, damage, excessively prune or cut, or encroach into the protected zone of any public tree within the City of South Gate without first obtaining a permit from the director of public works and paying the required fee. In addition, California native oaks are specifically protected by County of Los Angeles ordinances. The ordinances prohibit destruction of Valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), California live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), and any tree of the oak genus that is indigenous to California.¹⁶ This excludes scrub oaks and nursery-grown oaks.

Aerial and site photographs were used to identify trees on the Proposed Project site.¹⁷ There are no known sensitive or native biological resources in the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Project site. No protected biological resources are present on site; therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with any local policies, ordinances, or adopted conservation plans protecting biological resources.¹⁸ Although the Proposed Project site contains large trees used in landscaping that could be removed during construction activities, none of the trees is native. No trees designated for preservation and protection in the City of South Gate Tree Preservation and Protection Municipal Code are located on the Proposed Project site. Therefore, no impact would be expected to occur. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

¹⁵ *City of South Gate Municipal Code*, "Tree Preservation and Protection." Available at: <http://codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/>

¹⁶ *City of Los Angeles Municipal Code*, Chapter IV, Public Welfare, Article 6, "Preservation of Oak Trees," Section 46.00, "Oak Tree Regulations." Available at: http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll?f=templates&fn=default.htm&vid=amlegal:lamc_ca

¹⁷ Petro, Shelby and John Ivanov, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA. 19 October 2009. Site visit to New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Project Site in South Gate, CA.

¹⁸ California Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife & Habitat Data Analysis Branch. April 2005. *California Natural Diversity Database*. Sacramento, CA.

- (f) *Would the Proposed Project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project site is not located within an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. As such, no impact would be expected to occur. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 670.2 or 670.5.

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

California Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife & Habitat Data Analysis Branch. April 2005.
California Natural Diversity Database. Sacramento, CA.

California Department of Fish and Game. 2002. *Rarefind 4: A Database Application for the Use of the California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Data Base*. Sacramento, CA.

City of Los Angeles Municipal Code, Chapter IV, Public Welfare, Article 6, “Preservation of Oak Trees,” Section 46.00, “Oak Tree Regulations.” Available at:
http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll?f=templates&fn=default.htm&vid=amlegal:lamc_ca

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Green City Element*, South Gate, CA.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009.
“Conservation Enhancement of Natural and Biological Resources.” *South Gate General Plan 2035, Green City Element*. South Gate, CA.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. “Existing Land Use Conditions.” *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

Code of Federal Regulations, Title 50, Sections 17.11 and 17.12.

Code of Federal Regulations. 1972. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1344.

Petro, Shelby and John Ivanov, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA. 19 October 2009. Site visit to New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Project Site in South Gate, CA.

South Gate Municipal Code, “Tree Preservation and Protection.” Available at:
<http://codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Habitat and Resource Conservation. [Updated 1 October 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. “Wetlands Mapper.” Web site. Available at:
<http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/Mapper.html>

U.S. Geological Survey. [Updated 4 April 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. "Map Locator." Web site.
Available at:

http://store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/usgs/maplocator/%28xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd&layout=6_1_61_48&uiarea=2&ctype=areaDetails&carearea=%24ROOT%29/.do

3.5 Cultural Resources

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
CULTURAL RESOURCES — Would the Proposed Project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast LA Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to cultural resources, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. Cultural resources at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to a record search conducted at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) on February 7, 2011, for historical and archaeological resources; query of Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County for paleontological resources;^{1,2} coordination with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for Native American cultural resources and sacred sites for the USGS 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle.³ In addition, the 2011 edition of the Historic Property Data File for Los Angeles County was searched for listings in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), California Historical Landmarks, and California Points of Historical Interest in the Proposed Project area. The City of South Gate was contacted to determine if any culturally significant landmarks designated under the Chapter 7.68 of the City of South Gate municipal code are located on the Proposed Project site.⁴ Property tax assessment data for the Proposed Project site was also reviewed to determine the number of buildings on the Proposed Project site and their dates of construction. A site reconnaissance was conducted on February 15, 2011.

The potential for the Proposed Project to result in significant impacts to cultural resources was evaluated in relation to the following four questions recommended for consideration by the State CEQA Guidelines.

¹ Thomas, Roberta, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA. 11 February 2011. Letter to Mr. Dave Singleton, Native American Heritage Commission, Sacramento, CA.

² Thomas, Roberta, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA. 11 February 2011. Letter to Dr. Sam McLeod, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, CA.

³ Thomas, Roberta, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA. 11 February 2011. Letter to Mr. Dave Singleton, Native American Heritage Commission, Sacramento, CA.

⁴ Lefever, Steven A, City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment, South Gate, CA. 15 March 2011. Telephone communication with Roland Ok, Environmental Compliance Analyst, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA.

- a) *Would the Proposed Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?*

No Impact. A records search for the Proposed Project was conducted at the SCCIC and with the City of South Gate and a reconnaissance level survey was performed to determine the presence of historical resources within, adjacent, or facing the Proposed Project site. The record search resulted in the determination that no resources within, adjacent to, or facing the Proposed Project site have been listed in the NRHP or CRHR or designated as landmarks or contributors to a historic district. There are four historic structures that have been documented within a one-mile radius of the Proposed Project site. Two of these structures, 3335 ½ Firestone Boulevard and 3725 Tweedy Boulevard, have been evaluated for eligibility for listing in the NRHP and were determined ineligible for nomination. One structure, the Union Pacific Railroad (Nos. 33, 34, and 100), is part of a larger railroad system in the greater Los Angeles area that was previously determined eligible for the NRHP under Criteria A and B; however, it was determined that this small segment no longer retains sufficient integrity to be eligible. The remaining structure, 7812 State Street, has not been formally evaluated for eligibility but was determined through survey evaluation to not meet the criteria for nomination to the NRHP.

As a result of the site reconnaissance and research in the Los Angeles Property Tax Assessor's Property Data, it was determined that there are seven industrial buildings located within the Proposed Project site: 4100 Ardmore Avenue (one building, constructed in 1946), 8625 San Vicente Avenue (four buildings, constructed in 1939, 1949, 1956, and 1982), 4070 Ardmore Avenue (one building, constructed in 1968), and 4101 Firestone Boulevard (one building constructed in 1989). One of the buildings at 8625 San Vicente Avenue and the buildings located at 4070 Ardmore Avenue and 4101 Firestone Boulevard are less than 45 years old and do not appear eligible for inclusion in the CRHR or NRHP and therefore are not considered to be historical resources as defined by CEQA. They have no known exceptional significance in relation to associations with historical events or persons, or outstanding architectural qualities. The other two properties, 4100 Ardmore Avenue and three of the buildings at 8625 San Vicente Avenue, are over 45 years old but do not possess architectural integrity and research does not link any of the buildings to any significant person or event. As a result, these buildings do not appear to be eligible for the NRHP or the CRHR under Criteria A, B, C or D. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to cultural resources related to a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, and no further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- b) *Would the Proposed Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to cultural resources related to a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource. A records search was conducted at SCCIC to determine the presence of known archaeological resources within the Proposed Project site. Coordination was undertaken with the NAHC to identify the presence of known Native American sacred sites. The U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute series, South Gate, topographic quadrangle⁵ was reviewed for previously recorded archaeological resources within the Proposed Project

⁵ U.S. Geological Survey. [1964] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

area and within a one-mile radius. The results of the records search indicate that the Proposed Project site has never been surveyed for the presence of archaeological resources. Twenty-three previous archaeological surveys were conducted within one mile from the Proposed Project site. Although it is not certain whether the Proposed Project site has the potential to yield prehistoric archaeological resources, it is unlikely due to the historical development of the area. The ground surface has been highly disturbed by agricultural activities, landscaping, and the construction of the existing buildings within the Proposed Project area. According to the NAHC, no Native American cultural resources have been documented in the sacred lands file for the Proposed Project site or within one-half mile of the Proposed Project site.⁶ Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to cultural resources related to a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource, and no further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- c) *Would the Proposed Project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?*

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation. The Proposed Project may result in impacts to cultural resources related directly or indirectly to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature; these impacts are expected to be reduced to below the level of significance with the incorporation of mitigation measures. The geology of the Proposed Project site is composed of surficial deposits of younger Quaternary Alluvium (Holocene) as a result of deposition from the Los Angeles River, which currently flows through a concrete channel just east of the Proposed Project site. These younger deposits are underlain by older Quaternary Alluvium. The younger Quaternary deposits do not usually contain significant fossil vertebrates; however, the older Quaternary deposits have the potential to contain significant fossil vertebrates.

A paleontological records search indicates that there are no known vertebrate fossil localities recorded within the Proposed Project site, but that there are fossil localities nearby from the same sedimentary deposits that occur within the Proposed Project site.⁷ The closest known fossil localities, identified as LACM 7701-7702, were recovered at depths as shallow as eleven feet from older Quaternary deposits situated north-northeast of the Proposed Project site in the City of Commerce near the intersection of Atlantic Avenue and the Long Beach Freeway (Interstate 710). These localities produced specimens of fossil threespine stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*), salamander (*Batrachoseps* spp), lizard (*Lacertilia* spp), snake (*Colubridae* spp), rabbit (*Sylvilagus* spp), pocket mouse (*Microtus* spp), harvest mouse (*Reithrodontomys* spp), and pocket gopher (*Thomomys* spp). Without a site-specific geologic investigation, for the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that the older Quaternary deposits would exist at a similar depth on the Proposed Project site. While the Proposed Project site has been substantially disturbed, it is anticipated that excavation for the proposed three-story building plus basement at the Proposed Project site has the potential to exceed eleven feet in depth, and may therefore impact underlying rock units. Substantial excavations should be monitored closely to quickly and efficiently recover any fossil remains without delaying development. Any fossils collected during

⁶ Thomas, Roberta, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA. 11 February 2011. Letter to Mr. Dave Singleton, Native American Heritage Commission, Sacramento, CA.

⁷ Thomas, Roberta, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA. 11 February 2011. Letter to Dr. Sam McLeod, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, CA.

mitigation activities should be placed in an accredited scientific institution. Mitigation of paleontological resource impacts, where and if they are found, would be expected to reduce impacts to below the level of significance through the requirement to fully recover paleontological resources from excavations into older Quaternary Alluvium in accordance with standards for such recovery established by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Therefore, impacts to cultural resources directly or indirectly related to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature would be reduced to below the level of significance by the incorporation of the specified mitigation measures.

Mitigation required: The following mitigation measure will reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources to less than significant.

Measure Cultural-1

The impacts to cultural resources related directly or indirectly to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource from the project shall be reduced to below the level of significance through the salvage and disposition of all paleontological resources that are encountered during ground-disturbing activities involving disturbances of the older fossil-bearing Quaternary alluvium deposits that underlie the project site. All ground-disturbing activities of the construction period shall be monitored for the presence of paleontological resources unless a pre-construction geologic investigation determines that the depth of fossil-bearing Quaternary alluvium deposits exceeds the planned depth of excavation for the Project. The pre-construction geologic investigation for this purpose may be avoided if presence is assumed and paleontological monitoring is conducted during excavation.

Ground-disturbing activities include, but are not limited to, drilling, excavation, trenching, and grading. If paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, the applicant, under the direction of the lead agency, shall be required to and be responsible for salvage and recovery of those resources consistent with standards for such recovery established by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology.⁸

If the disturbance of strata considered highly sensitive for paleontological resources is expected as a result of site-specific geologic investigation, or is assumed in the absence of such an investigation, the applicant, under the direction of the lead agency, shall be responsible for and shall ensure implementation of construction monitoring by a qualified paleontological monitor during all earthmoving activities that involve disturbance of underlying Quaternary Alluvium rock units. The paleontological monitor shall coordinate a pre-construction briefing to provide information regarding the protection of paleontological resources. Construction personnel shall be trained in procedures to be

⁸ Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Accessed 11 December 2008. "Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Nonrenewable Paleontologic Resources: Standard Guidelines." Available at: <http://www.vertpaleo.org/society/polstatconformimpactmig.cfm>

followed in the event that a fossil site or fossil occurrence is encountered during construction. An information package shall be provided for construction personnel not present at the initial pre-construction briefing.

Should a potentially unique paleontological resource be encountered, a qualified paleontologist shall be contacted and retained by the applicant. The Society for Vertebrate Paleontology defines a qualified paleontologist as “A practicing scientist who is recognized in the paleontologic community and is proficient in vertebrate paleontology, as demonstrated by:

1. Institutional affiliations or appropriate credentials;
2. Ability to recognize and recover vertebrate fossils in the field;
3. Local geological and biostratigraphic expertise;
4. Proficiency in identifying vertebrate fossil; and
5. Publications in scientific journals.”⁹

If fossil localities are discovered, the paleontologist shall proceed according to guidelines offered by the Society for Vertebrate Paleontology.¹⁰ This includes the controlled collection of fossil and geologic samples for processing, screen washing to recover small specimens (if applicable), and specimen preparation to a point of stabilization and identification.

All significant specimens collected shall be appropriately prepared, identified, and catalogued prior to their placement in a permanent accredited repository, such as the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. The qualified paleontologist shall be required to secure a written agreement with a recognized repository, regarding the final disposition, permanent storage, and maintenance of any significant fossil remains and associated specimen data and corresponding geologic and geographic site data that might be recovered as a result of the specified monitoring program. The written agreement shall specify the level of treatment (*e.g.*, preparation, identification, curation, and cataloguing) required before the fossil collection would be accepted for storage. In addition, a technical report shall be completed.

Daily logs shall be kept by the qualified paleontological monitor during all monitoring activities. The daily monitoring log shall be keyed to a location map to indicate the area monitored, the date, and the assigned

⁹ Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Accessed 11 December 2008. “Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Nonrenewable Paleontologic Resources: Standard Guidelines.” Available at: <http://www.vertpaleo.org/society/polstatconformimpactmigig.cfm>

¹⁰ Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Accessed 11 December 2008. “Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Nonrenewable Paleontologic Resources: Standard Guidelines.” Available at: <http://www.vertpaleo.org/society/polstatconformimpactmigig.cfm>

personnel. In addition, this log shall include information of the type of rock encountered, fossil specimens recovered, and associated specimen data. Within ninety days of the completion of any salvage operation or monitoring activities, a mitigation report shall be submitted to the lead agency with an appended, itemized inventory of the specimens. The report and inventory, when submitted to the lead agency, will signify the completion of the program to mitigate impacts to paleontological resources.

Significance after Mitigation: Less than Significant.

- d) *Would the Proposed Project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. The results of the archaeological record search at the SCCIC, including a visual search for small and large cemetery icons in the USGS 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle and the NAHC Sacred Lands File search, indicate that no formal cemeteries or Native American burial grounds are located within or in proximity to the Proposed Project site. The ground has been substantially disturbed for the construction of existing industrial buildings and related surface parking located on the Proposed Project site. Although the discovery of human remains is not anticipated during ground-disturbing activities for the Proposed Project, a statutory process for addressing the unanticipated discovery of human remains, delineated in Health and Safety code 7050.5 and Public Resources Code 5097.98, would be followed. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to cultural resources related the disturbance of human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries, and no further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

Lefever, Steven A, City of South Gate Department of Community Development/Redevelopment, South Gate, CA. 15 March 2011. Telephone communication with Roland Ok, Environmental Compliance Analyst, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA.

McLeod, Dr. Sam, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, CA. 7 March 2011. Letter response to Roberta Thomas, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA.

Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Accessed 11 December 2008. "Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Nonrenewable Paleontologic Resources: Standard Guidelines." Available at: <http://www.vertpaleo.org/society/polstatconformimpactmigig.cfm>

Thomas, Roberta, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA. 11 February 2011. Letter to Dr. Sam McLeod, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, CA.

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Sacramento, CA.

U.S. Geological Survey. [1964] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, Topographic
Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

3.6 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

<u>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</u>	<u>Potentially Significant Impact</u>	<u>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</u>	<u>Less Than Significant Impact</u>	<u>No Impact</u>
GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND SEISMICITY — Would the Proposed 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.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to geology, soils, and seismicity, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Geology and soils at the Proposed Project site were evaluated in light of the adopted City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General Plan);² the County of Los Angeles General Plan;³ the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle in which the Proposed Project site is located;⁴ the California Geological Survey;⁵ and the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Maps.⁶

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

³ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Los Angeles, CA.

⁴ U.S. Geological Survey. [1964] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA

⁵ California Geological Survey, Web site. Available at: <http://www.consrv.ca.gov/cgs>

⁶ California Department of Conservation. Web site. Available at: <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/rgm/ap/Pages/Index.aspx>

The State CEQA Guidelines recommend the consideration of the following seven questions when addressing the potential for significant impact to geology and soils.

- (a.i) *Would the Proposed Project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts from exposing people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault. The Proposed Project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Study Area.⁷ However, the Proposed Project site is located approximately five miles from the Newport-Inglewood Fault Zone, which is a known seismically active area. Conformance of the Proposed Project to applicable requirements of California Building Code (CBC) and Uniform Building Code (UBC) would reduce impacts related to the rupture of a surface fault to the maximum extent possible under current engineering practices. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts related to exposing people or structures to potentially substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (a.ii) *Would the Proposed Project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts from exposing people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking. The Proposed Project site is located approximately five miles northeast of the Newport-Inglewood Fault Zone, which is a seismically active region that could potentially result in impacts from seismic shaking. However, conforming to applicable requirements under CBC and UBC (see *a.i.* above) would reduce impacts from strong seismic ground shaking to the maximum extent possible under currently accepted engineering practices. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts related to exposing people or structures to strong seismic ground shaking. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (a.iii) *Would the Proposed Project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts from exposing people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. According to the California Geological Survey,⁸ the Proposed Project site is located within a Seismic Hazard Zone for

⁷ California Department of Conservation. Web site. Available at: <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/rghm/ap/Pages/Index.aspx>

⁸ California Geological Survey. Revised February 2009. Seismic Hazards Zonation Program, Seismic Hazard Zone Map, South Gate. Available at: http://gmw.consrv.ca.gov/shmp/download/pdf/ozn_sgate.pdf

liquefaction, which indicates a potential for permanent ground displacements such that mitigation, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 2693(c), would be required.⁹ However, compliance of the Proposed Project with CBC and UBC (see *a.i* above) standards would only further reduce any potential for impacts resulting from liquefaction. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts from exposing people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. No further analysis is required.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(a.iv) *Would the Proposed Project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts related to exposing people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. The topography of the Proposed Project site and surrounding area can be characterized as flat and consequently would pose no potential risk for landslides.¹⁰ Moreover, no areas susceptible to seismic-induced landslides are shown within the Proposed Project boundary or within one mile of the Proposed Project site, on the USGS 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle. Therefore, due to the absence of steep slopes, there would be no expected impacts from exposing people or structures to potentially substantial adverse effects involving landslides. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(b) *Would the Proposed Project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts related to substantial soil erosion and loss of topsoil. It is anticipated that there would be grading associated with demolition of existing buildings and construction of the proposed courthouse and surface and underground parking spaces. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) would require the construction contractor to incorporate best management practices (BMPs) consistent with the guidelines provided in the *California Storm Water Best Management Practice Handbooks: Construction*.¹¹ The AOC would submit a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to the Regional Water Quality Control Board for approval and would require the construction contractor to implement the SWPPP. In addition, AOC would require the construction contractor to schedule grading activities outside the normal rainy season and to implement erosion-control measures for construction activities that occur during the rainy season. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts related to substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

⁹ California Geological Survey. Seismic Hazard Zoning Program, Public Resources Code Section 2693(c). Available at: <http://www.consrv.ca.gov/cgs/shzp/Pages/SHMPAct.aspx>

¹⁰ U.S. Geological Survey. [1965] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

¹¹ California Stormwater Quality Association. 2003. *California Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbooks: Construction*. Menlo Park, CA. Available at: http://www.cabmphandbooks.com/Documents/Construction/Section_3.pdf

- (c) *Would the Proposed Project be located on 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?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to geology and soils related to being located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Proposed Project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. According to the California Geological Survey, the Proposed Project site is located within a Seismic Hazard Zone for liquefaction, which indicates a potential for permanent ground displacements such that mitigation as defined in Public Resources Code Section 2693(c) would be required.¹² The Proposed Project would incorporate project design elements consistent with CBC and UBC (see *a.i* above) standards, and thus reduce the potential for impacts resulting from any unstable geologic units and soils present at the Proposed Project site. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts related to being located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Proposed Project, and potentially result in on-site or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (d) *Would the Proposed Project 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?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts related to being located on expansive soil, creating substantial risks to life or property. The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works spatial data indicates that the Proposed Project area is underlain by fine, sandy loam soil of the Tujunga association.¹³ The Tujunga series consists of very deep and somewhat excessively drained soils formed in alluvium weathered mostly from granitic sources. However, the geotechnical study that would be conducted in support of the Proposed Project would more adequately determine the potential for expansive soils to be present at the Proposed Project location, and would provide appropriate design requirements, if necessary. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts related to being located on expansive soil that would create substantial risks to life or property. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (e) *Would the Proposed Project site 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?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to geology and soils in relation to being located on 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. The Proposed Project would

¹² California Geological Survey. Revised February 2009. Seismic Hazards Zonation Program, Seismic Hazard Zone Map, South Gate. Available at: http://gmw.consrv.ca.gov/shmp/download/pdf/ozn_sgate.pdf

¹³ County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works. 2003. *Geographic Information Systems Soils Data*. Los Angeles, CA.

not require the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Sewers are available for wastewater disposal at the Proposed Project site. Furthermore, wastewater generated by the Proposed Project would be treated at the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) in the City of Carson, California.^{14,15} The JWPCP currently supports wastewater from the Proposed Project site and would continue to do so following the development of the Proposed Project. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to geology and soils related to the adequate use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. No further analysis would be required.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

California Department of Conservation. Web site. Available at:
<http://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/rghm/ap/Pages/Index.aspx>

California Geological Survey. Seismic Hazard Zoning Program, Public Resources Code Section 2693(c). Available at: <http://www.consrv.ca.gov/cgs/shzp/Pages/SHMPAct.aspx>

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County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Los Angeles, CA.

Frediani, David, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, CA. 10 February 2011. E-mail to Ms. Donna Grotzinger, Senior Environmental Compliance Coordinator, Sapphos Environmental, Inc., Pasadena, CA.

¹⁴ Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 10 March 2011. Web site. “Joint Water Pollution Control Plant.” Available at: http://www.lacsd.org/about/wastewater_facilities/jwpcp/default.asp

¹⁵ Frediani, David, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. 10 February 2011. E-mail to Ms. Donna Grotzinger, Senior Environmental Compliance Coordinator, Sapphos Environmental, Inc.

Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 10 March 2011. "Joint Water Pollution Control Plant." Web site. Available at:
http://www.lacsd.org/about/wastewater_facilities/jwpcp/default.asp

U.S. Geological Survey. [1964] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA

3.7 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS — Would the Proposed Project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have significant environmental impacts due to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that would require the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ GHG emissions generated by the Proposed Project were evaluated based on guidance provided by regulatory publications from the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association,² the State Office of the Attorney General,³ California Air Resources Board,⁴ and the Office of Planning and Research.⁵ According to the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32), GHG emissions are defined as emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

The potential for the Proposed Project to result in new or substantially more adverse significant impacts to GHG emissions was evaluated in relation to the following five questions recommended for consideration by the State CEQA Guidelines.

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to have less than significant impacts related to the generation of GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly.

The primary sources of GHG emissions during construction of the Proposed Project would include construction equipment and automobiles used by the construction workers for their daily commute. The primary source of GHG emissions during operation of the Proposed Project would be the daily vehicle trips generated by people working at and visiting the Proposed Project site, as well as the new buildings’ potential electricity consumption. Given the relatively small nine-acre area that would be scheduled for

¹ California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² California Air Pollution Control Officers Association. January 2008. *CEQA and Climate Change: Evaluating and Addressing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Projects Subject to the California Environmental Quality Act*. Sacramento, CA.

³ California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General. [21 May 2008] Updated 26 September 2008. *The California Environmental Quality Act Addressing Global Warming Impacts at the Local Agency Level*. Sacramento, CA.

⁴ California Air Resources Board. 24 October 2008. *Preliminary Draft Staff Proposal: Recommended Approaches for Setting Interim Significance Thresholds for Greenhouse Gases under the California Environmental Quality Act*. Available at: http://www.opr.ca.gov/ceqa/pdfs/Prelim_Draft_Staff_Proposal_10-24-08.pdf

⁵ California Governor’s Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory. 19 June 2008. *CEQA and Climate Change: Addressing Climate Change through California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Review*. Sacramento, CA.

construction activities and the relatively short 24-month construction schedule of the Proposed Project, GHG emissions associated with both the construction and operation (which would incorporate green building design features) of the Proposed Project would be below the level of significance.⁶ Currently, the existing buildings total approximately 328,623 square feet and are generally described as office, warehouse, and storage buildings. The existing buildings are single-story structures of various construction types, including wood frame, concrete block, and sheet metal siding. The western portion of the property is currently owned and occupied by Leggett & Platt, a manufacturer of mattress components. The warehouse on the Leggett & Platt property is a two-story reinforced concrete structure. The eastern portion of the Proposed Project property is owned by Masco Building Products. One tenant is present on the Masco parcel - Pan American Auto Sales, a used-car lot located at the southern end of the parcel. Pacific Clothing, a cutter and processor of fabrics, recently occupied the northern end of the parcel, but has since left; this parcel and the central part of the Masco Building Products parcel are currently unoccupied. Attainment of LEED credits, energy efficiency, reduction in use of materials and resources, and indoor environmental quality would be integrated into the design features to reduce or prevent GHG emissions associated with the operation of the Proposed Project. Therefore, there would be no anticipated significant GHG emission impacts due to operation of the Proposed Project.⁷

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- b) *Would the Proposed Project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?*

Less than Significant. Impacts from the Proposed Project to GHG emissions, specifically in relation to a conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions, would be below the level of significance.

Assembly Bill (AB) 32 established the goal of reducing GHG emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020. The Proposed Project's incremental impact on GHG emissions would be considered to conflict with the goals of AB 32 if the size, nature, or duration of the construction phase would generate a substantial amount of GHG emissions. It is anticipated that the Proposed Project would take approximately 24 months to construct and would cover an area of approximately nine acres. Heavy-duty construction equipment would be operated during construction of the Proposed Project. The construction duration, the relatively small area under construction, and the nature of the construction activities would be expected to generate GHG emissions, but these emissions would be temporary and would not be considered to be significant on a regional scale.

During the operational phase of the Proposed Project, GHG emissions would occur from daily operation and maintenance of a courthouse and from vehicular trips to and from the Proposed Project site. Daily operational emissions would be result from electricity use for space and water heating, lighting, and use of electrical appliances. However, the Proposed Project's impacts related to potential conflicts with the state's goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 would be below the level of significance.⁸ No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

⁶ Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *Air Quality Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

⁷ Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *Air Quality Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

⁸ Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *Air Quality Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

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- California Air Pollution Control Officers Association. January 2008. *CEQA and Climate Change: Evaluating and Addressing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Projects Subject to the California Environmental Quality Act*. Sacramento, CA.
- California Air Resources Board. 24 October 2008. *Preliminary Draft Staff Proposal: Recommended Approaches for Setting Interim Significance Thresholds for Greenhouse Gases under the California Environmental Quality Act*. Available at:
http://www.opr.ca.gov/ceqa/pdfs/Prelim_Draft_Staff_Proposal_10-24-08.pdf
- California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.
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- California Governor's Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory. 19 June 2008. *CEQA and Climate Change: Addressing Climate Change through California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Review*. Sacramento, CA.
- Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *Air Quality Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

3.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS — Would the Proposed Project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact related to hazards and hazardous materials, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹

Hazardous wastes are by-products of society that can pose a substantial or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly managed. Hazardous wastes possess at least one of four characteristics, including 1) ignitability, 2) corrosivity, 3) reactivity, and/or 4) toxicity, or appear on specific U.S. Environmental Protection Agency lists.²

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² *Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 40, Chapter 1, Part 261.

Hazards and hazardous materials at the Proposed Project site were evaluated based on expert opinion supported by facts, review of an environmental database,³ and the County of Los Angeles General Plan.⁴

State CEQA Guidelines recommend the consideration of the following eight questions when addressing the potential for significant impacts to hazards and hazardous materials.

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to hazards and hazardous materials with respect to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. The existing structures on-site would have to be demolished to allow for the construction of the Proposed Project. Currently, the western portion of the Proposed Project property is occupied by Leggett & Platt, a manufacturer of mattress components. The eastern portion of the Proposed Project property is occupied by two tenants: Pacific Clothing, a cutter and processor of fabrics, was located at the northern end but has since left; this parcel is currently unoccupied, and Pan American Auto Sales, a used-car lot, is located at the southern end. The central part of the eastern portion of the property is unoccupied. The buildings located on site are office, warehouse, and storage buildings. Hazardous wastes are known to be generated at the Leggett & Platt facility located at 4095 Firestone Boulevard. The wastes generated at this facility consist of (1) aqueous solutions with organic residues, which are collected and transported to a waste-transfer station prior to disposal, and (2) waste oil and oil-containing wastes that are collected and transported to a recycler. No other significant amounts of hazardous materials are known to presently exist at the site. Use of these substances is governed by state and federal regulations. While there is no record of site contamination, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) would complete both Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) of the Proposed Project site prior to acquisition. The Phase I and II ESAs will identify any recognized environmental conditions and provide for the appropriate clean-up in compliance with the appropriate state oversight agency(ies) as may be needed to obtain a clearance letter to allow for construction of the Proposed Project.

In addition, existing buildings will be tested for asbestos and lead-based paints prior to demolition and, where they exist, will be removed in accordance with South Coast Air Quality Management District and state and federal requirements.

The Proposed Project would involve the use of minimal hazardous materials during the construction phase, which may include standard cleaning materials, solvents, paints, lubricants, and oils. However, the Proposed Project would not entail the use, beyond regulated parameters, of materials whose transport, use, and disposal is specifically restricted by government regulations. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts from hazards and hazardous materials related to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

³ Environmental Data Resources. 28 February 2011. *The EDR Radius Map™ Report with GeoCheck®*. Inquiry Number: 3001085.2s. Milford, CT.

⁴ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Los Angeles, CA.

- (b) *Would the Proposed Project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts from hazards and hazardous materials in relation to the creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous material. The hazardous waste generated by the mattress component manufacturer, Leggett & Platt, consists of (1) aqueous solutions with organic residues that are collected and transported to a waste transfer station prior to disposal and (2) waste oil and oil-containing wastes that are collected and transported to a recycler. The disposal of hazardous wastes generated at the site is routine and would cease upon AOC purchase of the site, thereby assuring no reasonably foreseeable upset or accident conditions in relation to the Proposed Project. Existing buildings will be tested for asbestos and lead-based paints prior to demolition, and, where they exist, will be removed in accordance with South Coast Air Quality Management District, state, and federal requirements.

The construction and/or operation of the Proposed Project, which is comparable to an office use, would not entail use of significant quantities of hazardous materials. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts from hazards and hazardous materials related to the creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous material. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (c) *Would the Proposed Project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts from hazards and hazardous materials with respect to the emission of hazardous emissions or handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. The schools nearest to the Proposed Project site are South Gate Middle School, located less than 0.10 mile directly south across Firestone Boulevard, and San Gabriel Elementary School, located 0.17 mile to the west.

The Proposed Project site would be used as a courthouse facility, which would not be expected to use significant quantities of hazardous materials that would result in the release of hazardous emissions. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts from hazards and hazardous materials with respect to the emission of hazardous emissions or the handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (d) *Would the Proposed Project be located on a site which 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?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts from hazards and hazardous materials in relation to the Proposed Project being located on a site included on a list of hazardous materials sites. The Proposed Project site is not listed in the environmental regulatory

database for hazardous waste sites pursuant to Government Code 65962.5.⁵ Therefore, the Proposed Project site would not be expected to result in significant impacts from hazards and hazardous materials related to location on a hazardous waste site. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (e) *For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Proposed Project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Proposed Project area?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts from hazards and hazardous materials in relation to proximity to an airport and the creation of safety hazards for people residing or working in the Proposed Project area. The nearest airports to the Proposed Project site are the Compton Airport, located approximately five miles south at 901 West Alondra Boulevard in the City of Compton, and the Long Beach Airport in the City Long Beach, located approximately nine miles south of the Proposed Project site.⁶⁷ Due to the substantial distances between the Proposed Project site and the nearest airports, significant impacts would not be expected from hazards and hazardous materials in relation to proximity to an airport and the creation of safety hazards for people residing or working in the Proposed Project area. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (f) *For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the Proposed Project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Proposed Project area?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts from hazards and hazardous materials due to the Proposed Project being located in the vicinity of a private airstrip and the potential for safety hazards for people residing or working in the Proposed Project area. There are no private airstrips within 10 miles of the Proposed Project. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts from hazards and hazardous materials due to the Proposed Project being located in the vicinity of a private airstrip and the potential for safety hazards for people residing or working in the project area. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required

- (g) *Would the Proposed Project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts from hazards and hazardous materials related to impairing the implementation of or physically interfering with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The proposed project does not currently include an emergency response plan or evacuation plan. The Proposed Project is not anticipated to interfere with an emergency response plan or evacuation plan. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts from hazards and hazardous materials related to impairing the implementation of or physically interfering with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No further analysis is warranted.

⁵ Environmental Data Resources. 28 February 2011. *The EDR Radius Map™ Report with GeoCheck®*. Inquiry Number: 3001085.2s. Milford, CT.

⁶ U.S. Geological Survey. [1964] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, California, Topographic Quadrangle.

⁷ U.S. Geological Survey. [1964] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, Long Beach, California, Topographic Quadrangle.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (h) *Would the Proposed Project 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?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts from hazards and hazardous materials related to exposure of 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. The Proposed Project site is located in an urban environment without adjacent or nearby wildlands. In addition, the Proposed Project site is not located in a fire hazard severity zone.⁸ Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts related to 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. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15300.

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http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fhsz_maps/fhsz_maps_losangeles.php

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Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, Chapter 1, Part 261.

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U.S. Geological Survey. [1964] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, Long Beach, California, Topographic Quadrangle.

U.S. Geological Survey. [1964] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, California, Topographic Quadrangle.

⁸ California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 1997. Los Angeles Fire Hazard Severity Zoning Map. Sacramento, CA. Available at: http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fhsz_maps/fhsz_maps_losangeles.php

3.9 Hydrology and Water Quality

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
YDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY — Would Proposed Project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of a site or area through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or by other means, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of a site or area through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or by other means, substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 authoritative flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact on hydrology and water quality, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Hydrology and water quality at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to the City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

Plan),² the County of Los Angeles General Plan,³ the California Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan for the Los Angeles Region,⁴ National Flood Insurance Program Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the County of Los Angeles,⁵ and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle.⁶

The State CEQA Guidelines recommend the consideration of the following ten questions when addressing the potential for significant impacts to hydrology and water quality:

(a) *Would the Proposed Project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to violating any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. The Proposed Project would entail demolition, construction, and operational elements that would involve ground-disturbing activities. The construction of the Proposed Project may contribute to erosion, sediment-laden runoff, discharge of non-storm water runoff, or other water quality-related events that would have the potential to violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.

The Proposed Project would implement best management practices (BMPs) to reduce or eliminate non-storm discharges to the storm water system. BMPs would meet the water quality standards set forth by the responsible agencies and address storm runoff quantity and flow rate, suspended solids (primarily from erosion), and contaminants, such as phosphorus and hydrocarbons. BMPs would be implemented in accordance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board Los Angeles Region, with the County of Los Angeles Storm Water Management Plan, and with the County of Los Angeles General Plan. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to violating any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

³ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Los Angeles, CA. Available at: <http://ceres.ca.gov/docs/data/0700/791/HYPEROCR/hyperocr.html>

⁴ Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region. 1994. *Basin Plan*. Available at: http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb4/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/

⁵ Federal Emergency Management Agency. *Flood Maps*. Available at: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/map/index.shtm>

⁶ U.S. Geological Survey. [Updated 4 April 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. "Map Locator." Web site. Available at: http://store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/usgs/maplocator/%28xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd&layout=6_1_61_48&uiarea=2&ctype=areaDetail&carearea=%24ROOT%29.do

- (b) *Would the Proposed Project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to groundwater supplies or groundwater recharge. The Proposed Project site is located within the Central Basin Municipal Water District.⁷ Although soil boring records of the Proposed Project area indicate that groundwater levels range from approximately 34 to 59 feet below ground surface, the Proposed Project site and its existing uses do not influence the local groundwater basin (as the majority of the site is currently covered with impervious material), and the site does not serve as a groundwater recharge site.⁸ The Proposed Project would not use groundwater supplies, although dewatering activities may be necessary during the construction phase of the Proposed Project. However, dewatering activities would be temporary and of short duration. Further, the Proposed Project would be designed to incorporate low-impact development (LID) standards for water management (see Section 2.0, *Project Description*). Hence, the Proposed Project would not interfere with groundwater recharge into the basin or create substantial interference with groundwater recharge for the area. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to groundwater supplies or groundwater recharge. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (c) *Would the Proposed Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of a site or area through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or by other means, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off-site?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to alteration of existing drainage patterns in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on site or off site. The Proposed Project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the Proposed Project site or area or alter the course of any existing streams or rivers in the Proposed Project area.

Review of the USGS 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle in which the Proposed Project site is located indicates that there is no potential for impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to alteration of existing drainage patterns in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on site or off site.⁹ There are no existing drainage patterns on, or within the vicinity of, the Proposed Project site that would be impacted by the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would entail the demolition and redevelopment of a previously disturbed and fully developed site. Currently, the majority of the site is covered with impervious material. Furthermore, BMPs would be implemented

⁷ Central Basin Municipal Water District. Accessed on: 10 March 2011. "Service Area." Web site. Available at: <http://www.centralbasin.org/serviceArea.html>

⁸ California Water Quality Control Board. Geotracker Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment. Available at: <http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/>

⁹ U.S. Geological Survey. [1965] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

during construction and operation with guidelines provided in the *California Storm Water Best Management Practices Handbook for Construction Activities* and in the County of Los Angeles Storm Water Management Program for substantiated erosion or siltation.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (d) *Would the Proposed Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of a site or area through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or by other means, substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to alteration of existing drainage patterns in a manner that would result in flooding on site or off site. As previously mentioned, the Proposed Project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on site or off site. The USGS 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle was reviewed, and there is no potential for impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to the alteration of existing drainage patterns in a manner that would result in flooding on site or off site.¹⁰ Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to hydrology and water quality related to alteration of existing drainage patterns in a manner that would result in flooding on site or off site. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (e) *Would the Proposed Project create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?*

Less than Significant: The impacts to hydrology and water quality related to exceeding the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or providing substantial additional sources of polluted runoff from the Proposed Project would be expected to be less than significant. While the Proposed Project site is part of the Los Angeles storm drain system and the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works has implemented measures to initiate storm water pollution reduction programs throughout the County of Los Angeles, the Proposed Project would entail construction and operational activities that may impact the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems.¹¹ However, the Proposed Project would implement BMPs consistent with LEED guidelines, which would require the Proposed Project to function at levels that would not exceed the current hydrological capacity. Further, the addition of the proposed courthouse and parking would not be expected to contribute significantly to runoff because the Proposed Project would be developed on an existing site covered with impervious material.

However, it is anticipated that elements of the Proposed Project, may require alterations to the existing on-site storm water drainage infrastructure. In addition, the construction phase of the Proposed Project

¹⁰ U.S. Geological Survey. [1965] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

¹¹ County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works. Accessed on: 22 February 2011. "Storm water Pollution Prevention Home." Web site. Available at: [http://ladpw.org/PRG/Storm water/Page_03.cfm](http://ladpw.org/PRG/Storm%20water/Page_03.cfm)

may entail activities (such as site preparation or grading) that have the potential to result in indirect impacts related to runoff of sediment-laden polluted storm water or wastewater into the County of Los Angeles storm drain systems, subsequently causing discharges of pollutants of concern into receiving waters of the storm drain system. The construction phase would also require the use of gasoline, diesel fuel, and lubricants for fueling project vehicles and paints, adhesives, and solvents. Accidental spills of petroleum products and other hazardous substances during project construction, refueling, and operation, and maintenance activities could potentially enter the storm drain system if not properly cleaned up and removed from the spill site.

As noted, the Proposed Project would implement BMPs consistent with the guidelines provided in the *California Storm Water Best Management Practice Handbooks: Construction*, and would be required to comply with state and federal guidelines (including the NPDES), which would reduce the potential impacts related to some demolition, construction, and operation activities at the site. The AOC's construction contract will require the construction contractor to implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan that would have been approved by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. In addition, the AOC requires the construction contractor to schedule grading activities outside the normal rainy season and to implement erosion-control measures during construction activities that occur during the rainy season. Therefore, impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to exceeding the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or providing substantial additional sources of polluted runoff would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(f) *Would the Proposed Project otherwise substantially degrade water quality?*

Less than Significant: The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to substantial degradation of water quality. The Proposed Project would be required to comply with NPDES requirements; therefore, there would be no potential for impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to substantial degradation of water quality for the Proposed Project.^{12,13} The Proposed Project would be constructed and operated in accordance with BMPs that would further reduce the potential for the Proposed Project to degrade water quality. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to substantial degradation of water quality. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(g) *Would the Proposed Project place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other authoritative flood hazard delineation map?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to placement of housing within a 100-year flood hazard area. The Proposed Project

¹² County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works. January 2006. *2006 Hydrology Manual*. Available at: <http://dpw.lacounty.gov/wrd/publication/>

¹³ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/generalplan>

would not include a housing element. Further, the Proposed Project site is not located within a 100-year flood hazard zone;¹⁴ therefore, there would be no expected impacts to hydrology and water quality related to placement of housing within a 100-year flood hazard area. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (h) *Would the Proposed Project place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to placement of structures (other than housing) within a 100-year flood hazard area. The Proposed Project site is not located within a 100-year flood zone. The Proposed Project would not involve the development of structures within a 100-year flood hazard area. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to hydrology and water quality related to placement of any structures within a 100-year flood hazard area. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (i) *Would the Proposed Project 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?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to the failure of a levee or dam. The County of Los Angeles maintains over 15 major dams and other flood control facilities, such as spreading grounds, within the county.¹⁵ The flood control facilities within the Proposed Project are maintained by the County of Los Angeles Flood Control District, and comply with local, state, and federal regulations.¹⁶ Proposed Project would not be anticipated to have impacts on the operation of existing levees or dams. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to hydrology and water quality related to the failure of a levee or dam. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (j) *Would the Proposed Project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not introduce a potential threat of seiches, tsunamis, or mudflow. Seiches are large waves generated in enclosed bodies of water in response to ground shaking. Tsunamis are tidal waves generated in large bodies of water in response to ground shaking. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to the inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. Review of the USGS 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic map indicates the elevation of the Proposed Project site is approximately 118 feet

¹⁴ Federal Emergency Management Agency. *Flood Maps*. Available at: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/map/index.shtm>

¹⁵ County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works. Accessed on: 25 February 2011. "Water Resources." Web site. Available at: <http://dpw.lacounty.gov/wrd/index.cfm>

¹⁶ County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works. Accessed on: 25 February 2011. "Water Resources." Web site. Available at: <http://dpw.lacounty.gov/wrd/index.cfm>

above mean sea level. The Proposed Project site is located approximately thirteen and one-half miles east of the California coastline. Due to the elevation of the Proposed Project area and its distance from the ocean and other bodies of water, it would not be expected to have any direct or indirect impacts related to seiches or tsunamis.

A mudflow is a large flow of mud resulting from soil saturation on steep slopes. The Proposed Project site is not located in a section of the County of Los Angeles that is susceptible to mudslides, and there are no steep slopes with soils or vegetation on, or immediately adjacent to, the Proposed Project site. Therefore, there would be no potential for impacts related to mudflows. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to the inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

California Water Resources Control Board. Geotracker Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment. Available at: <http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/>

Central Basin Municipal Water District. Accessed on: 10 March 2011. “Service Area.” Available at: <http://www.centralbasin.org/serviceArea.html>

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County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works. Accessed on: 22 February 2011. “Stormwater Pollution Prevention Home.” Available at: http://ladpw.org/PRG/StormWaterStormwater/Page_03.cfm

County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works. Accessed on: 25 February 2011. “Water Resources.” Web site. Available at: <http://dpw.lacounty.gov/wrd/index.cfm>

County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works. January 2006. *2006 Hydrology Manual*. Available at: <http://dpw.lacounty.gov/wrd/publication/>

County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/generalplan>

Federal Emergency Management Agency. *Flood Maps*. Available at: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/map/index.shtm>

Regional Water Quality Control Board Los Angeles Region. 1994. *Basin Plan*. Available at: http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb4/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/

U.S. Geological Survey. [1965] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

3.10 Land Use and Land Use Planning

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
LAND USE AND LAND USE PLANNING — Would the Proposed Project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) might have a significant impact to land use and planning, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Land use and planning at the Proposed Project site were evaluated in light of the adopted and published City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General Plan),² the City of South Gate land use map,³ the City of South Gate zoning map,⁴ the City of South Gate Municipal Code,⁵ the California Trial Court Facilities Standards,⁶ and the County of Los Angeles General Plan.⁷

The State CEQA Guidelines recommend the consideration of the following three questions when addressing the potential for significant impacts to land use and planning:

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project divide an establish community?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts in relation to land use and planning through the physical division of an established community. The community design element of the South Gate General Plan,⁸ City of South Gate land use and zoning maps⁹ and the U.S. Geological

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

³ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

⁴ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

⁵ *City of South Gate Municipal Code*. 13 July 2010. Title 11, “Zoning.” Available at: <http://codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/>

⁶ Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. [Updated 21 April 2006] Reissued 1 March 2010 with Amendment 1. *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*. San Francisco, CA.

⁷ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Available at: <http://ceres.ca.gov/docs/data/0700/791/HYPEROCR/hyperocr.html>

⁸ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

⁹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle¹⁰ were used to determine the relationship of the Proposed Project to the surrounding communities. According to the South Gate General Plan community design element, the Proposed Project site and vicinity is located within the Firestone Industrial District.¹¹ Furthermore, the City of South Gate M-2 (Light Manufacturing Zones) and CM (Commercial Manufacturing Zone) zoning cover the Proposed Project area; both M-2 and CM zones are compatible for mixed-use development. In addition, the South Gate General Plan community design element lists civic/institutional development as a highly desired use within the Firestone Industrial District.¹²

The Proposed Project site is currently a mixed-use area with light manufacturing operations. Adjacent to the project site on the west are residential properties. South Gate Middle School is located across Firestone Boulevard south of the Proposed Project site. Adjacent to the Proposed Project site on the east end are warehouses and small strip malls that contain an auto repair shop, an automobile sales lot, and a fast-food retail restaurant. Residential properties are located north of the Proposed Project area, north of both Ardmore Avenue and Independence Avenue.

Currently, the western portion of the Proposed Project property is owned and occupied by Leggett & Platt, a manufacturer of mattress components. The eastern portion of the Proposed Project property is owned by Masco Building Products and is occupied by Pacific Clothing at the northern end and by Pan American Auto Sales at the southern end. The central portion of the Masco Building Products property is currently unoccupied.

The Proposed Project would be located in a manner that would be compatible with the existing community and would not include the development of facilities and site uses that do not currently exist in the surrounding area. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected physically divide the established community and consequently would not be expected to result in significant impacts to land use and planning with regard to physical division of an established community. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(b) *Would the Proposed Project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to land use and planning in relation to a conflict with adopted or proposed land use plans, policies, or regulations. Currently, the Proposed Project site is located on privately owned land. The eastern portion of the property is owned by Masco Building Products and the western portion of the property is owned by Leggett & Platt. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) would acquire the Proposed Project site and consequently would have primary jurisdiction over the site, exempting it from local regulations.

¹⁰ U.S. Geological Survey. [1965] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

¹¹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

¹² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

The California Trial Court Facilities Standards address the construction of state court facilities and were reviewed to determine the compatibility of the Proposed Project with the standards.¹³ The Proposed Project would be designed and constructed in a manner that would be consistent with the design and technical criteria of the facilities standards. One of the objectives of the facilities standards is that court facilities consider the community and regional context: “The siting of the court facility should take into consideration and ideally improve the existing context by complying with local restrictions and planning mandates, such as compatibility with neighboring land use and view corridors.”¹⁴ The South Gate General Plan was reviewed to identify the land uses surrounding the Proposed Project site and to ensure compatibility between the land uses and the Proposed Project.¹⁵ The South Gate General Plan designates the land use of the Proposed Project site as Firestone Industrial District, which contains a mix of manufacturing and light industrial/flex spaces on the north side of Firestone Boulevard.¹⁶ Areas along Firestone Boulevard are intended for civic/institutional, boulevard high, office/R&D, light flex, and open-space development.¹⁷ Therefore, the Proposed Project would be compatible with the vision and policies established for the Firestone Industrial District. The existing City of South Gate zoning districts that cover the Proposed Project site are M-2 (Light Manufacturing Zones) and CM (Commercial Manufacturing Zone), both of which are compatible for mixed-use development. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be compatible with the surrounding land uses.

According to the City of South Gate zoning ordinance, a CM-zoned property may be a maximum of four stories or forty-five feet high, whichever is less, if the lot has an open space that is not less than twenty feet wide along the entire length of each lot line that does not separate the lot from a street or an alley. For CM-zoned properties without an open space, structures are permitted to have a maximum height of two stories or thirty-five feet, whichever is less.¹⁸ In addition, the maximum height of an M-2 zoned property is seven stories or eighty-five feet, whichever is less, if the lot has an open space that is not less than twenty feet wide along the entire length of each lot line that does not separate the lot from a street or an alley. The maximum permitted height in other M-2 zoned properties is four stories or forty-five feet, whichever is less.¹⁹ Furthermore, although the Proposed Project would be exempt from local ordinances because it is owned by a state agency, the Proposed Project would still comply with the City of South Gate zoning ordinance regarding the height of structures.

As a state agency, the AOC is exempt from local planning and zoning regulations but the facilities standards acknowledge local planning and zoning regulations. The Proposed Project would be consistent

¹³ Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. [Updated 21 April 2006] Reissued 1 March 2010 with Amendment 1. *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*. San Francisco, CA.

¹⁴ Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. [Updated 21 April 2006] Reissued 1 March 2010 with Amendment 1. *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*. San Francisco, CA.

¹⁵ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *City of South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

¹⁶ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

¹⁷ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

¹⁸ *City of South Gate Municipal Code*, Chapter 11.20.30, “C-M Commercial Manufacturing Zone: Permitted Height.” South Gate, CA. Available at: <http://codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/>

¹⁹ *City of South Gate Municipal Code*, Chapter 11.22.010, “M-2 Light Manufacturing Zone: Permitted Height.” South Gate, CA. Available at: <http://codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/>

with the goals and policies of the facilities standards and would be expected to be consistent with the City of South Gate zoning ordinances. Therefore, potential impacts to land use and planning from the Proposed Project related to conflicts with adopted or proposed land use plans, policies, or regulations would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required. No mitigation required.

(c) *Would the Proposed Project conflict with any applicable habitat or natural community conservation plan?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to land use and planning in relation to a conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. The Proposed Project would not be located in an area proposed or adopted as part of a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.^{20,21} Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to existing land use and planning related to a conflict with any adopted habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

California Department of Fish and Game. Accessed on: 7 February 2011. “Natural Community Conservation Planning.” Web site. Sacramento, CA. Available at: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/nccp>

City of South Gate Municipal Code, Chapter 11.20.30, “C-M Commercial Manufacturing Zone: Permitted Height.” South Gate, CA. Available at: <http://codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/>

City of South Gate Municipal Code, Chapter 11.22.010, “M-2 Light Manufacturing Zone: Permitted Height.” South Gate, CA. Available at: <http://codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/>

City of South Gate Municipal Code. 13 July 2010. Title 11, “Zoning.” South Gate, CA. Available at: <http://codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/>

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Available at: <http://ceres.ca.gov/docs/data/0700/791/HYPEROCR/hyperocr.html>

Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. [Updated 1 April 2006] Reissued 1 March 2008 with Amendment 1. *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*. San Francisco, CA.

²⁰ California Department of Fish and Game. Accessed on: 7 February 2011. “Natural Community Conservation Planning.” Web site. Sacramento, CA. Available at: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/nccp>

²¹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Green City Element*. South Gate, CA.

U.S. Geological Survey. [1965] Photo revised 1981. 7.5-Minute Series, South Gate, California,
Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

3.11 Mineral Resources

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
MINERAL RESOURCES — Would the Proposed 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to geology and soils, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Geology and soils at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to the City of South Gate General Plan health community element,² California Geological Survey publications;^{3,4} map of the U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute series, South Gate, California, topographic quadrangle in which the Proposed Project is located;⁵ California Division of Mines and Geology report;⁶ and the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Maps.⁷

The State CEQA Guidelines recommend the consideration of the following two questions when addressing the potential for significant impact to geology and soils.

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project 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?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to mineral resources in relation to the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. Based on a review of the California Geological Survey report, there are no known mineral resources of statewide or regional importance produced within the Proposed Project site.⁸ According to the California Geological Survey publication,

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² City of South Gate. Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Health Community Element*. South Gate, CA. Available at:

³ California Geological Survey. [1966] Reprinted 13 March 2008. *Bulletin 189: Minerals of California*. Centennial Volume (1866–1966). Los Angeles, CA.

⁴ California Geological Survey. Revised 1999. *Mines and Mineral Producers Active in California (1997–1998)*. Special Publication 103. Los Angeles, CA.

⁵ U.S. Geological Survey. [Updated 4 April 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. “Map Locator.” Web site. Available at: http://store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/usgs/maplocator/%28xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd&layout=6_1_61_48&uiarea=2&ctype=areaDetail&scarea=%24ROOT%29.do

⁶ California Department of Conservation, California Division of Mines and Geology. 1962. *Mines and Mineral Resources of Kern County California, County Report 1*. 655 S. Hope Street, #700, Los Angeles, CA 90017.

⁷ California Geological Survey. Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Maps. Available at: http://www.quake.ca.gov/gmaps/ap/ap_maps.htm

⁸ California Department of Conservation, California Division of Mines and Geology. 1962. *Mines and Mineral Resources of Kern County California, County Report 1*. 655 S. Hope Street, #700, Los Angeles, CA 90017.

Mines and Minerals Producers Active in California (1977–1998),⁹ the County of Los Angeles contains twenty-five active mines; however, there are no mining districts located within or in the vicinity of the Proposed Project site. The proposed site has been developed for industrial use since at least 1956 and it is not in use as a mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to mineral resources related to the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(b) *Would the Proposed Project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to mineral resources in relation to the loss of availability of a known mineral resource recovery site. The conservation element of the County of Los Angeles General Plan does not specifically address mineral resources.¹⁰ Furthermore, the Proposed Project site has not been delineated in any known local plans as a site of local importance,¹¹ and no significant impacts would be expected. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to mineral resources related to the loss of availability of a known locally important mineral resource recovery site. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology. 1962. *Mines and Mineral Resources of Kern County California, County Report 1*. 655 S. Hope Street, #700, Los Angeles, CA 90017.

California Geological Survey. [1966] Reprinted 13 March 2008. *Bulletin 189: Minerals of California*. Centennial Volume (1866–1966). Los Angeles, CA.

California Geological Survey. Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Maps. Available at: http://www.quake.ca.gov/gmaps/ap/ap_maps.htm

California Geological Survey. Revised 1999. *Mines and Mineral Producers Active in California (1997–1998)*. Special Publication 103. Los Angeles, CA.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Health Element*. South Gate, CA.

⁹ California Geological Survey. Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Maps. Available at: http://www.quake.ca.gov/gmaps/ap/ap_maps.htm

¹⁰ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Available at: <http://ceres.ca.gov/docs/data/0700/791/HYPEROCR/hyperocr.html>

¹¹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan, Health Community Element*. South Gate, CA.

County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Available at: <http://ceres.ca.gov/docs/data/0700/791/HYPEROCR/hyperocr.html>

U.S. Geological Survey. [Updated 4 April 2010] Accessed on: 2 March 2011. "Map Locator." Web site. Available at:
http://store.usgs.gov/b2c_usgs/usgs/maplocator/%28xcm=r3standardpitrex_prd&layout=6_1_61_48&uiarea=2&ctype=areaDetails&carea=%24ROOT%29/.do

3.12 Noise and Vibration

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
NOISE — Would the Proposed Project:				
a) Result in exposure of persons to, or generation of, noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in exposure of persons to, or generation of, excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the Proposed Project vicinity above levels existing without the Proposed Project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the Proposed Project vicinity above levels existing without the Proposed Project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a Proposed Project located within an airport land use plan area, or, where such a plan has not been adopted, in an area within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Proposed Project expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a Proposed Project located in the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the Proposed Project expose people residing or working in the Proposed Project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to noise, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Noise at the Proposed Project site was evaluated with regard to the City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General Plan) noise element;² the City of South Gate Municipal Cod;³ and the site-specific noise and vibration technical analysis⁴ prepared for the Proposed Project (Appendix C, *Noise Impact Technical Report*), including ambient noise measurements taken at the Proposed Project site on February 15, 2011.⁵

The State CEQA Guidelines recommend the consideration of the following six questions when addressing the potential for significant impact to noise.

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Noise Element*. South Gate, CA.

³ *City of South Gate Municipal Code*, “Noise Emissions.” Available at: <http://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/html/SouthGate11/SouthGate1129.html>

⁴ Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Noise Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

⁵ Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Noise Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project result in exposure of persons to, or generation of, noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to noise in relation to exposure or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established by the South Gate General Plan and the City of South Gate Municipal Code that govern noise within the City of South Gate.^{6,7} The City of South Gate Municipal Code provides for a noise control officer and sets standards for specific noise sources. Applicable to Proposed Project operations, the Municipal Code states that no person shall cause a sound level that exceeds the ambient by five A-weighted decibels (dBA). A change of at least five dBA would be noticeable to the human ear and would likely evoke a community reaction. A ten-dBA increase is subjectively heard as a doubling in loudness and would cause a community response. Specific standards are included in the Municipal Code for noise sources that include domestic power tools, refuse collection vehicles, and emergency signaling devices. Although the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is exempt from municipal regulations, it does consult with local standards to establish thresholds for CEQA purposes. The City of South Gate Municipal Code lists activities that are exempt from the noise ordinance:

- The emission of sound for the purpose of alerting persons to the existence of an emergency, or the emission of sound in the performance of emergency work
- Warning devices necessary for the protection of public safety or self-defense, for example, police, fire and ambulance sirens and train horns
- Activities conducted on public playgrounds and public or private school grounds, including, but not limited to, school athletic and school entertainment events
- Any activity to the extent preempted from regulation by state or federal law
- Bells, chimes, or carillons while being used in conjunction with religious services

As indicated in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the Proposed Project would meet the standards set forth by the City of South Gate in the South Gate General Plan and Municipal Code. The existing noise environment in the vicinity of the Proposed Project site is typical of urban areas and is dominated by vehicular traffic on Firestone Boulevard, Otis Street, and surrounding streets and highways. However, San Miguel Avenue to the west, and Independence Avenue to the north of the Proposed Project site are characterized as residential streets with residential uses. Existing ambient noise in the vicinity of the Proposed Project site was monitored on February 15, 2011 (Table 3.12-1, *Ambient Noise Levels*).

⁶ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Noise Element*. South Gate, CA.

⁷ *City of South Gate Municipal Code*, "Noise Emissions." Available at: <http://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/html/SouthGate11/SouthGate1129.html>

**TABLE 3.12-1
AMBIENT NOISE LEVELS**

Location	Average L_{eq}	Peak Hour L_{eq}	CNEL
Firestone Boulevard	75.3 dBA	84.4 dBA	81.7 dBA
Otis Street	71.7 dBA	80.4 dBA	78.1 dBA
Independence Avenue	66.7 dBA	79.6 dBA	73.1 dBA
San Miguel Avenue	59.8 dBA	75.4 dBA	66.2 dBA

Certain land uses are more sensitive than others to noise. The South Gate General Plan noise element defines noise-sensitive land uses as residences, schools, hospitals, churches, outdoor speculative sports facilities, performing arts facilities, and hotels and motels (Table 3.12-2, *Noise-sensitive Receptors in the Proposed Project Vicinity*).

**TABLE 3.12-2
NOISE-SENSITIVE RECEPTORS IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT VICINITY**

Sensitive Receptors	Distance and Direction from Proposed Project Site
South Gate Middle School (Firestone Boulevard)	90 feet south
Residential Properties (Independence Avenue)	175 feet north
Residential Properties (San Miguel Avenue)	Directly west (approximately 50 feet)

The City of South Gate does not have noise standards for construction activity. Construction activities for the Proposed Project would not continue permanently and would use best management practices, including maintaining construction vehicles and equipment in good working order by using mufflers where applicable and staging of construction vehicles as far from sensitive receptors as reasonably practicable. Therefore, noise generated from construction of the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact.

Currently, the western portion of the property is owned and occupied by Leggett & Platt, a manufacturer of mattress components. The warehouse on this property is a two-story reinforced concrete structure. The eastern portion of the property is owned by Masco Building Products. One tenant is present on the Masco Building Products parcel: Pan American Auto Sales, a used-car lot located at the southern end of the parcel. Pacific Clothing, a cutter and processor of fabrics, recently occupied the northern end of the parcel, but has since left; this parcel and the central part of the Masco Building Products parcel are currently unoccupied.

Operation of the Proposed Project would be expected to generate noise from building operations (i.e., mechanical systems) as well as noise from traffic generated by the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project site is located within a manufacturing area designated by the South Gate General Plan as the Firestone Industrial District⁸ and zoned M-2 (Light Manufacturing Zone) and CM (Commercial Manufacturing Zone) by the City of South Gate. The existing area is characterized by manufacturing uses,

⁸ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *City of South Gate General Plan, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

automobile sales, train tracks, and primary arterials carrying high levels of traffic, including high levels of truck trips.⁹

Noise generated by the mechanical systems of buildings would typically create noise levels between fifty and sixty dBA at fifty feet from the source. The nearest sensitive receptors are residential properties located directly west of the Proposed Project, approximately fifty feet from the Proposed Project boundary at the closest point. Assuming a worse-case scenario where the mechanical system of the Proposed Project would result in a sixty-dBA level at fifty feet, the noise level from the mechanical system at the residential properties would be sixty dBA, which is 0.2 dBA higher than the 59.8-dBA ambient noise level at the nearest residential properties approximately fifty feet west from the Proposed Project. A three-dBA increase in the noise level is considered barely perceptible, and is below the City of South Gate's significance criterion of an increase of five dBA.¹⁰ As the mechanical systems of the Proposed Project would result in an increase of less than three dBA in the ambient noise level, noise generated from operation would result in a less than significant impact.

The Proposed Project would decrease PM peak-hour traffic because persons accessing the Proposed Project would use intersections intermittently throughout the day instead of standard use in the PM peak hour. The Proposed Project would slightly increase AM peak-hour traffic.¹¹ The slight increase in AM peak-hour traffic would not conflict with the South Gate General Plan. The increased traffic generated by the Proposed Project would not be perceptible. It takes a doubling of traffic volumes to result in an approximate increase in noise levels of three dBA along a roadway.¹² Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to noise related to exposure or generation of noise levels in excess of established standards. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(b) *Would the Proposed Project result in exposure of persons to, or generation of, excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to noise in relation to generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise. Field observations found that vibration levels from surrounding and nearby roadways are not perceptible at the Proposed Project site, as the site currently includes land that is currently occupied and owned by Leggett & Platt on the western portion of the property. The eastern portion of the property is owned by Masco Building Products. Pan American Auto Sales, a used-car lot, is located at the southern end of the Masco Building Products parcel. Pacific Clothing, a cutter and processor of fabrics, recently occupied the northern end of the parcel, but has since left; this parcel and the central part of the Masco Building Products parcel are currently unoccupied.¹³

Use of heavy equipment (*e.g.*, a large bulldozer) generates vibration levels of 0.089 inch per second peak

⁹ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

¹⁰ James P. Cowan. *Handbook of Environmental Acoustics*. 1993. Wiley-Interscience.

¹¹ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

¹² Kansas Department of Transportation. *Traffic Noise*. Topeka, KS. Available at: www.ksdot.org/PDF_Files/Trafficnoise.pdf

¹³ Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Noise Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

particle velocity (PPV) at a distance of twenty-five feet (Table 3.12-3, *Vibration Velocities for Construction Equipment*). Vibration levels at the nearest sensitive receptor were adjusted according to its distance from the Proposed Project. The nearest sensitive receptors are residential properties located approximately fifty feet directly west from the Proposed Project boundary at the closest point. These sensitive receptors would experience occasional heavy equipment activity and could experience vibration levels of 0.0445 inch per second PPV. According to the City of South Gate Municipal Code, the vibration perception threshold shall be a motion velocity of 0.01 inch per second over a range of 1 to 100 Hertz.¹⁴ Vibration levels at this receptor would be perceptible but would not exceed the potential building damage threshold (for reinforced concrete, steel, or timber, but not plaster) of 0.5 inch per second PPV.¹⁵

**TABLE 3.12-3
VIBRATION VELOCITIES FOR CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT**

Equipment	PPV at 25 Feet (Inches/Second) ^a
Pile driving (impact)	0.644
Pile driving (sonic)	0.170
Caisson drilling	0.089
Large bulldozer	0.089
Loaded trucks	0.076

KEY: ^a Fragile buildings can be exposed to groundborne vibration levels of 0.5 inch per second PPV without experiencing structural damage.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Authority. May 2006. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*.

The City of South Gate Municipal Code prohibits the operation of any device that creates vibration in excess of the vibration perception threshold of an individual situated on adjacent or abutting property zoned for any use other than manufacturing.¹⁶ The residential properties directly west of the Proposed Project are zoned as multiple residential. However, the vibration perception threshold is defined as 0.01 inch per second in relation to long-term vibration exposure. The vibration exposure would only be temporary, occurring only during the construction phase of the Proposed Project. In addition, the City of South Gate does not have vibration standards for construction activity. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to noise related to exposure of persons to, or generation of, excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (c) *Would the Proposed Project result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the Proposed Project vicinity above levels existing without the Proposed Project?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to noise in relation to permanent increases in ambient noise levels. The Proposed Project site is located

¹⁴ *City of South Gate Municipal Code*, “Noise Emissions.” Available at: <http://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/html/SouthGate11/SouthGate1129.html>

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration. “12.2.2 Construction Vibration Criteria.” *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*. Available at: http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_Noise_and_Vibration_Manual.pdf

¹⁶ *City of South Gate Municipal Code*, “Noise Emissions.” Available at: <http://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/html/SouthGate11/SouthGate1129.html>

within a manufacturing area designated by the South Gate General Plan as Firestone Industrial District¹⁷ and zoned M-2 (Light Manufacturing) and CM (Commercial Manufacturing) by the City of South Gate Zoning Code. The existing area is characterized by manufacturing uses, automobile sales, train tracks and primary arterials carrying high levels of traffic, including high levels of truck trips.¹⁸

Operation of the Proposed Project would be expected to generate noise from building operations (*i.e.*, mechanical systems) as well as noise from traffic generated by the Proposed Project. As the mechanical systems of the Proposed Project would result in an increase of less than three dBA in the ambient noise level, noise generated from operation would result in a less than significant impact (see response *a*). The Proposed Project would decrease PM peak-hour traffic because persons accessing the Proposed Project would use intersections intermittently throughout the day instead of standard use in the PM peak hour. The Proposed Project would slightly increase AM peak-hour traffic.¹⁹ Based upon projected traffic conditions, the slight increase in AM peak-hour traffic would not be anticipated to be greater than three dBA, the level at which an increase in noise is considered perceptible, and would not be considered substantial. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to noise related to permanent increases in ambient noise levels. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (d) *Would the Proposed Project result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the Proposed Project vicinity above levels existing without the Proposed Project?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to noise in relation to temporary or periodic increases in ambient noise levels. Noise generated by construction equipment during the construction phase of the Proposed Project would result in temporary or periodic increases in ambient noise levels; however, the City of South Gate does not have noise standards for construction activity. Construction activities would not continue permanently and would be conducted according to best management practices, including maintaining construction vehicles and equipment in good working order by using mufflers where applicable and staging construction vehicles as far from sensitive receptors as reasonably practicable. The increase in the ambient noise level during the construction of the Proposed Project would not be considered substantial. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to noise related to temporary or periodic increases in ambient noise levels. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (e) *For a Proposed Project located within an airport land use plan area, or, where such a plan has not been adopted, in an area within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Proposed Project expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to noise in relation to public airports. The public airport nearest to the Proposed Project is the Compton/Woodley Airport,

¹⁷ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *City of South Gate General Plan, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

¹⁸ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

¹⁹ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

which is located approximately five miles southwest of the Proposed Project site. The Proposed Project would not be located within two miles of a public airport. The Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts from exposure of people residing or working in the Proposed Project area to excessive noise levels from a public airport. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to noise related to public airports. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (f) *For a Proposed Project located in the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the Proposed Project expose people residing or working in the Proposed Project area to excessive noise levels?*

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to noise in relation to private airstrips. The nearest private airstrip is located in Playa Vista at 5510 Lincoln Boulevard, approximately thirteen and one-half mile west of the Proposed Project site.²⁰ A heliport is located approximately one and three-quarter miles south of the Proposed Project site at the St. Francis Medical Center for hospital-specific use. Use of the heliport would not be expected to increase substantially with implementation of the Proposed Project; impacts to people residing or working in the Proposed Project area would not be expected to increase as a result of the Proposed Project. Therefore, there would be no expected noise impacts related to private airstrips. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Noise Element*. South Gate, CA.

City of South Gate Municipal Code, “Noise Emissions.” Available at:
<http://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SouthGate/html/SouthGate11/SouthGate1129.html>

GCR & Associates, Inc. Accessed on: 11 March 2011. “Airport IQ Data Center.” Web site. Available at:
<http://www.gcr1.com/5010web/>

James P. Cowan. 1993. *Handbook of Environmental Acoustics*. Wiley-Interscience.

Kansas Department of Transportation. *Traffic Noise*. Topeka, KS. Available at:
www.ksdot.org/PDF_Files/Trafficnoise.pdf

Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Noise Impact Technical Report*. Pasadena, CA.

²⁰ GCR & Associates, Inc. Accessed on: 11 March 2011. “Airport IQ Data Center.” Web site. Available at:
<http://www.gcr1.com/5010web/>

U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration. “12.2.2 Construction Vibration Criteria.” *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*. Available at:
http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_Noise_and_Vibration_Manual.pdf

3.13 Population and Housing

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
POPULATION AND HOUSING — Would the Proposed 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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New South Gate Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to population and housing, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Population and housing at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to state, regional, and local data and forecasts for population and housing, and the proximity of the Proposed Project to existing and planned utility infrastructure.

The State CEQA Guidelines recommend the consideration of the three following questions when addressing the potential for significant impacts to population and housing.

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to population and housing related to inducing substantial direct or indirect population growth. Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.7, typical local thresholds of significance for housing and population growth include effects that would induce substantial growth or concentration of a population beyond a city’s or county’s projections; alter the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the population beyond that projected in the city or county general plan housing element; result in a substantial increase in demand for additional housing; or create a development that significantly reduces the ability of the county to meet housing objectives set forth in the city or county general plan housing element.² The Proposed Project would entail the construction of a new courthouse that would serve the needs of the existing and anticipated population in southeast Los Angeles. According to the City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General Plan), the purpose of the housing element is to provide sites with appropriate zoning and development standards and with services and facilities to accommodate the jurisdiction’s Regional Housing Needs Assessment for each income level; assist in the development of adequate housing to meet the needs of low- and moderate-income households; address and, where appropriate and legally possible,

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

remove governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing, including housing for households of all income levels and for persons with disabilities; and promote housing opportunities for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, familial status, or disability.³

The Proposed Project would consolidate the existing functions of two courthouses, one existing and one closed. The Proposed Project would not include a residential component and would be located in a developed area of the City of South Gate that is fully supported by infrastructure, including roads and utilities. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to population and housing related to inducing substantial direct or indirect population growth. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(b) *Would the Proposed Project displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to population and housing in relation to the displacement of substantial numbers of housing units that would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The current Proposed Project site consists of land occupied by light manufacturing companies, small businesses, vacant land, and surface parking. There are no housing units on the Proposed Project site and no housing would be displaced with implementation of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would not include the construction of any new housing units and would not be expected to alter the location, distribution, density, or growth of the human population of an area beyond that projected in the City of South Gate General Plan community design element.⁴ Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to population and housing related to the displacement of substantial numbers of housing units that would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(c) *Would the Proposed Project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to population and housing in relation to the displacement of substantial numbers of people that would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Currently, the Proposed Project site consists of land parcels occupied by light manufacturing companies, small businesses, vacant land, and surface parking. There are no people currently residing on the Proposed Project site, nor are there housing units or homes on the Proposed Project site. No persons would be displaced with implementation of the Proposed Project. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to population and housing related to the displacement of substantial

³ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

⁴ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035 Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Community Design Element*. South Gate, CA.

3.14 Public Services

<u>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</u>	<u>Potentially Significant Impact</u>	<u>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</u>	<u>Less Than Significant Impact</u>	<u>No Impact</u>
PUBLIC SERVICES — Would the Proposed Project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of, or 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 following public services:				
i) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
v) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to public services, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Public services at the Proposed Project site were evaluated based on review of the City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General Plan),² the City of South Gate web site,³ the County of Los Angeles Fire Department web site,⁴ and the City of South Gate Police Department web site.⁵

The potential for the Proposed Project to result in new or substantially more adverse significant impacts to public services was evaluated in relation to the following five-part question recommended for consideration by the State CEQA Guidelines.

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

³ City of South Gate. March 2011. Web Site. Available at: <http://www.sogate.org/>

⁴ County of Los Angeles Fire Department. 2011. Web site. Available at: <http://fire.lacounty.gov/HometownFireStations/HometownFireStations.asp>

⁵ South Gate Police Department. 2011. Web site. Available at: <http://www.sogate.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/nav/navid/19/>

(a) *Would the Proposed Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of, or 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 following public services:*

i) *Fire protection?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to public services in relation to fire protection. Currently, the fire protection facility in place to serve the Proposed Project site is the South Gate Fire Department, which maintains two fire stations in the City of South Gate (Table 3.14-1, *Fire Stations in the Proposed Project Vicinity*).⁶ Fire Station No. 54 is located approximately 1.3 miles from the Proposed Project site and would serve as the primary fire emergency responder.⁷ However, either Fire Station No. 54 or Fire Station No. 57 may respond to the Proposed Project site according to need and availability, and the Proposed Project site would likely draw units from both stations.⁸ The South Gate Fire Department maintains an average response time of four minutes and fifty-eight seconds for emergency calls, and seven minutes and six seconds for non-emergency calls.⁹

**TABLE 3.14-1
FIRE STATIONS IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT VICINITY**

Station No.	Location	Distance and Direction from Proposed Project Site
54	4867 Southern Avenue, South Gate 90280	1.3 miles southeast
57	5720 Gardendale Street, South Gate 90280	4.1 miles southeast

The Proposed Project would not be expected to place an additional burden on the existing primary and secondary emergency response units because 1) it would replace existing industrial buildings that were previously occupied within the service area of the South Gate Fire Department, 2) it would not be expected to induce population growth, and 3) it would not require additional fire department personnel or the construction of new fire department facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to public services related to fire protection. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

⁶ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

⁷ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

⁸ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

⁹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

ii) *Police protection?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to public services in relation to police protection. Police protection services in the Proposed Project area are provided by the South Gate Police Department (Table 3.14-2, *Citywide Police Department Facilities*). Currently, the City of South Gate provides police protection services out of two centers: 1) the headquarters at 8620 California Avenue and 2) a substation at the El Paseo Shopping Center located at 5831 Firestone Boulevard.¹⁰ According to the South Gate General Plan, the City of South Gate is considering a city hall annex that would include a substation adjacent to the proposed Gateway Development and other facilities in the Westside and Hollydale areas of the City of South Gate.¹¹ In addition, the South Gate General Plan notes that the current police department headquarters are out of date and inadequate for the size of the department; a new police headquarters building is planned as part of the proposed civic center redevelopment. The South Gate Police Department currently maintains an average response time of three minutes and forty-eight seconds for emergency calls and seventeen minutes and twenty-two seconds for non-emergency calls.¹²

**TABLE 3.14-2
CITYWIDE POLICE DEPARTMENT FACILITIES**

Station No.	Location	Distance and Direction from Proposed Project Site
1	8260 California Avenue, South Gate 90280	0.6 miles west
2	5831 Firestone Boulevard, South Gate 90280	2.2 miles east

Operation of the Proposed Project would not be expected to require additional police personnel or construction of new police department facilities because the Proposed Project would replace existing industrial buildings that were previously occupied within the planned service area of the South Gate Police Department, and because it would not be expected to induce population growth. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to public services related to police protection. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

iii) *Schools?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to public services in relation to schools. There are seven schools located within a one-mile radius of the Proposed Project site: South Gate Middle School, San Gabriel Avenue Middle School, South Gate High School, Bryson Avenue Elementary School, San Miguel Elementary School, South Gate

¹⁰ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

¹¹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

¹² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

Community Adult School, and Teresa Hughes Elementary School (Table 3.14-3, *Schools in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project*). The Proposed Project would not be expected to induce population growth and would not be expected to affect the population of school-age children in the City of South Gate. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts of public services in relation to schools. No further analysis is warranted.

**TABLE 3.14-3
SCHOOLS IN THE VICINITY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

Schools	Location	Distance and Direction from the Proposed Project Site
South Gate Middle School	4100 Firestone Boulevard, South Gate 90280	0.2 mile south
San Gabriel Avenue Elementary School	8628 San Gabriel Avenue, South Gate 90280-3199	0.2 mile west
South Gate High School	3551 Firestone Boulevard, South Gate 90280-2985	0.7 mile west
Bryson Avenue Elementary School	4470 Missouri Avenue, South Gate 90280-5057	0.8 mile west
San Miguel Elementary School	9801 San Miguel Avenue, South Gate 90280-4823	0.7 mile south
South Gate Community Adult School	4100 Firestone Boulevard, South Gate 90280	0.2 mile south
Teresa Hughes Elementary School	4242 Clara Street, Cudahy 90201-5010	0.8 mile north

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

iv) *Parks?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to public services in relation to parks. The Proposed Project would not be expected to induce population growth, and, therefore, would not be expected to increase the level of demand on existing park facilities in the City of South Gate during operation. Parks located within one mile of the Proposed Project site are the Lugo Park Community Center, South Gate Park, Clara Park, and Huntington Park (Table 3.14-4, *Parks in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project*). The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to public services with regard to parks. No further analysis is warranted.

**TABLE 3.14-4
PARKS IN THE VICINITY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

Park	Location	Distance and Direction from the Proposed Project Site
Lugo Park Community Center	7810 Otis Avenue, Cudahy 90201-5072	0.7 mile northeast
South Gate Park	9615 Pinehurst Avenue, South Gate 90280	0.64 mile southeast
Clara Park	4835 Clara Street, Cudahy 90201-5209	1.0 miles northwest
Huntington Park	1449 West Rosecrans Avenue, Gardena 90249	1.11 miles northwest

v) *Other public facilities?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to public services in relation to other public facilities. The Proposed Project area is adequately served by public facilities, including two post offices, one public library, and two hospitals (Table 3.14-5, *Public Services Facilities in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project*). The Proposed Project would not include residential development, and would therefore not be expected to result in a net increase in local population. Construction of new public facilities would not be anticipated to be required in association with the Proposed Project. Since the closure of the former South Gate Courthouse in 2004, criminal cases have not been processed locally for the City of Huntington Park, City of South Gate, and some of the other neighboring communities of southeast Los Angeles County. Since courthouses are classified as other public facilities, and the Proposed Project includes improved access to these facilities, the Proposed Project would be expected to enhance public courthouse facilities. There would be no expected impacts to other public facilities. No further analysis is warranted.

**TABLE 3.14-5
PUBLIC SERVICES FACILITIES IN THE VICINITY
OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

Facility	Location	Distance and Direction from the Proposed Project Site
Post Offices		
Firestone Post Office	3270 Firestone Boulevard, South Gate 90280-2968	1.0 miles west
South Gate Post Office	South Gate Post Office, South Gate 90280	1.4 miles southeast
Libraries		
Leland R. Weaver Library	4035 Tweedy Boulevard, South Gate 90280-6199	1.2 miles south
Hospitals		
St. Francis Medical Center	3630 East Imperial Highway, Lynwood 90262	1.8 miles south
Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center	7601 Imperial Highway, Downey 90242-3496	2.8 miles southeast

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

California Code of Regulations. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Public Facilities and Services Element*. South Gate, CA.

City of South Gate. March 2011 Web Site. Available at: <http://www.sogate.org/>

County of Los Angeles Fire Department. 2011. Web site. Available at: <http://fire.lacounty.gov/HometownFireStations/HometownFireStations.asp>

South Gate Police Department. 2011. Web site. Available at: <http://www.sogate.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/nav/navid/19/>

3.15 Recreation

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
RECREATION — Would the Proposed Project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The potential for the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) to result in new or substantially more adverse significant impacts to recreation was evaluated in relation to a two-part question recommended for consideration by the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project 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?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts related to increasing the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. There are four parks located within approximately one mile of the Proposed Project site:

1. Lugo Park Community Center, located approximately 0.55 mile northeast of the Proposed Project site in the City of Cudahy¹
2. South Gate Park, located approximately 0.64 mile southeast of the Proposed Project site in the City of South Gate²
3. Clara Park, located approximately 1.0 mile northwest of the Proposed Project site in the City of Cudahy³
4. City of Huntington Park, located approximately 1.11 miles northwest of the Proposed Project site⁴

¹ City of Cudahy. Accessed on: 11 March 2011. "About the City: Parks and Recreation." Available at: <http://www.cudahy.ca.us/about/about.asp>

² City of South Gate. Accessed on: 11 March 2001. "Parks and Facilities: City of South Gate Parks." Available at: <http://www.sogate.org/download/index.cfm/fuseaction/download/cid/444/>

³ City of Cudahy. Accessed on: 11 March 2011. "About the City: Parks and Recreation." Available at: <http://www.cudahy.ca.us/about/about.asp>

⁴ City of Huntington Park. Accessed on: 11 March 2011. "The Official Site of Huntington Park, CA." Available at: <http://www.huntingtonpark.org/>

The Proposed Project would entail the development of a courthouse that would be accessed by employees, jurors, and visitors during business hours only. Individuals accessing the courthouse would travel from their respective homes and businesses to access the courthouse during designated court business hours. Employment at the proposed new courthouse would replace combined employment at the Huntington Park and South Gate, and employment numbers would remain approximately the same. Development of the proposed courthouse would not be expected to encourage or induce population growth near the Proposed Project site; thus, the Proposed Project would not be expected to increase the level of demand on existing park facilities in the City of South Gate or in the surrounding area during operation. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts and no further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (b) *Would the Proposed Project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not entail recreational facilities or require the expansion of existing facilities. The Proposed Project would not be expected to induce population growth in the Proposed Project area. During construction, workers would be expected to commute to the Proposed Project site for work during the construction period. The increase in workers would be temporary and would not create or result in an increase in the population of the Proposed Project area. During operation, the proposed courthouse would operate similar to a commercial office building. Individuals accessing the proposed new courthouse would be expected to travel from their respective homes and businesses to the courthouse for various courthouse functions during designated court business hours. Operational employment at the courthouse would replace the combined employment at the Huntington Park and South Gate courthouses, and would employ a similar number of personnel. Use of the courthouse would not encourage population growth in the area or result in the additional use of recreation facilities that would require an expansion. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

References

City of Cudahy. Accessed on: 11 March 2011. "About the City: Parks and Recreation." Available at: <http://www.cudahy.ca.us/about/about.asp>

City of Huntington Park. Accessed on: 11 March 2011. "The Official Site of Huntington Park, CA." Available at: <http://www.huntingtonpark.org/>

City of South Gate. Accessed on: 11 March 2001. "Parks and Facilities: City of South Gate Parks." Available at: <http://www.sogate.org/download/index.cfm/fuseaction/download/cid/444/>

3.16 Transportation and Traffic

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC — Would the Proposed 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 non-motorized 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact on transportation or traffic, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Transportation and traffic at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to the mobility element of the City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General Plan),² the Congestion Management Plan for the County of Los Angeles,³ the Congestion Management Plan Traffic Impact Analysis Report Guidelines,⁴ and a Traffic Impact Analysis prepared by Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers for the Proposed Project (Appendix D, *Traffic Impact Analysis*).⁵

The State CEQA Guidelines recommend the consideration of the following seven questions when addressing the potential for significant impact to transportation and traffic.

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Mobility Element*. South Gate, CA.

³ Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. 2010. *2010 Congestion Management Program*. Los Angeles, CA. Available at: http://www.metro.net/projects_studies/cmp/images/CMP_Final_2010.pdf

⁴ Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. 2010. *2010 Congestion Management Program*. Los Angeles, CA. Available at: http://www.metro.net/projects_studies/cmp/images/CMP_Final_2010.pdf

⁵ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project 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 non-motorized 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?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to transportation/traffic in relation to creating a substantial increase in traffic considering the existing traffic and capacity of the street system. Ardmore Avenue on the north, Firestone Boulevard on the south, San Miguel Avenue on the west, and private warehouse or storage buildings that face Otis Street on the east. In addition, San Vicente Avenue traverses the center of the Proposed Project site.

The level-of-service (LOS) ratings for traffic describe the operational conditions for the flow of traffic. The LOS rating system uses the letters A through F to describe traffic flow conditions, with LOS A representing ideal operating conditions and LOS F representing the worst traffic conditions. According to the South Gate General Plan mobility element, the majority of City of South Gate streets operate at LOS D or better. However, nine percent of roadway segments (Primary Arterials, Minor Arterials, and Collector Streets, as designated by the City of South Gate) currently operate at LOS E or F in the AM peak hours and fourteen percent in the PM peak hours.⁶ The Proposed Project area is located along Firestone Boulevard, which is one of the streets in the City of South Gate where levels of service of LOS D, LOS E, and LOS F occur. In addition, heavy-truck traffic also occurs on Firestone Boulevard due to its industrial land uses and proximity to the I-710 freeway (Long Beach Freeway).⁷ The South Gate General Plan has LOS standards for signalized intersections (Table 3.16-1, *Level of Service Definitions for Signalized Intersections*).

⁶ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Mobility Element*. South Gate, CA.

⁷ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Mobility Element*. South Gate, CA.

**TABLE 3.16-1
LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS FOR SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS**

Level of Service	Description	Volume to Capacity Ratio
A	Excellent operation. All approaches to the intersection appear quite open, turning movements are easily made, and nearly all drivers find freedom of operation.	<0.600
B	Very good operation. Many drivers begin to feel somewhat restricted within platoons of vehicles. This represents stable flow. An approach to an intersection may occasionally be fully utilized and traffic queues start to form.	0.601 – 0.700
C	Good operation. Occasionally drivers may have to wait for more than 60 seconds, and backups may develop behind turning vehicles. Most drivers feel somewhat restricted.	0.701 – 0.800
D	Fair operation. Cars are sometimes required to wait for more than 60 seconds during short peaks. There are no long-standing traffic queues. This level is typically associated with design practice for peak periods.	0.801 – 0.900
E	Poor operation. Some long-standing vehicular queues develop on critical approaches to intersections. Delays may be up to several minutes.	0.901 – 1.000
F	Forced flow. Represents jammed conditions. Backups from locations downstream or on the cross street may restrict or prevent movement of vehicles out of the intersections approach lanes; therefore, volumes carried are not predictable. Potential for stop-and-go type traffic flow.	Over 1.001

SOURCE: City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Mobility Element*. South Gate, CA.

After consultation with the City of South Gate, twelve study intersections were selected for detailed, peak-hour LOS analysis under existing (year 2011) plus Proposed Project traffic conditions, existing AM peak-hour traffic conditions, existing plus ambient plus related projects traffic conditions, and year 2015 cumulative traffic conditions with the addition of Proposed Project traffic. To determine future Proposed Project traffic volumes, a trip generation analysis for the proposed courthouse as compared to the existing land uses was conducted, allowing “credit” for existing trips. The operation of a courthouse results in intermittent travel to and from the facility throughout the day instead of the standard pattern of many land uses, which generate most of their outgoing traffic during the peak PM hour. A courthouse, in comparison, does not contribute to traffic during the peak PM hour due to visitors and jurors leaving the courthouse at intermittent times throughout the day. Given the nature of the trips associated with a courthouse, the implementation of the Proposed Project would be anticipated to reduce trips during the PM peak hour. Therefore, only AM peak-hour traffic conditions were analyzed.

The relative impact of the additional Proposed Project traffic volumes generated during the AM peak hour was evaluated based on an analysis of future operating conditions at the twelve key study intersections. The analysis looked at the twelve intersections without the Proposed Project, and then with the Proposed Project. The potential traffic impacts of the Proposed Project were then evaluated using the following City of South Gate traffic impact criteria:

- An unacceptable peak hour LOS (*i.e.*, LOS E or F) at any of the key intersections is projected. The City of South Gate considers LOS D (ICU = 0.801 - 0.900) to be the minimum desirable LOS for all intersections.

- The addition of Proposed Project traffic causes an increase of 0.020 or greater in the ICU value for signalized intersections, causing or worsening LOS E or F (ICU > 0.900).
- At unsignalized intersections, this report identifies a significant traffic impact when the addition of Proposed Project traffic results in a decrease in LOS by one level or more for those locations operating at LOS D or E.

Volume/capacity calculations have been performed using the ICU/HCM methodologies on the following scenarios:

- 1) Existing Traffic Conditions
- 2) Existing plus Project Traffic Conditions
- 3) Scenario (B) with Improvements/Mitigation, if necessary
- 4) Year 2015: Cumulative (existing plus ambient growth plus related projects traffic)
- 5) Year 2015: Cumulative with Project Traffic
- 6) Scenario (E) with Improvements/Mitigation, if necessary

A detailed analysis of these scenarios is provided in the Traffic Impact Analysis prepared for the Proposed Project (Appendix D).⁸ A discussion of the key Proposed Project impacts is presented below. These include: 1) the Existing plus Project Traffic Conditions; and 2) the Year 2015 Cumulative with Project Traffic.

Existing plus Proposed Project traffic conditions are shown in Table 3.16-2, *Existing plus Project Traffic Conditions*, and existing AM peak-hour traffic conditions, existing plus ambient plus related projects traffic conditions, and Year 2015 cumulative traffic conditions with the addition of Proposed Project traffic are shown in Table 3.16-3, *Year 2015 Peak Hour Traffic Conditions*.

⁸ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

**TABLE 3.16-2
EXISTING PLUS PROJECT TRAFFIC CONDITIONS**

No.	Key Intersections	Time Period	(1) Existing Traffic Conditions		(2) Existing plus Project Traffic Conditions		(3) Project Significant Impact	
			ICU/HCM	LOS	ICU/HCM	LOS	ICU/HCM Increase	Yes/No
1	California Avenue at Independence Avenue	AM	0.645	B	0.646	B	0.001	No
2	California Avenue at Ardmore Avenue	AM	0.726	C	0.728	C	0.002	No
3	California Avenue at Firestone Boulevard	AM	0.861	D	0.861	D	0.000	No
4	San Juan Avenue at Ardmore Avenue	AM	0.589	A	0.598	A	0.009	No
5	San Miguel Avenue at Ardmore Avenue	AM	11.3 sec/veh	B	11.5 sec/veh	B	0.2 sec/veh	No
6	San Miguel Avenue at Firestone Boulevard	AM	122.0 sec/veh	F	79.1 sec/veh	F	-42.9 sec/veh	No
7	Otis Street at Santa Ana Street	AM	0.700	B	0.701	B	0.001	No
8	Otis Street at Independence Avenue	AM	0.563	A	0.564	A	0.001	No
9	Otis Street at Ardmore Avenue	AM	0.713	C	0.713	C	0.000	No
10	Otis Street at Firestone Boulevard	AM	0.969	E	0.975	E	0.006	No
11	Otis Street at Southern Avenue	AM	0.634	B	0.635	B	0.001	No
12	Atlantic Avenue at Firestone Boulevard	AM	0.938	E	0.940	E	0.002	No

KEY: ICU = intersection capacity utilization; HCM = highway capacity manual; LOS = level of service

SOURCE: Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

The trip generation analysis for existing plus Proposed Project traffic conditions indicates the Proposed Project would not significantly impact any of the twelve intersections when compared to LOS standards and significant impact criteria. Although the intersections of San Miguel Avenue / Firestone Boulevard and Otis Street / Firestone Boulevard are forecast to operate at unacceptable LOS E and/or LOS F during the AM peak hour with the addition of Proposed Project traffic, the Proposed Project would be expected to decrease the intersection delay at the unsignalized intersection (*i.e.* San Miguel Avenue / Firestone Boulevard) and add less than 0.020 to the ICU value at the signalized intersection (*i.e.* Otis Street / Firestone Boulevard). The remaining ten key study intersections are forecast to continue to operate at an acceptable LOS with the addition of Proposed Project traffic to existing traffic.⁹ Implementation of the Proposed Project with existing traffic conditions would not conflict with the South Gate General Plan. Implementation of the Proposed Project with existing traffic conditions would not conflict with the CMP.

⁹ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

**TABLE 3.16-3
YEAR 2015 PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC CONDITIONS**

Key Intersection	Time Period	(1) Existing Traffic Conditions		(2) Year 2015 Cumulative Traffic Conditions		(3) Year 2015 Cumulative Plus Project Traffic Conditions		(4) Project Significant Impact		(5) With Planned Improvements		
		ICU/HCM	LOS	ICU/HCM	LOS	ICU/HCM	LOS	ICU/HCM Increase	Yes/No	ICU/HCM	LOS	
1	California Avenue at Independence Avenue	AM	0.645	B	0.689	B	0.691	B	0.002	No	---	---
2	California Avenue at Ardmore Avenue	AM	0.726	C	0.774	C	0.776	C	0.002	No	---	---
3	California Avenue at Firestone Boulevard	AM	0.861	D	0.984	E	0.987	E	0.003	No	---	---
4	San Juan Avenue at Ardmore Avenue	AM	0.589	A	0.608	B	0.617	B	0.009	No	---	---
5	San Miguel Avenue at Ardmore Avenue	AM	11.3 sec/veh	B	11.5 sec/veh	B	11.7 sec/veh	B	0.2 sec/veh	No	---	---
6	San Miguel Avenue at Firestone Boulevard	AM	122.0 sec/veh	F	454.2 sec/veh	F	398.6 sec/veh	F	-55.6 sec/veh	No	---	---
7	Otis Street at Santa Ana Street	AM	0.700	B	0.733	C	0.733	C	0.000	No	---	---
8	Otis Street at Independence Avenue	AM	0.563	A	0.593	A	0.593	A	0.000	No	---	---
9	Otis Street at Ardmore Avenue	AM	0.713	C	0.748	C	0.749	C	0.001	No	---	---
10	Otis Street at Firestone Boulevard	AM	0.969	E	1.090	F	1.097	F	0.007	No	---	---
11	Otis Street at Southern Avenue	AM	0.634	B	0.672	B	0.673	B	0.001	No	---	---
12	Atlantic Avenue at Firestone Boulevard	AM	0.938	E	1.063	F	1.065	F	0.002	No	0.911	E ¹⁰

KEY: ICU = intersection capacity utilization; HCM = highway capacity manual; LOS = level of service

¹⁰ Includes improvements recommended as part of the Firestone Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue Intersection Improvement Project.

The analysis in Table 3.16-3 demonstrates that the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact in the future cumulative, with-project scenario. The future cumulative, with-project scenario, as presented in the table, represents existing AM peak-hour traffic conditions, with the addition of ambient plus related projects traffic and the Proposed Project traffic for the future year 2015. Although the intersections of California Avenue / Firestone Boulevard, San Miguel Avenue / Firestone Boulevard, Otis Street / Firestone Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue / Firestone Boulevard are forecast to operate at unacceptable LOS E and/or LOS F during the AM peak hour with the addition of project traffic in the year 2015, the Proposed Project would be expected to decrease the intersection delay at the unsignalized intersection (*i.e.*, San Miguel Avenue / Firestone Boulevard) and add less than 0.020 to the ICU values at the signalized intersections (*i.e.*, California Avenue / Firestone Boulevard, Otis Street / Firestone Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue / Firestone Boulevard). The remaining eight key study intersections are forecast to continue to operate at an acceptable LOS with the addition of Proposed Project generated traffic in the year 2015.¹¹

Though the Proposed Project would not significantly impact any of the twelve key study intersections, and no Proposed Project mitigation measures are required, column five shows the AM peak hour LOS results for the intersection of Atlantic Avenue / Firestone Boulevard with implementation of improvements associated with the upcoming Firestone Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue Intersection Improvement Project, which would improve the LOS at that intersection from LOS F to LOS E during the AM peak.¹²

Although there are no significant Proposed Project impacts with regard to traffic, and although the AOC is a state agency, and as such, its authority supersedes the authority of the City of South Gate, the AOC, in consultation with the City of South Gate, will implement the following measures to improve traffic circulation in the vicinity of the Proposed Project site:

- 1) Dedicate eight feet of right-of-way on Firestone Boulevard and construct associated improvements
- 2) Dedicate five of right-of-way on San Miguel Avenue and construct associated improvements
- 3) Dedicate fifteen feet of right-of-way on Ardmore Avenue and construct associated improvements
- 4) Dedicate a corner cutoff on the northeast corner of San Miguel Avenue at Firestone Boulevard and construct associated improvements
- 5) Based on the Traffic Impact Analysis, left-turn phasing would be needed at the intersections of Otis Street at Firestone Boulevard and San Miguel Avenue at Firestone Boulevard (the AOC will pay a fair share portion of the cost of this improvement)
- 6) Install a raised center island median on Firestone Boulevard between San Miguel Avenue and Otis Street
- 7) Maintain access on Firestone Boulevard as right-in and right-out only

¹¹ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

¹² Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

As previously discussed, the traffic analysis found that all study intersections in the vicinity of the Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts, based upon the thresholds for significance identified in the South Gate General Plan.¹³ Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to transportation/traffic related to potential conflicts with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, considering all modes of transportation, including mass transit and non-motorized 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. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(b) *Would the Proposed Project 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?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to transportation/traffic in relation to conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to, LOS standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways. The CMP was created statewide pursuant to Proposition 111 (June 1990) and has been implemented locally by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.¹⁴ The CMP for the County of Los Angeles requires the analysis of the traffic impacts of individual development projects with potential regional significance. Impact thresholds are established within the County of Los Angeles CMP.¹⁵ In addition, the CMP criteria for designated monitoring locations on the CMP highway system states a project would result in significant impacts if the project were to do the following:¹⁶

- Add fifty or more trips during either the AM or PM weekday peak hours at all CMP arterial monitoring intersections, including freeway on and off-ramp intersections
- Add one hundred fifty or more trips in either direction of mainline freeway-monitoring stations during the AM or PM weekday peak hours.

CMP Station Number 114, Intersection Number 12 at Atlantic Avenue and Firestone Boulevard was the only identified CMP intersection monitoring location within the Proposed Project study area. Based on the Proposed Project's trip generation potential, trip distribution, and trip assignment, the Proposed Project would not add fifty or more trips at the identified CMP intersection during the weekday AM peak hour. The LOS analysis in Table 3.16-3 indicated the Proposed Project would not significantly impact the CMP intersection monitoring location.¹⁷ There would be no expected impacts to a CMP intersection monitoring location.

¹³ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

¹⁴ Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. 2010. *2010 Congestion Management Program*. Los Angeles, CA. Available at: http://www.metro.net/projects_studies/cmp/images/CMP_Final_2010.pdf

¹⁵ Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. 2010. *2010 Congestion Management Program*. Los Angeles, CA. Available at: http://www.metro.net/projects_studies/cmp/images/CMP_Final_2010.pdf

¹⁶ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

¹⁷ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

The closest CMP freeway monitoring location in the Proposed Project vicinity is the I-710 Freeway Route 105, Firestone Boulevard (CMP Station 1080 – Post Mile 19.10). Based on the Proposed Project’s trip generation potential and distribution pattern, the Proposed Project would not add more than one hundred fifty trips during the AM peak hour at this CMP mainline freeway-monitoring location.¹⁸ There would be no expected impacts to a CMP freeway monitoring location. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to transportation/traffic related to conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to LOS standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (c) *Would the Proposed Project 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?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to transportation and traffic in relation to a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks. The nearest public airport or private use airport to the Proposed Project is the Compton/Woodley Airport located approximately five miles southwest of the Proposed Project site. The Proposed Project would not be located within an airport land use plan. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to transportation and traffic related to a change in air traffic patterns that result in substantial safety risks. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (d) *Would the Proposed Project substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to transportation and traffic in relation to substantially increasing hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses. Any construction-induced traffic would not be expected to result in increased hazards related to traffic engineering design features or incompatible uses. The Proposed Project site is connected by a network of well-defined and pre-existing paved roads. Access to the site would continue to be provided by these roads following construction of the Proposed Project. The proposed new courthouse building would have separate entrances for the County of Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department’s bus traffic, service traffic, and judicial officers. The Proposed Project would be a compatible use of the Proposed Project site (see subchapter 3.10, *Land Use and Land Use Permitting*). There would be no expected significant impacts from an increase in hazards due to a design feature. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (e) *Would the Proposed Project result in inadequate emergency access?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to transportation and traffic in relation to inadequate emergency access. The proposed new courthouse building would have separate

¹⁸ Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

driveways for the County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department's bus traffic, service traffic, and judicial officers. These separate access points would be expected to provide adequate emergency access. The Proposed Project would include improved safety features well beyond those included in the former South Gate Courthouse, which had major security problems and has been closed. Safety is one of the primary objectives of the Proposed Project. Therefore, there would be no expected impacts to transportation and traffic related to inadequate emergency access. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (f) *Would the Proposed Project conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to transportation and traffic in relation to a conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation. The City of South Gate does not currently have any established plan or system for bicycle routes, but there are several bicycle routes in the City of South Gate.¹⁹ The Proposed Project would not be expected to interfere with the bicycle lanes. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority transit service provides numerous routes through the City of South Gate and covers the major roadway corridors. Future transit plans include the possibility of a high speed, grade-separated, environmentally friendly transit line.²⁰ The Proposed Project site is served by bus lines, including The Gate service, a new bus line that as of May 3, 2010, connects with several Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority lines.²¹ The Gate service runs along Ardmore Avenue and California Avenue to the west of the Proposed Project site, less than one mile away. The closest bus stop to the Proposed Project is located at Firestone Boulevard and San Juan Avenue approximately one-tenth of a mile west of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would be accessible to pedestrians. The Proposed Project site is served by sidewalks on the major surrounding streets and the Proposed Project would include pedestrian walkways to facilitate building access. The Proposed Project would be expected to be consistent with future transit plans; therefore, there would be no expected impacts to transportation and traffic related to adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

¹⁹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *City of South Gate General Plan 2035, Mobility Element*. South Gate, CA.

²⁰ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *City of South Gate General Plan 2035, Mobility Element*. South Gate, CA.

²¹ City of South Gate. Accessed on: 22 March 2011. Web site. Available at: <http://www.sogate.org/news/index.cfm/fuseaction/story/ID/196/>

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Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers. 22 April 2011. *New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse Traffic Impact Analysis*. Costa Mesa, CA.

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. 2010. *2010 Congestion Management Program*. Los Angeles, CA. Available at:

http://www.metro.net/projects_studies/cmp/images/CMP_Final_2010.pdf

3.17 Utilities and Service Systems

<u>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</u>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS — Would the Proposed Project:				
a) Conflict with wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities, or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that would serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to utilities and service systems, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Utilities and service systems at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to the City of South Gate General Plan 2035 (South Gate General Plan),² the County of Los Angeles General Plan safety element,³ and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Los Angeles Region Basin Plan.⁴ The utilities and service systems investigation entailed coordination with the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works to assess natural gas, telephone, electric, sewer, storm drain and water utilities.

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010 . Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000-15387, Appendix G.

² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Public Facilities and Services Element*. South Gate, CA.

³ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan, Safety Element*. Los Angeles, CA.

⁴ California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region. Accessed on: 14 February 2011. "LARWQCB Basin Plan." Available at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/

- (a) *Would the Proposed Project conflict with wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to utilities and service systems in relation to exceedance of wastewater treatment requirements of the RWQCB and the City of South Gate.

The Proposed Project would be served by the existing wastewater system and would not require the development of new sewer lines. Wastewater generated by the Proposed Project would be treated at the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) located approximately 16 miles southwest of the Proposed Project site at 24501 Figueroa Street in the City of Carson, California, 90705.⁵ The JWPCP currently supports wastewater discharge from the Proposed Project site and would continue to do so during operation of the Proposed Project. The JWPCP is one of the largest wastewater treatment plants in the world and is the largest of the County of Los Angeles Sanitation District's wastewater treatment plants. The facility provides both primary and secondary treatment for approximately 320 million gallons of wastewater per day.⁶ The JWPCP currently operates in conformance with the applicable RWQCB standards for the Los Angeles Region. The plant serves a population of approximately 3.5 million people throughout the County of Los Angeles.⁷

Sources of wastewater from the Proposed Project would be limited to restroom facilities and would be considered negligible in relation to the capacity of the JWPCP. In addition, courthouse activities would not result in containment emissions that would require a higher wastewater treatment level because sanitary wastewater would only be generated during courthouse operations. The Proposed Project would shift employees from existing and former facilities to the new courthouse location. In addition, the current users at the proposed site account for some contribution to the wastewater system. Thus, the amount of wastewater generated by the Proposed Project would be similar to that generated in existing and former courthouse facilities and would not require a higher level of treatment. Therefore, the existing wastewater system would be capable of handling the wastewater generated from the new facility.

The City of South Gate requires new development to meet the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), and the Proposed Project would comply with these requirements (see Chapter 2, *Project Description*). The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) would also review the best management practices (BMPs) outlined in the Los Angeles County Standard Urban Storm-water Mitigation Plan. No impact would be expected to occur related to the discharge pipelines' incapability to adequately support the use of non-potable water from the facility, which would include construction operations, post-construction operations, and maintenance of bathroom facilities or other sources of wastewater. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to have less than significant impacts in relation to exceedance of wastewater treatment requirements of the RWQCB. No further analysis is warranted.

⁵ Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 14 February 2011. "Joint Water Pollution Control Plant." Available at: http://www.lacsd.org/about/wastewater_facilities/jwpcp/default.asp

⁶ Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 14 February 2011. "Joint Water Pollution Control Plant." Available at: http://www.lacsd.org/about/wastewater_facilities/jwpcp/default.asp

⁷ Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 14 February 2011. "Joint Water Pollution Control Plant." Available at: http://www.lacsd.org/about/wastewater_facilities/jwpcp/default.asp

Mitigation required. No mitigation required.

- (b) *Would the Proposed Project 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?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to utilities and service systems in relation to the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities that would cause significant environmental effects. Wastewater generated by the Proposed Project would be treated at the JWPCP, which provides both primary and secondary treatment for approximately 320 million gallons of wastewater per day and serves a population of approximately 3.5 million people throughout the County of Los Angeles.^{8,9} The JWPCP currently operates in conformance with the applicable RWQCB standards for the Los Angeles Region.

Sources of wastewater from the Proposed Project would be limited to restroom facilities for the courthouse and would be considered negligible. The Proposed Project would transfer employees from existing and former facilities to the proposed new courthouse. In addition, the current uses of the Proposed Project site account for some contribution to wastewater. In addition, the Proposed Project would include sustainable design elements that would limit the amount of wastewater generated by the Proposed Project site; thus, the amount of wastewater generated by the Proposed Project would be similar or less than that generated by existing and former courthouse facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to utilities and service systems. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (c) *Would the Proposed Project require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities, or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to utilities and service systems in relation to the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, which could cause significant environmental impacts.

As stated in Chapter 2, the Proposed Project would comply with the NPDES permit issued by the RWQCB. As part of the NPDES, the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan requires new development to implement BMPs to reduce or eliminate non-storm water discharges to the storm water system.

While the Proposed Project would be anticipated to result in storm water runoff from non-storm and storm water discharges on roofs, streets, drive-ways, and parking lots, BMPs would be implemented in the construction, operation, and maintenance procedures for the Proposed Project to limit the use and

⁸ Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 14 February 2011. "Joint Water Pollution Control Plant." Available at: http://www.lacsd.org/about/wastewater_facilities/jwpcp/default.asp

⁹ Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 14 February 2011. "Joint Water Pollution Control Plant." Available at: http://www.lacsd.org/about/wastewater_facilities/jwpcp/default.asp

discharge of oils, chemicals, soils, and other pollutants. In addition, the sustainable design elements of the Proposed Project may reduce runoff from existing levels because the existing site is made up of mostly impervious surfaces. As such, the Proposed Project would not be expected to result in the creation of significant additional storm water runoff or discharge of pollutants into nearby storm drains or waterways. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts related to the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or the expansion of existing facilities. No further analysis is warranted.

- (d) *Would the Proposed Project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to utilities and service systems in relation to availability of sufficient water supplies from existing entitlements and resources to serve the Proposed Project.

The City of South Gate receives its potable (drinking) water primarily from its own wells. Water generated from wells is chlorinated and distributed to City of South Gate customers and/or stored in reservoirs. The total capacity of both active and stand-by wells is 32.97 million gallons per day (MGD), or 101.19 acre-feet per day.¹⁰ This represents a surplus over the City of South Gate's average daily demand of 9.32 MGD and its maximum daily demand of 16.78 MGD.¹¹ In addition to its wells, the City of South Gate also has agreements to purchase water from The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), the City of Downey, and the Golden State Water Company.¹² It should be noted that these secondary sources are generally available for emergencies only, and the City of South Gate has not used or purchased water from these secondary sources in the last ten years. Several factors, including population growth, housing density, employment, and household income, would determine future water demands. However, the Proposed Project would not include residential elements and would not be expected to contribute to an increase in population. In addition, considering the current water consumption by existing users at the Proposed Project site and the intent of the Proposed Project to consolidate two courthouses, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in a negligible net increase in water use. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to significantly increase water demand.

Section 15083.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines requires consultation with the affected water agency.¹³ This guideline applies to projects that meet or constitute the functional equivalent of a project with any one of six factors:

¹⁰ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Public Facilities and Services Element*. South Gate, CA.

¹¹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035 Public Facilities and Services Element*. South Gate, CA.

¹² City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035 Public Facilities and Services Element*. South Gate, CA.

¹³ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000-15387, Appendix G.

1. A residential development of more than 500 dwelling units
2. A shopping center or business establishment that will employ more than 1,000 persons or have more than 500,000 square feet of floor space
3. A commercial office building that will employ more than 1,000 persons or have more than 250,000 square feet of floor space
4. A hotel, motel, or both with more than 500 rooms
5. An industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or industrial park intended to house more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or having more than 650,000 square feet of floor area
6. Any mixed-use project that would demand an amount of water equal to, or greater than, the amount of water needed to serve a 500-dwelling unit project

The Proposed Project would be a 118,000-gross-building-square-foot facility whose water use would be similar to that of a commercial office building. The Proposed Project would have less than the 250,000 square feet of floor space and thus would not require water supply consultation. Currently, the existing facility uses less water than it has available to use, and, because the Proposed Project would be designed according to the California Trial Court Facilities Standards guide and would entail sustainable design features, the Proposed Project would be expected to use less water than the existing facility uses.¹⁴ The sustainable elements of the Proposed Project would meet standards to achieve a LEED Silver rating that have been used for several previously identified courthouses in the State of California.¹⁵ Implementation of the proposed sustainable design elements would ensure that the Proposed Project would not significantly increase water usage during its construction and operation.

The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to utilities and service systems related to the availability of sufficient water supplies from existing entitlements and resources to serve the Proposed Project, or to require new expanded entitlements. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

- (e) *Would the Proposed Project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that would serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in impacts to utilities and service systems in relation to a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the Proposed Project and that it has adequate capacity to serve the Proposed Project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments. The City of South Gate's sanitary sewer system transports water from households and businesses to the JWPCP for treatment. The JWPCP provides primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment for up to 320 million gallons of wastewater per day. The JWPCP has the capacity to absorb projects that are consistent with regional growth factors established by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The Proposed Project would

¹⁴ Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. [Updated 21 April 2006] Reissued 1 March 2010 with Amendment 1. *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*. San Francisco, CA.

¹⁵ Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. [Updated 21 April 2006] Reissued 1 March 2010 with Amendment 1. *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*. San Francisco, CA.

not substantially increase the need for wastewater treatment because it would consolidate two courthouses (one existing and one former) and it would not be expected to induce population growth but would be consistent with the population growth projected by the SCAG. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be expected to have impacts on utilities and service systems related to a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the Proposed Project that it has adequate capacity to serve the Proposed Project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(f) *Would the Proposed Project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to utilities and service systems in relation to being served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs. Currently, there are twelve major landfills permitted to accept solid waste in the County of Los Angeles.¹⁶ Ten are located in the metropolitan Los Angeles area, and two are located in the Antelope Valley. Eight sites are privately owned and operated and three are operated by local sanitation districts. A majority of solid waste within the City of South Gate is disposed of at either Class II landfills (municipal solid waste facilities), which are facilities for non-hazardous household waste, or unclassified (inert) landfills that accept materials such as soil, concrete, asphalt, and other construction and demolition debris.

The City of South Gate is a member of the Los Angeles Integrated Waste Management Authority (LARA), which is a consortium of 16 cities within the Los Angeles County. LARA's mission is to assist members in meeting and exceeding the 50 percent waste diversion mandates of Assembly Bill 939. As a result, the City of South Gate has a number of private-sector businesses that assist in recycling materials, including Interior Removal Specialists; Pacific Coast Metals; Hanson Aggregates, Inc.; and the Sanitation District South Gate Transfer Station.¹⁷ Moreover, the City of South Gate has several programs to divert solid waste from landfills: composting, facility recovery, policy incentives, household hazardous waste management, and public education. As a result, the City of South Gate diverted 47 percent of its solid waste in 2002. LARA, of which the City of the South Gate is a member, had a diversion rate of 59 percent in 2006.¹⁸

Waste Management operates a transfer station in South Gate and uses a set of specific landfills for residential and commercial/industrial wastes: Commerce Refuse-to-Energy Facility; Bradley Landfill; Downtown Diversions Inc; El Sobrante Landfill; Nu-Way Live Oak Reclamation, Inc.; Southeast

¹⁶ Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 14 February 2011. *Solid Waste Facilities in Los Angeles County*. Available at: <http://www.lacsd.org/civica/filebank/blobload.asp?BlobID=3727>

¹⁷ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Public Facilities and Services Element*. South Gate, CA.

¹⁸ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035, Public Facilities and Services Element*. South Gate, CA.

Recovery Resource Facility; City of Long Beach Energy Recovery Bureau; and Synagro Regional Composting Facility.¹⁹

The Proposed Project would include the development of commercial office space and bathroom facilities, which would require an increase in water consumption and waste disposal during construction and operational phases of the Proposed Project. Refuse collected by the City of South Gate, which includes collection at the Proposed Project site, would be burned in the Commerce Refuse-to-Energy Facility and the Southeast Resource Recovery Facility (SERRF). The Commerce Refuse-to-Energy Facility is located approximately five and one half miles away from the Proposed Project site at 5926 Sheila Street, Commerce, California 90040. The Commerce facility converts waste into energy and generates power for approximately 20,000 Southern California homes.²⁰ An average of 120 trucks per day deliver loads Monday through Friday, and the facility burns an average of 360 tons of trash per day and generates ten megawatts net energy.²¹ The facility has a permitted capacity of 1,000 tons per day, and burns approximately 10,800 tons of refuse each month.²² It is anticipated that waste collected at the Proposed Project site would be transferred to the Commerce facility, which has capacity to service the Proposed Project site. The SERRF is located approximately seventeen miles south of the Proposed Project site at 120 Pier South Avenue, Long Beach, California. The SERRF converts waste into energy and generates power for the City of South Gate and state.²³ According to the 2007 third-quarter report, during the months of July, August, and September, 56,021.46 tons of refuse were collected.²⁴ The facility has the capacity to store up to 5,000 tons and processes 1,380 tons of solid waste per day.²⁵ It is anticipated that waste collected at the Proposed Project site would be transferred to the SERRF, which has the capacity to service the Proposed Project site. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to utilities and service systems in relation to being served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(g) *Would the project comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to service systems in relation to compliance with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to

¹⁹ City of South Gate, Department of Community Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035 Public Facilities and Services Element*. South Gate, CA.

²⁰ Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 14 March 2011. "Commerce Refuse-to-Energy." Web site. Available at: http://www.lacsd.org/about/solid_waste_facilities/commerce/default.asp

²¹ Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 14 March 2011. "Commerce Refuse-to-Energy." Web site. Available at: http://www.lacsd.org/about/solid_waste_facilities/commerce/default.asp

²² Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 14 March 2011. "Commerce Refuse-to-Energy." Web site. Available at: http://www.lacsd.org/about/solid_waste_facilities/commerce/default.asp

²³ City of Long Beach. Accessed 14 March 2011. Web site. "SERRF Operations." Available at: http://www.longbeach.gov/lbgo/serrf/serrf_operations.asp

²⁴ County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works. 2007 November 30. *Monthly Solid Waste Disposal Quantity Summary by Jurisdictions (Reporting Period: Year 2007)*. Available at: http://dpwprod3.co.la.ca.us/swims/download/rpt_20071130_102022_-1_13.pdf

²⁵ Sanitation District of Los Angeles County. Accessed on: 14 March 2011. "Southeast Resource Recovery Facility (SERRF) Brochure." Available at: http://www.lacsd.org/about/solid_waste_facilities/serrf/brochure.asp

solid waste. The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939) requires the County of Los Angeles to attain specific waste diversion goals. In addition, the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991, as amended, requires expanded or new development projects to incorporate storage areas for recycling bins into the existing design. The Proposed Project would include sustainable elements to ensure compliance with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. It is anticipated that these project elements would comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations to reduce the amount of solid waste. The AOC shall ensure that the best method of solids disposal and reduction of the solid waste stream is implemented at the Proposed Project site. The Proposed Project would result in deposition of all solid waste at permitted facilities for solid waste (including hazardous waste). Therefore, the impacts in relation to compliance with federal, state, and local statutes would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

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http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/basin_plan_documentation.shtml

City of Long Beach. Accessed on: 14 March 2011. "SERRF Operations." Web site. Available at:
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3.18 Mandatory Findings of Significance

<u>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</u>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE — Would the Proposed Project:				
a) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have impacts that would be 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.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse (Proposed Project) may have a significant impact to Mandatory Findings of Significance, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.¹ Mandatory Findings of Significance at the Proposed Project site were evaluated with regard to California Trial Court Facilities Standards,² California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Scenic Highway System designations,³ South Gate General Plan,⁴ County of Los Angeles General Plan,⁵ previously prepared information on the Proposed Project site, information provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), technical reports (aesthetics, air quality, noise, and traffic and transportation) prepared for the Proposed Project, and field reconnaissance undertaken in February 2011.

¹ *California Code of Regulations*. 2010. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

² Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts. [21 April 2006] Reissued 1 March 2010 with Amendment 1. *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*. Available at: http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/documents/06_April_Facilities_Standards_with_Amendment1.pdf

³ California Department of Transportation. 10 May 2010. *Officially Designated State Scenic Highways*. Available at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/schwy.htm>

⁴ City of South Gate, Department of Development/Redevelopment. December 2009. *South Gate General Plan 2035*. South Gate, CA.

⁵ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning. November 1980. *County of Los Angeles General Plan*. Los Angeles, CA.

- (a) *Would the Proposed 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?*

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation. The Proposed Project would not be expected 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, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal community. The Proposed Project site is located in an urbanized and previously developed area. No native plant communities or animal habitats exist at the Proposed Project site. Therefore, there would be no expected Mandatory Findings of Significance related to the potential of the Proposed Project to 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, and/or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. No further analysis is warranted.

The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to Mandatory Findings of Significance in relation to the potential degradation of the quality of the environment or elimination of important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. The Proposed Project would not entail the demolition of a cultural resource. Construction of the Proposed Project would not be expected to adversely impact or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Further, the results of the records search also indicate that there are no known prehistoric archaeological resources within the Proposed Project site or within one-half mile of the Proposed Project site.

The Proposed Project may result in impacts to cultural resources related directly or indirectly to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature. Incorporation of mitigation measures would be expected to reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. The geology of the Proposed Project site is composed of surficial deposits of younger Quaternary Alluvium (Holocene) as a result of deposition from the Los Angeles River, which currently flows through a concrete channel just east of the Proposed Project site. These younger deposits are underlain by older Quaternary Alluvium. The younger Quaternary deposits do not usually contain significant fossil vertebrates; however, the older Quaternary deposits have the potential to contain significant fossil vertebrates. While the Proposed Project site has been substantially disturbed, it is anticipated that excavation for the proposed three-story building and basement would potentially exceed 11 feet in depth and could impact underlying rock units. Mitigation of paleontological resource impacts, where and if found, would be expected to reduce impacts to below the level of significance through the requirement to fully recover paleontological resources from excavations into older Quaternary Alluvium in accordance with standards for such recovery established by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Therefore, impacts to cultural resources directly or indirectly related to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature would be reduced to below the level of significance through mitigation.

Mitigation required: Mitigation measure Cultural-1 would reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources to below the level of significance.

Measure Cultural-1

The impacts to cultural resources related directly or indirectly to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource from the Project shall be reduced to below the level of significance through the salvage and disposition of paleontological resources that result from all earthmoving activities involving disturbances of the older Quaternary Alluvium. Ground-disturbing activities include, but are not limited to, drilling, excavation, trenching, and grading. If paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, the applicant, under the direction of the lead agency, shall be required to, and be responsible for, salvage and recovery of those resources consistent with standards for such recovery established by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology.⁶

Because the precise depth of strata considered highly sensitive for paleontological resources is unknown, the applicant, under the direction of the lead agency, shall be responsible for, and shall ensure implementation of construction monitoring by a qualified paleontological monitor during all earthmoving activities that involve disturbance of underlying rock units. The paleontological monitor shall coordinate a pre-construction briefing to provide information regarding the protection of paleontological resources. Construction personnel shall be trained in procedures to be followed in the event that a fossil site or fossil occurrence is encountered during construction. An information package shall be provided for construction personnel not present at the initial pre-construction briefing.

Should a potentially unique paleontological resource be encountered, a qualified paleontologist shall be contacted and retained by the applicant. The Society for Vertebrate Paleontology defines a qualified paleontologist as “a practicing scientist who is recognized in the paleontologic community and is proficient in vertebrate paleontology, as demonstrated by:

1. Institutional affiliations or appropriate credentials,
2. Ability to recognize and recover vertebrate fossils in the field,
3. Local geological and biostratigraphic expertise,
4. Proficiency in identifying vertebrate fossils, and
5. Publications in scientific journals.”⁷

⁶ Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Accessed on: 23 March 2011. “Policy Statements: Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Nonrenewable Paleontologic Resources: Standard Guidelines.” Available at: <http://www.vertpaleo.org/Content/NavigationMenu/TheSociety/StatementsandGuidelines/ConformableImpactMitigationGuidelinesCommittee/default.htm>

⁷ Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Accessed on: 23 March 2011. “Policy Statements: Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Nonrenewable Paleontologic Resources: Standard Guidelines.” Available at: <http://www.vertpaleo.org/Content/NavigationMenu/TheSociety/StatementsandGuidelines/ConformableImpactMitigationGuidelinesCommittee/default.htm>

If fossil localities are discovered, the paleontologist shall proceed according to guidelines offered by the Society for Vertebrate Paleontology, including controlled collection of fossil and geologic samples for processing, screen washing to recover small specimens (if applicable), and specimen preparation to a point of stabilization and identification.⁸

All significant specimens collected shall be appropriately prepared, identified, and catalogued prior to their placement in a permanent accredited repository, such as the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. The qualified paleontologist shall be required to secure a written agreement with a recognized repository, regarding the final disposition, permanent storage, and maintenance of any significant fossil remains and associated specimen data and corresponding geologic and geographic site data that might be recovered as a result of the specified monitoring program. The written agreement shall specify the level of treatment (*e.g.*, preparation, identification, curation, and cataloguing) required before the fossil collection would be accepted for storage. In addition, a technical report shall be completed.

Daily logs shall be kept by the qualified paleontological monitor during all monitoring activities. The daily monitoring log shall be keyed to a location map to indicate the area monitored, the date, and the assigned personnel. In addition, this log shall include information of the type of rock encountered, fossil specimens recovered, and associated specimen data gathered. Within 90 days of the completion of any salvage operation or monitoring activities, a mitigation report shall be submitted to the lead agency with an appended, itemized inventory of the specimens. The report and inventory, when submitted to the lead agency, will signify the completion of the program to mitigate impacts to paleontological resources.

Significance after Mitigation: Less than Significant.

- (b) *Would the Proposed Project have impacts that would be 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.)*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts after mitigation to Mandatory Findings of Significance in relation to impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable. Construction of the Proposed Project would not be expected to contribute to impacts that could be cumulatively considerable. Construction impacts to air quality, noise, and traffic could temporarily affect nearby residents, but these impacts would be below the level of significance. The impacts would only occur during short construction periods. Implementation of the Proposed Project

⁸ Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Accessed on: 23 March 2011. “Policy Statements: Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Nonrenewable Paleontologic Resources: Standard Guidelines.” Available at: <http://www.vertpaleo.org/Content/NavigationMenu/TheSociety/StatementsandGuidelines/ConformableImpactMitigationGuidelinesCommittee/default.htm>

would not be expected to contribute to incremental effects that could be considered significant when considered together with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.⁹ Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

(c) *Would the Proposed Project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?*

Less than Significant. The Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts with mitigation to Mandatory Findings of Significance in relation to the Proposed Project having environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The Proposed Project would ensure compliance with federal and state regulations. The Proposed Project would also respect local regulations and would implement sustainable features through LEED elements, which would further ensure that the Proposed Project would not result in substantial adverse impacts to human beings. Potential shadow impacts resulting from the height of the Proposed Project structure would result in less than significant impacts to human beings. Construction impacts from air quality, noise, and traffic could temporarily affect nearby residents and could potentially have impacts. However, these impacts would be below the level of significance. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be expected to result in less than significant impacts after mitigation to Mandatory Findings of Significance. No further analysis is warranted.

Mitigation required: No mitigation required.

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CHAPTER 4

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