FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Land Transfer from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center to the Los Angeles National Cemetery

North Hills, California

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Construction and Facilities Management
425 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to identify, analyze, and document the potential physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts associated with the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) proposed transfer of 26.4 acres of land from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center (SACC) for expansion of the Los Angeles National Cemetery (LANC).

This EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA; 42 United States Code 4321 et seq.), the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508), Environmental Effects of the Department of Veterans Affairs Actions (38 CFR Part 26), and relevant guidance from VA's NEPA Interim Guidance for Projects (VA, 2010).

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide additional National Cemetery burial options and increase long-term burial capacity for the Veteran population of approximately 600,000 who reside within 75 miles of the LANC.

This project is needed because the LANC presently has limited burial options. Most of the LANC facility adjacent to the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center is closed to first interments and is open only for subsequent interments (i.e., where Veterans and eligible family members can join a Veteran or spouse in an existing gravesite). A columbarium option opened in October 2019 at the LANC for cremation internments. However, Veterans from the Los Angeles area who wish to receive a casket burial have to utilize the Riverside or Bakersfield National Cemeteries (approximately 75 or 110 from Los Angeles, respectively) or use a private burial option.

Proposed Action and Alternatives

This EA examines in-depth two alternatives, the Proposed Action Alternative and the No Action Alternative, defined as follows:

- **Proposed Action Alternative:** VA would transfer approximately 26.4 acres of land that are part of the SACC managed by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) to the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) for development of a new cemetery. This land transfer parcel is presently underutilized property. VA would develop a new national cemetery at the parcel in accordance with the requirements of the *NCA Design Guide*. The parcel presently contains the Mission Hills Golf Course and baseball field (both closed since 2020), various vacant buildings, and the Sepulveda Vet Center Outstation. Before VA proceeds with cemetery development, existing buildings and infrastructure will be demolished or modified as needed, and the functions of the Sepulveda Vet Center Outstation will be relocated.

- **No Action Alternative:** VA would not construct a new cemetery in Los Angeles County. As the owner of the SACC property, VA would continue to mow and maintain the Project Site, as needed. The No Action Alternative would not provide VA the opportunity to expand National Cemetery burial options and capacity to meet future demand in the Los Angeles area. However, the No Action Alternative is assessed in this EA to provide a comparative baseline analysis, as required under the CEQ regulations.

Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

The EA describes the baseline physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic conditions at the Project Site and the general vicinity. Table ES-1 summarizes the potential environmental impacts associated with implementing the Proposed Action or the No Action alternative.

Table ES-1. Summary of Impact Analysis

Resource Area	Proposed Action	No Action Alternative
Aesthetics	Negligible impacts anticipated due to changes to the site, but the site will remain visually similar and consistent with the present configuration.	No impacts anticipated
Air Quality	Short-term, minor criteria pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions during construction and long-term, negligible criteria pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles accessing the site once operational would be expected. Construction and operational emissions would be well below federal *de minimis* thresholds. Increase in burial options within Los Angeles County would regionally offset some mobile source emissions occurring from families and visitors that are currently traveling to cemeteries outside the Los Angeles area.	Negligible adverse effects from Veteran families having to travel more than 75 miles to access other National Cemeteries, resulting in continuation of long-term, negligible impacts on regional air quality.
Cultural and Historic Resources	There are no historic properties identified in the area of potential effects for the Proposed Action; therefore, the land transfer and development of a new cemetery at the Project Site would not result in adverse cultural resources impacts. In the event that cultural resources are discovered during ground disturbing activities, findings will be assessed for eligibility and Tribal input obtained with regards to significance and treatment.	No impacts anticipated
Geology and Soils	Short-term, negligible impact due to potential for erosion of soil exposed during construction, which would be managed with appropriate stormwater pollution control. No impact during operation, as soils would be revegetated to prevent and avoid erosion. No impact on geology or topography.	No impacts anticipated
Hydrology and Water Quality	Short-term, negligible adverse impact from construction activity that would be managed with appropriate stormwater pollution control.	No impacts anticipated

Resource Area	Proposed Action	No Action Alternative
Wildlife and Habitat	Short-term, negligible adverse impacts to common wildlife are expected from noise and temporary loss of vegetation during construction. There is no suitable habitat for listed protected species, and therefore no effect on these species from the Proposed Action.	No impacts anticipated
Noise	Short-term minor noise impacts from construction equipment and vehicles would be expected. The closest noise-sensitive receptors are the residences across Lassen St. and Haskell Ave. approximately 100 feet north and east from the Project Site. Compliance with noise ordinance restrictions and engineering controls will help minimize construction noise. Operational noise impacts from vehicle traffic, use of powered equipment, and intermittent rifle salutes would be minimized through landscape design that provides a buffer from sensitive receptors. Operational noise impacts would be long-term but less than significant.	No impacts anticipated
Land Use	Negligible effects are anticipated, since the proposed use of the Project Site is allowable under current zoning provisions and is consistent with the current institutional use of the SACC.	No impacts anticipated
Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Zone Management	The Project Site contains no wetlands and is outside of floodplains and the Coastal Zone Management Zone. No impacts anticipated.	No impacts anticipated
Community Services	The new cemetery is not expected to increase demand for community services. No impacts anticipated.	No impacts anticipated
Solid and Hazardous Materials	Short-term, negligible adverse impacts from construction would be expected from generation of solid wastes and construction/demolition debris. Volumes generated would be anticipated to make a negligible contribution to the overall solid waste volume generated and disposed of in Los Angeles County. Construction contractors would be required to develop and implement a construction and demolition debris recycling plan. Solid waste and hazardous materials from operations will be managed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and are not anticipated to result in significant impacts.	No impacts anticipated

Resource Area	Proposed Action	No Action Alternative
Transportation and Parking	Short-term, minor adverse impacts from construction traffic would be expected, but would be managed with a Work Zone Transportation Management Plan. A Transportation Impact Analysis estimated that operation of the proposed cemetery would result in a reduction of trips during the morning peak hour (between 7:00 and 9:00 AM) and a net increase of 169 daily trips afternoon peak hour (between 4:00 and 6:00 PM). LOS would be at the same level with or without the Proposed Action at key local intersections. Vehicle miles traveled are not expected to increase significantly from the Proposed Action. Therefore, impacts on transportation and parking would not be significant.	Local traffic is expected to increase based on overall development patterns. Study intersections are expected to experience a slight degradation of LOS regardless of implementation of the Proposed Action.
Utilities	Long-term, negligible adverse impacts due to increased utilization of utilities at the Project Site, particularly increased water demand.	No impacts anticipated
Socioeconomics	Short-term, negligible beneficial impact on the local economy from construction employment and material purchases. Long-term, negligible beneficial impact during operations from increased visitors, potential increase in spending on area services, and avoiding visitors' costs to travel to another National Cemetery outside of greater Los Angeles area.	Negligible adverse impact due to increased costs for Veteran families using private cemeteries or families and visitors who have to travel to a National Cemetery outside of greater Los Angeles area.
Environmental Justice	Long-term, negligible beneficial impact during operations from increased visitors, potential increase in spending on area services, and avoiding visitors' costs to travel to another National Cemetery outside of greater Los Angeles area.	Negligible adverse impact to minority and low-income populations due to increased costs for Veteran families using private cemeteries or families and visitors who have to travel to a National Cemetery outside of greater Los Angeles area.
Cumulative Effects	Various transportation and mixed-use projects are anticipated in the Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills in the next 5-10 years that could result in cumulative impacts when considered alongside the Proposed Action. The proposed cemetery would contribute to traffic, noise, and air quality impacts during the construction period, as described under the respective resource area sections, but the cemetery's contribution to those impacts would be minimal compared to the scope of projects in the area. Cumulative impacts are not expected to be significant.	Development in the surrounding area and associated air quality, noise, and traffic impacts would occur regardless of whether the proposed cemetery is constructed. If the proposed cemetery is not constructed, then no cumulative impacts would occur.
Potential for Generating Substantial Public Controversy	No controversial issues were identified during the scoping process.	No impacts anticipated

Agency Coordination and Public Involvement

During preparation of the draft EA, VA reached out to selected federal, state, and local agencies, Native American Tribes, and elected officials for early input on the Proposed Action and environmental concerns to be addressed in the draft EA. A scoping notice was also published in the *Los Angeles Times* on August 30 and September 4, 2022, to announce VA's intent to develop an EA and to solicit input from interested stakeholders. Copies of correspondence and newspaper notices are provided in Appendix B.

VA published and distributed the draft EA for a 30-day public comment period as announced by a Notice of Availability (NOA) published in the *Los Angeles Times* on January 27 and 29, 2023. A copy of the draft EA was also made available for public review at the Mid-Valley Regional Library in North Hills, CA and on the VA website at: https://www.cfm.va.gov/environmental/index.asp. VA received two public comments regarding the draft EA. Copies of notices and comments received are provided in Appendix B.

Conclusions

The analysis performed in this EA concludes there would be no significant adverse impact, either individually or cumulatively, to the local environment or quality of life associated with the Proposed Action, provided the minimization and management measures and regulatory compliance measures described in this EA are implemented. This EA's analysis determines, therefore, that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is unnecessary for implementation of the Proposed Action, and that a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is appropriate.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACM	Asbestos containing materials
APE	Area of potential effects
BMP	Best management practices
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFM	Office of Construction and Facilities Management
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CUPA	Certified Unified Program Agency
dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibels
EA	Environmental assessment
EIS	Environmental impact statement
ESA	Environmental site assessments
ESL	Environmental screening limits
FONSI	Finding of no significant impact
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
LACMTA	Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
LAMC	Los Angeles Municipal Code
LANC	Los Angeles National Cemetery
LOS	Level of service
NAAQS	National ambient air quality standards
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
NCA	National Cemetery Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOA	Notice of Availability
NPDES	National pollutant discharge elimination system
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
OHP	Office of Historic Preservation
PM_{10}	Suspended particulate matter less than or equal to 10 micrometers
$PM_{2.5}$	Fine particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 micrometers
ROG	Reactive organic gases
SACC	Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SWPPP	Stormwater pollution prevention plan
U.S.	United States

U.S.C.	United States Code
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs
VAGLAHS	VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System
VHA	Veterans Health Administration
VMT	Vehicle miles traveled

1 INTRODUCTION

This EA has been prepared by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), acting as lead agency, in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 4321 et seq.); the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500–1508); Environmental Effects of the Department of Veterans Affairs Actions (38 CFR Part 26); and relevant guidance from VA's *NEPA Interim Guidance for Projects* (VA, 2010).

This EA identifies, analyzes, and documents the potential physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts associated with VA's proposed transfer of approximately 26.4 acres of land from the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center (SACC) to the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) for the expansion of the Los Angeles National Cemetery (LANC).

In accordance with the cited regulations, this EA allows for public input into the federal decision-making process, provides federal decision-makers with an understanding of potential environmental effects of their decisions before making these decisions, identifies the measures the federal decision-maker could implement to reduce potential environmental effects, and documents the NEPA process.

1.1 Background

The NCA is the entity within VA that is responsible for establishing, constructing, and maintaining national cemeteries in order to provide reasonable access to burial benefits for Veterans pursuant to the provisions of the National Cemeteries Act of 1973 and other statutes. Under this mandate, the NCA is responsible for the operation and maintenance of 155 existing national cemeteries and the construction of new national cemeteries. NCA generally considers reasonable access to burial benefits to mean that a first interment option is available within 75 miles of the Veterans' residence.

The LANC was originally established in 1889 and currently operates a 127-acre cemetery at 950 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049, adjacent to the VA West Los Angeles Medical Center. The LANC has been closed to first interment casketed burials since 1976 due to capacity limits. In October 2019, LANC opened a new columbarium on 13 acres transferred from the adjacent VA West Los Angeles Medical Center, allowing for new cremation internments, which had been discontinued in 1998. However, no casketed or other in-ground burial options are currently available for Veterans in the greater Los Angeles area.

The SACC, located in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles (16111 Plummer St., North Hills, California 91343), is part of the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System (VAGLAHS) (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Site Location

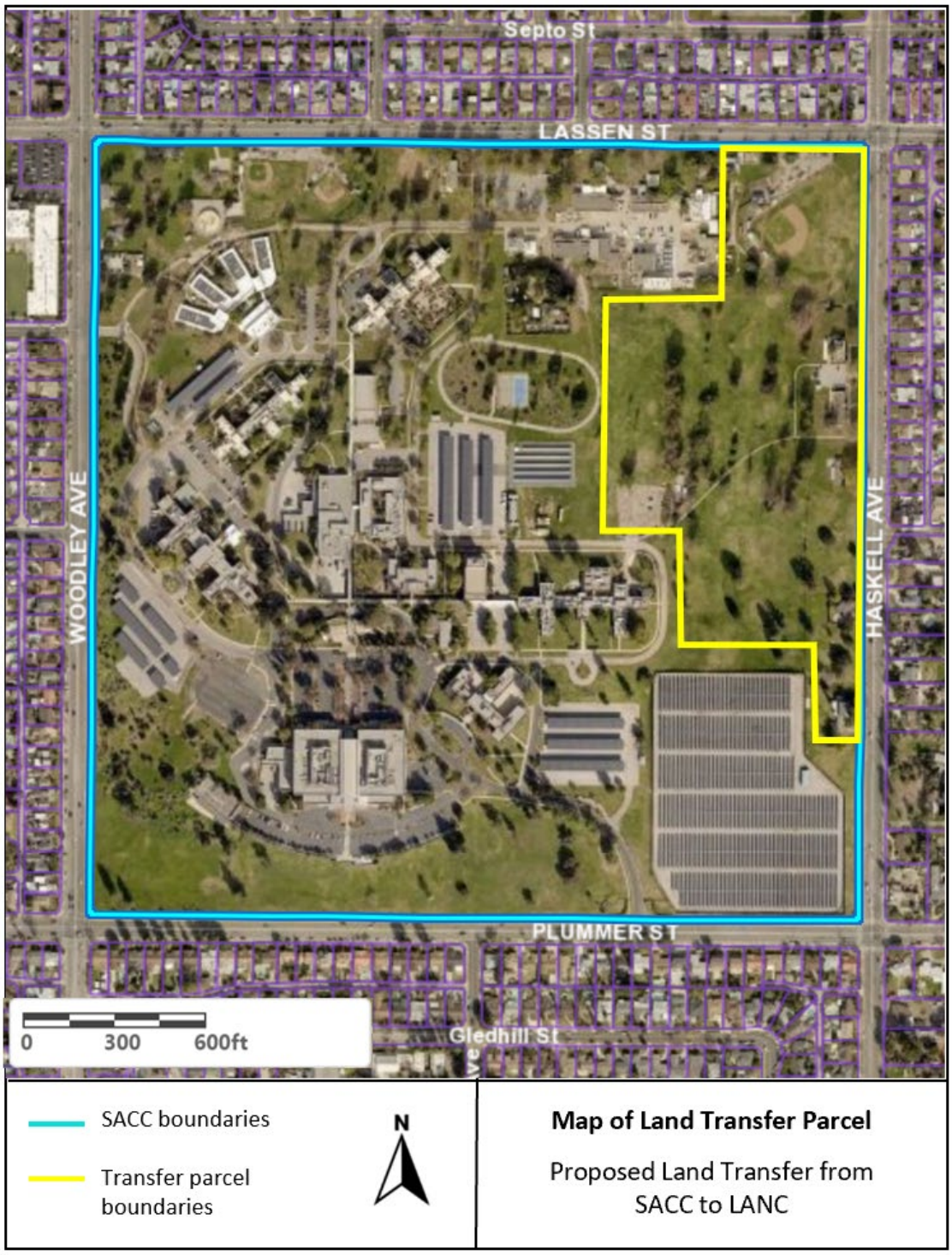

Figure 2. Map of Land Transfer Parcel

The SACC is a comprehensive outpatient, ambulatory care facility with additional education and research functions. There is also a 120-bed academic nursing home care unit on the campus.

The SACC was opened in 1955 and occupies approximately 151 acres. The medical buildings are clustered largely on the western half of the campus, and the support facilities are primarily located on the northeast corner of the property. On the eastern side of the SACC, VA has identified approximately 26.4 acres of underutilized property (Figure 2). This land is referred to as the "Project Site" or "Land Transfer Parcel" throughout this EA. The Project Site contains the following elements:

- **Mission Hills golf course and baseball field:** Most of the parcel is occupied by these recreational facilities, which used to be managed by the Mission Hills Little League and were publicly available. These recreational facilities were closed in 2020, following the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and the public health emergency declaration in March 2020. At that time, VA decided to restrict access to its campuses and facilities to Veterans with appointments or seeking care, residents, employees, and others with official VA business. The decision to close these recreational land use activities was made permanent so that VA could focus on its central mission of providing healthcare to Veterans.
- **Vacant buildings:** Buildings 85, 88, and 91 are located along the perimeter of Haskell Ave. They were former quarters buildings constructed in the 1950s and have been vacant for many years. VA has a planned project for their demolition that is independent of this proposed action (see section 3.16 of this EA for more information on the project).
- **Vet Center:** Building 63 is an approximately 3,900 square foot building that houses the Sepulveda Vet Center Outstation (street address 9737 Haskell Ave.). Vet Centers are community-based counseling centers that provide a wide range of social and psychological services to eligible Veterans, active-duty service members, and their families (https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/). The Sepulveda Vet Center Outstation has been conducting all appointments virtually since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

VA is proposing to execute a memorandum of understanding to transfer these approximately 26.4 acres to NCA for expansion of the LANC, and NCA would hold the land until such time as cemetery development can be fully planned and funded.

1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide expanded burial options at the LANC for Veterans and eligible family members in the greater Los Angeles area. This project is needed because the LANC is currently limited to columbaria burials and subsequent internments only.

It is the policy of the NCA to provide a burial facility within 75 miles of a significant Veteran population. The current LANC cemetery at 950 S. Sepulveda Blvd. is the only National Cemetery

burial option in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The majority of the LANC cemetery—the portion located east of I-405—remains closed to first interments but is open for subsequent interments. That is, if a Veteran or spouse is already interred there, the cemetery can accommodate casket burials for Veterans and eligible family members joining their loved one in an existing gravesite. A columbarium, opened in 2019 on the cemetery area west of I-405, offers only columbaria burials.

The nearest national or state Veteran cemeteries open for new casket burials are Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, California (approximately 75 miles east of Los Angeles) and Bakersfield National Cemetery in Arvin, California (approximately 110 miles north of Los Angeles).

It is expected that a large number of Veterans and family members will avail themselves of the opportunity to utilize a new cemetery for casket and in-ground burials within the city of Los Angeles. NCA staff have projected demand for casket and in-ground burials at the new cemetery could be 27,773 internments through 2045.

1.3 Decision-Making

This EA has been prepared to identify, analyze, and document the potential physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with VA's proposed transfer of approximately 26.4 acres of land from the SACC to the NCA for a new cemetery.

VA, as a federal agency, is required to incorporate environmental considerations into their decision-making process for the actions they propose to undertake. This is done in accordance with the regulations identified in Section 1.1. Ultimately, VA will decide, in part based on the analysis presented in this EA and after having taken potential physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects into account, whether VA should implement the Proposed Action, and, as appropriate, carry out management, avoidance, and mitigation (if necessary) measures to reduce effects to the environment.

2 ALTERNATIVES

This section describes the proposed action and alternatives considered by VA, including those alternatives eliminated from further analysis. NEPA, CEQ regulations, and VA NEPA regulations require that all reasonable alternatives be rigorously explored and objectively evaluated. Alternatives that are eliminated from detailed study must be identified, along with a brief discussion of the reasons for eliminating them. For the purposes of this analysis, an alternative was considered "reasonable" only if it would enable VA to accomplish the purpose of, and need for, the Proposed Action as described in Section 1.2.

2.1 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would transfer approximately 26.4 acres of land from east side of the SACC at 16111 Plummer St., North Hills, CA to the NCA for construction of a new national cemetery to expand burial options and capacity of the LANC (see Figure 2). The new cemetery would provide casketed and other in-ground burial options and create additional capacity to continue providing National Cemetery burial benefits to the Veteran community in the greater Los Angeles area.

Conceptual designs and details of the new cemetery do not exist at this time. Based on parcel size, NCA planners are projecting to provide approximately 56,265 gravesites that could include about 30,855 pre-placed crypts (3-ft by 8-ft gravesites) and 25,410 in-ground cremations (4-ft x 4-ft gravesites). A 300-gravesite memorial wall and limited traditional caskets gravesites may be included as part of the master planning and design process. Columbaria burial options are not being considered at this location due to the availability of columbaria at the central Los Angeles National Cemetery, located approximately 10 miles from this proposed site. NCA central office ultimately will make the decision on the burial options, total gravesites, and project phasing at a future date given the overall population and future demand.

Cemetery development would follow the *National Cemetery Administration Design Guide* (VA, 2022). Based on the Design Guide, the proposed LANC expansion would generally include the following components:

- Construction of a main entrance to provide a sense of arrival at a national shrine. The Main Entrance will include hardscape and landscape features that portray the significance and dignity of the national cemetery. Perimeter fencing may be installed or upgraded for security and overall appearance.
- Development of internment area(s) for burials of either full casket or cremated remains. Burial sections would primarily be located in relatively level areas to minimize the need for grading and to retain natural features to the extent possible. Edges of burial sections would be set back a minimum of 6 m (20 ft) from property boundaries or fence lines. Each gravesite would be marked with a small, upright marble headstone.

- Construction of buildings and structures associated with cemetery administration, maintenance, and public services, as required.
- Construction of internal roadways approximately 24 ft wide that would loop around the property and maintain a complete, simple traffic pattern around the cemetery.
- Extension or reconfiguration of utilities and other supporting infrastructure throughout the site, including potable and irrigation water, sewer, and electric.

Cemetery development would require the demolition of the existing golf course and baseball field (and associated infrastructure), which have been closed since 2020. In addition, the Vet Center operations out of SACC Building 63 would need to be relocated to another suitable location that is yet to be determined, and the building demolished to accommodate cemetery plans. However, these actions would not necessarily take place until after NCA is ready to proceed with cemetery development.

Prior to construction, VA would obtain all applicable federal, state, and local permits for the proposed cemetery development from appropriate government authorities. VA would avoid any significant on-site environmental resources through sensitive site design, including avoidance of significant natural resources.

2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, VA would not construct a new cemetery at the Project Site. The land would remain a part of the SACC. The current LANC at 950 S. Sepulveda Blvd. would remain the only national cemetery in the greater Los Angeles area. This cemetery only offers columbarium burials and has no options for casketed or other in ground burials. Therefore, eligible Veterans in the greater Los Angeles area will need to continue using private cemeteries for local casket burial services or travel approximately 75 miles east of Los Angeles to the Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, California, for these services.

The No Action Alternative is carried forward for analysis to reflect the status quo and serves as a benchmark against which the effects of the Proposed Action can be evaluated.

2.3 Alternatives Not Evaluated in Detail in this Environmental Assessment

As described in Section 2.2.1, VA has the opportunity to transfer approximately 26.4 acres of underutilized land located on the east side of the SACC for development of a new cemetery. This is a unique opportunity to secure the land necessary to meet long-term cemetery needs in the greater Los Angeles area. No other un-obligated property near the existing LANC was readily available at the time of this report that meets the requirements for cemetery expansion (e.g., at least 10 acres required for minimum development, accessible, level topography) and is suitable for cemetery development. Therefore, while VA has considered other possibilities for LANC expansion, no other alternatives were identified for analysis in this report.

3 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section describes the existing conditions at the Project Site and presents an analysis of the potential consequences of implementing the Proposed Action or the No Action alternative. Each alternative was evaluated for its potential impacts on physical, biological, and socioeconomic resources in accordance with CEQ guidelines at 40 CFR 1508.8.

The environmental impacts (or effects) of implementing each alternative were identified for each resource area and described in terms of significance. The significance of an action is measured in terms of its context and intensity, including duration, magnitude of the impact, and whether the impact is adverse or beneficial, as described in the following paragraphs:

- **Short-term or long-term.** In general, short-term impacts are those that would occur only with respect to a particular activity for a finite period, or only during the time required for construction or installation activities. Long-term impacts are those that are more likely to be persistent and chronic.
- **Less-than-significant (negligible, minor, moderate) or significant (major)**. These relative terms are used to characterize the magnitude or intensity of an impact. Negligible impacts are generally those that might be perceptible but are at the lower level of detection. A minor impact is slight, but detectable. A moderate impact is readily apparent. Significant impacts are those that, in their context and due to their magnitude (severity), have the potential to meet the thresholds for significance set forth in CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1508.27) and, thus, warrant heightened attention and examination for potential means for mitigation.
- **Adverse or beneficial.** An adverse impact is one having unfavorable or undesirable outcomes on the man-made or natural environment. A beneficial impact is one having positive outcomes on the man-made or natural environment.

This EA follows CEQ guidelines and regulations that encourage agencies to streamline environmental analyses in their EAs by focusing on significant issues and discussing insignificant issues only briefly; discussing impacts in proportion to their significance; and incorporating by reference other environmental analyses (CEQ, 2012).

3.1 Aesthetics

3.1.1 Affected Environment

The SACC is located in the San Fernando Valley on the northern part of the city of Los Angeles, California. The area is characterized primarily by low density suburban residential development. The SACC property encompasses an entire city block bounded by Lessen, Plummer, and Woodley Streets and Haskell Avenue, and consists of approximately 151 acres. The medical buildings are

clustered largely on the western half of the campus and the support facilities are concentrated on the northeast corner of the property.

The Project Site is comprised of approximately 26.4 acres on the eastern part of the campus, and contains a golf course, a baseball field, an electrical substation, and various vacant or underutilized buildings that primarily served as former quarters. In addition to the grassy areas associated with the recreational fields, there are scattered trees throughout the site, and some minimal landscaping around existing buildings.

3.1.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, development of a new cemetery on the Project Site would produce some visual changes, including the installation of an entrance gate, maintained grassy burial areas, roads, and possibly several small buildings and structures for cemetery administrative or maintenance functions. However, this is visually similar and consistent with the existing grassy golf field and baseball field and various single- and two-story structures currently onsite.

The proposed cemetery design has not been completed, but it is anticipated that the cemetery expansion be developed in concert with the Project Site's natural topography and features and would maintain some natural areas and landscaping. No significant grade changes are anticipated. Given that the proposed cemetery would be designed to blend with the existing topography and landscape and would be visually consistent with the current golf course and baseball field, implementing the Proposed Action would result in negligible aesthetic impacts to the Project Site.

3.1.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would retain the golf course and baseball fields in their current state and therefore would not result in aesthetic impacts. VA would continue to provide basic site maintenance, including mowing.

3.2 Air Quality

3.2.1 Affected Environment

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) regulate air quality in California. The project site is in the South Coast Area Air Basin, which is within the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). These agencies develop rules, regulations, and policies for regulating air quality in accordance with applicable legislation. USEPA regulations may not be superseded; however, state and local regulations may be more stringent.

3.2.1.1 Air Quality Standards

The Clean Air Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.), as amended, authorizes the USEPA to establish primary and secondary National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) (40 CFR Part 50) that set acceptable upper concentration limits for the following criteria pollutants: suspended particulate

matter less than or equal to 10 micrometers (PM10), fine particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 micrometers (PM2.5), sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, and lead.

Areas that violate a NAAQS are designated as nonattainment areas; areas with levels below NAAQS are designated as attainment areas. An area may also be classified as a maintenance area if it was once classified as nonattainment but has since reached attainment for a probationary period through implementation of a maintenance plan. The Project Site is located in the Los Angeles County-South Coast Air Basin, an area designated as extreme nonattainment for the 8-hour ozone standard, serious nonattainment for PM2.5, and nonattainment for lead.

The USEPA General Conformity Rule requires federal agencies to demonstrate that actions that they undertake, approve, permit or support in maintenance areas and nonattainment areas will conform to the appropriate USEPA-approved State Implementation Plan (40 CFR Parts 51 and 93). A conformity applicability analysis is the first step to assess if a federal action must be supported by a full conformity determination. If the results of the applicability analysis indicate that the total emissions of a proposed project would not exceed *de minimis* emissions thresholds, then the conformity evaluation process is complete. If total emissions would equal or exceed the federal *de minimis* thresholds, then a full conformity determination is required to ensure that federal actions do not cause or contribute to violations of the NAAQS or affect NAAQS attainment. Table 1 summarizes the NAAQS attainment status for the Project Site and applicable *de minimis* thresholds.

Table 1. Federal Criteria Pollutant Attainment Status and Applicable *de minimis* Thresholds

Criteria Pollutant	NAAQS Status for the Los Angeles County-South Coast Air Basin	Applicable Federal *de minimis* Threshold
8-hour ozone (2015)	Nonattainment (extreme)	10 tons per year of nitrogen oxides or volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
Carbon monoxide	Attainment (maintenance)	100 tons per year
Lead	Nonattainment	25 tons per year
Nitrogen dioxide	Attainment (maintenance)	100 tons per year
Sulfur dioxide	Unclassifiable/Attainment	Not applicable
$PM_{2.5}$ (2012)	Nonattainment (Serious)	70 tons per year of emissions of PM2.5, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, and ammonia
PM_{10}	Attainment (maintenance)	100 tons per year

(USEPA, 2022; SCAQMD, 2016)(40 CFR 93.153)

3.2.1.2 Site Conditions

No regulated sources of air emissions currently exist on the Project Site. Non-regulated sources of air emissions at the site include those associated with site maintenance such as lawn mowing.

The adjacent SACC campus has three boilers that serve the entire campus and are in Building 202. All three boilers have a maximum heat output of 16.8 MMBtus and are covered by individual source permits issued by SCAQMD on March 6, 2017. For emergency power, there are seven

engine generators throughout the SACC campus, ranging in power from 200 kilowatt (kW) to 3,281 kW. The generators are covered under individual emission source air permits. Other properties surrounding the Project Site are primarily residential and have no known regulated sources of air emissions.

CEQ's NEPA regulations require evaluation of the degree to which a Proposed Action affects public health. Children, elderly people, and people with illnesses are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants; therefore, hospitals, schools, convalescent facilities, and residential areas are sensitive receptors for air quality impacts. The sensitive receptors near the Project Site include SACC's medical facilities and residential buildings immediately to the west, and residential neighborhoods to the north, east, and south. In addition, the following schools are all located within approximately one mile of the project site:

- Vintage Magnet Elementary School, 15848 Stare St.
- Los Angeles Baptist High School, 9825 Woodley Ave.
- Gledhill Street Elementary School, 16030 Gledhill St.
- James Monroe High School, 9229 Haskell Ave.
- Valley Presbyterian Pre-School & Infant Center, 9240 Haskell Ave.
- Sepulveda Middle School, 15330 Plummer St.

3.2.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

3.2.2.1 Construction

While a construction schedule has yet to be developed for the Proposed Action, for purposes of evaluating air emission impacts, construction of the new cemetery is assumed to require approximately 18 months of earthwork activities associated with demolishing Building 63 and other existing infrastructure, and subsequent grading, roadway realignment and construction, and installation of pre-placed crypts.

Site preparation and construction activities such as clearing, grading, digging, roadwork, temporary stockpiling of soils, and equipment traffic over temporary roads at the construction site generate fugitive dust emissions. Fugitive dust emissions (i.e., suspended particulates) are proportional to the area of land being worked and the level of activity. Generation of total suspended particulates was estimated using the emission factor for heavy construction operations from AP-42, Compilation for Air Pollutant Emission Factors, Chapter 13 (USEPA, 1995). The estimated value is conservatively high, as it is assumed the entire land transfer parcel will be disturbed for the full 18 months of construction, and the emission derivation of the factor assumes that construction activity occurs 30 days per month. As described later in this section, construction best management practices (BMPs) including water or chemical dust suppression would be implemented to control fugitive dust generation and prevent it from becoming airborne.

Table 2. Estimated Fugitive Dust Emissions during Construction

Area to be disturbed (acres)	Construction Duration (months)	Emission Factor (tons/acre/month)	Control Efficiency (%)	Total suspended particulates (tons)	Total suspended particulates (tons/year)
26.4	18	1.2	50%	0.88	0.5867

Operation of construction equipment onsite would also generate criteria pollutant emissions. Emissions were calculated assuming the use of four backhoes, two graders, and two bulldozers operating for approximately eight hours per day for the 18-month duration of the project and one paver for 20 weekdays. Emissions were estimated using SCAQMD-derived off-road mobile source emission factors for the year 2025 (SCAQMD, 2022).

Table 3. Nonroad Construction Equipment Assumptions

Equipment Type	Total hours	Emission Factors, lbs/hr				
		ROG[a]	CO	NOx	SOx	PM[b]
Backhoes/Tractors/ Loaders	11520	0.03357	0.3586	0.18573	0.00078	0.00588
Graders	5760	0.06764	0.56959	0.3314	0.0015	0.01473
Rubber Tired Dozers	5760	0.16717	0.66204	1.08243	0.00245	0.04188
Paver	160	0.07171	0.47447	0.38582	0.00089	0.02197

[a] VOCs are considered equivalent to Reactive Organic Gases (ROG) for calculating non-road construction equipment emissions
[b] PM emissions represent combined PM10 and PM2.5

Construction of the Proposed Action would utilize on-road heavy-duty diesel vehicles, such as multi-axle dump trailers and flatbeds that would be used to transport demolition debris to local landfills and construction materials and pre-cast crypts to the site. For analysis purposes, a total of four, 60-mile round trips a day, five days a week over the course of the project were assumed.

Emissions were also estimated from construction workers' vehicles commuting to the Project Site. It is estimated that 30 workers would support demolition and construction, traveling to and from the Project Site approximately a distance of 40 miles per day five days a week over the course of the project. Table 4 presents the calculated emissions of criteria pollutants from on-road construction vehicles and worker commuting. Emissions were estimated using SCAQMD-derived on-road mobile source emission factors for 2025 (SCAQMD, 2022).

Table 4. On-road Vehicle Assumptions

Equipment Type	Total miles	Emission Factors, lbs/hr					
		ROG[a]	CO	NOx	SOx	PM10[b]	PM2.5[b]
Heavy Duty Diesel Construction Vehicles	86,400	0.0008	0.00431	0.00933	4E-05	0.00049	0.00036
Construction Worker Passenger Vehicles	432,000	0.00044	0.00343	0.00029	1.1E-05	9.7E-05	6.4E-05

[a] Reactive Organic Gases (ROG) are considered equivalent to VOCs for calculating non-road construction equipment emissions
[b] Includes emissions from exhaust, brake wear, and tire wear

Table 5 summarizes estimated annual construction emissions of criteria pollutants from all sources during the construction phase of the Proposed Action. As shown, none of the calculated criteria pollutant emissions exceed applicable federal *de minimis* thresholds in 40 CFR 93.153(b). Therefore, the action is exempt from the requirement to prepare a full conformity determination and is also deemed to not present a significant impact.

Table 5. Estimated Annual Construction Emissions for the Proposed Action

Emission Source	VOC (tons)	CO (tons)	NOx (tons)	SO2 (tons)	PM10 (tons)	PM2.5 (tons)
Construction Site Fugitive Dust[a]	--	--	--	--	0.5280	0.0587
Nonroad Construction Equipment	0.8754	5.6506	5.1725	0.0159	---[b]	0.1987
Heavy Duty Diesel Construction Vehicles	0.0026	0.0138	0.0298	0.0001	0.0016	0.0012
Construction Worker Passenger Vehicles	0.0068	0.0539	0.0045	0.0002	0.0015	0.0010
Total tons[c]	**0.8848**	**5.7183**	**5.2069**	**0.0162**	**0.5311**	**0.2595**
Construction Emissions, annualized average (tons/yr)	**0.5898**	**3.8122**	**3.4712**	**0.0108**	**0.3540**	**0.1730**
Federal *de minimis* threshold (tons/yr)	***10***	***100***	***10***	***N/A***	***N/A***	***70***
Exceeds de minimis?	**NO**	**NO**	**NO**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**NO**

[a] 10 percent of the estimated fugitive dust emissions are assumed to be PM2.5

[b] Nonroad equipment emission factors do not differentiate between PM10 and PM2.5. As the Project Site is in a non-attainment zone for PM2.5, all calculated PM emissions were allocated to PM2.5 to be most conservative for purposes of conformity analysis.

[c] Total for the entire 18-month duration of construction activity

Criteria pollutant emissions during construction could cause minor, localized, short-term impacts on air quality and create minor, temporary nuisance concerns for sensitive receptors near the site and populations along construction traffic routes. Potential impacts on air quality during construction will be minimized by implementing the following management practices:

- Apply SCAQMD Rule 403 Best Available Control Measures for fugitive dust, including:
    - Apply water or other soil stabilizers to exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas, and unpaved access roads) in sufficient quantity to prevent generation of dust plumes
    - Stabilize exposed soil with vegetation or mulching to minimize erosion and dust generation
    - Pre-water soils prior to trenching
    - Limit vehicle speeds on unpaved areas to 15 miles per hour.
    - Apply gravel/paving to all haul routes as soon as possible to all future roadway areas
    - Install and utilize a wheel washing system to remove bulk material from tires and vehicle undercarriages before vehicles exit the site
    - Cover all haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site.

- Require nonroad trucks and construction equipment to meet or exceed USEPA Tier 4 exhaust emissions standards for heavy-duty nonroad compression-ignition engines.

Toxic Substances

Other sources of emissions that can impact air quality at the Project Site include asbestos-containing materials (ACM) that could be released during building demolition activities. Under the Proposed Action, Building 63 and other smaller structures would be demolished to accommodate the new cemetery facilities. Pre-demolition asbestos surveys would be conducted for any structures to be demolished as part of the Proposed Action. A registered Cal/OSHA asbestos abatement contractor will perform all disturbance and/or removal of ACM in accordance with SCAQMD Rule 1403 and Cal/OSHA requirements for removal work as well as other applicable state and federal rules and regulations.

3.2.2.2 Operations

Operational sources of air emissions would include visitors' vehicles and cemetery maintenance equipment (e.g., mowers, backhoes, power washers). The Proposed Action would result in an increase in visitor vehicle traffic and maintenance equipment operations in the new cemetery grounds. This increase in vehicle and equipment usage would lead to a negligible increase in criteria pollutant emissions. To further minimize emissions from operational maintenance activities, the maintenance equipment will be kept in good working order.

Operation of the Proposed Action would also increase capacity and extend the longevity of the LANC. Thus, while criteria pollutant emissions from visitor traffic would marginally increase in the immediate area of Project Site, these visitors and families would not otherwise be required to travel longer distances to reach other National Cemeteries outside of the greater Los Angeles area. As a result, there would be an anticipated minimal decrease in emissions from visitors' vehicles. In total, the balance of operational emissions associated with the Proposed Action would not be regionally significant.

3.2.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no air quality impacts associated with VA's Proposed Action would result. As the only continued use on the project site would be operation of the Vet Center, this would result in negligible local air quality impacts. In the absence of a new cemetery at the project site, Veteran families may end up traveling farther to cemeteries outside the greater Los Angeles to visit their loved ones. Therefore, this may result in continued long-term, negligible adverse impacts on regional air quality. No significant impacts on air quality would be expected.

3.3 Cultural and Historic Resources

3.3.1 Affected Environment

The SACC was constructed as part of VA's nationwide "Third Generation" construction campaign to provide modern medical care to Veterans following World War II. In 1951, VA initiated

condemnation proceedings on the properties within the city block bordered by Woodley Avenue, Lassen Street, Haskell Avenue, and Plummer Street; these streets continue to serve as the borders of the current SACC. Construction commenced in 1954, and the hospital was dedicated in 1955. The hospital initially focused on primarily providing neuropsychiatric care but shifted to providing primarily general medical and surgical care in the 1970s. Earthquake damage in 1994 led to the demolition of several damaged buildings and the subsequent construction of new buildings, notably Building 200.

The land transfer parcel was part of the original Third Generation hospital complex. The houses along Haskell Avenue served as quarters for staff. The recreational facilities, including the golf course, were typical features for a Veterans neuropsychiatric facility of this time period as it provided recreation for patients who routinely had prolonged hospital stays. The golf course was completed about 1955. By the early 1970s, it had been renamed the Mission Hills Golf Course and was open to the public. Gradually, the former residences along Haskell Avenue were converted to support services for the campus, and several are currently vacant.

In 2017, VA completed a Determination of Eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and concluded that the accumulation of the building changes combined with alterations to the overall site have compromised the historic character of the campus such that the SACC is not eligible for listing (Row 10 Historic Preservation Solutions, 2017). The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP, also the State Historic Preservation Officer or SHPO) concurred with this determination on February 12, 2018.

An Initial Cultural Resources Impact Prediction (ICRIP) of the Project Site was completed in September 2022. The ICRIP included a records and literature search of California SHPO files and NRHP data, and a pedestrian survey by an architectural historian. No historic resources, including archeological resources, were identified through this research (Row 10 Historic Preservation Solutions, 2022).

During the scoping process for the Proposed Action, VA reached out to federally and state-recognized Native American Tribes with cultural ties to the Project Site (see Appendix B for listing). Tribes were identified through a request for a Sacred Lands File and Native American Contacts List Request to the Native American Heritage Commission. Only the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) responded with an interest on the project. The tribal representative did not identify any known archeological resources at the Project Site but requested notification and the opportunity to monitor any potential discoveries during project activities (see Appendix B for comment).

On November 15, 2022, VA submitted an Invitation for NHPA Section 106 Consultation regarding the Proposed Action to the following parties:

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)
- California SHPO
- City of Los Angeles Planning Department

- Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning
- Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, California
- Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, California
- Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians
- Chumash Council of Bakersfield
- Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation
- Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
- Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation
- Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
- Gabrielino /Tongva Nation
- Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
- Gabrielino Tongva Tribe
- Northern Chumash Tribal Council
- San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council
- Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians
- San Fernando Valley Historical Society
- Los Angeles Conservancy

The invitation identified the Area of Potential Effects (APE) and stated VA's determination that the Proposed Action had no potential to affect historic properties. The SHPO concurred with this finding of no adverse effect on December 6, 2022. No other parties responded with an interest in participating in consultation.

3.3.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

Because there are no historic properties identified in the APE for the Proposed Action, VA determined that land transfer and development of a new cemetery at the Project Site would not result in adverse cultural resources impacts.

In the event that cultural resources are discovered during ground disturbing activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) will cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards will assess the find to determine eligibility. As requested by the FTBMI, after the archaeologist makes an initial assessment of the nature of the find, the tribe will be contacted about any pre-contact and/or post-contact finds to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. If the finding is deemed significant, a professional Native American monitor procured by the FTBMI will be retained to observe all remaining ground-disturbing activities.

3.3.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the continued use of the Project Site as mostly unimproved land at the SACC would result in no cultural resource impacts.

3.4 Geology and Soils

3.4.1 Affected Environment

Regional geology information for the Project Site was obtained from the Geologic Map of the Beverly Hills and Van Nuys (South ½) Quadrangle, Los Angeles, California. The geology underlying the Project Site is classified as older surficial sediment from the late Pleistocene age, of the Cenozoic era. The geology consists of alluvial gravel, sand, and silt-clay derived from Santa Monica Mountains (Dibblee & Ehrenspeck, 1991).

Central Geotechnical Services conducted a geotechnical investigation of the site for VA in August 2022. The investigation found that there are two soil layers on the site: an upper layer of fill and a lower layer of alluvial sediment. The layer of fill extends from the ground surface to a depth of about 3 to 4 feet below ground surface. The fill consisted of brown sand with trace fine roots in growth position and trace angular gravel. Beneath the fill are alluvial deposits consisting of alternating layers of sandy silt, silty sand, and sand. The deposit extended to the maximum depth explored of 21.5 feet (Central Geotechnical Services, 2022).

According to data from the California Department of Conservation's California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application, the Project Site is not located in a fault zone, liquefaction zone, or landslide zone (California Department of Conservation, 2022). However, the SACC has been affected by earthquakes in the past. In 1971, the San Fernando earthquake caused structural damage to the south wings of the main hospital building (Building 3), including extensive damage to the elevators. VA opted to repair the damages and continue using the Sepulveda Campus. In 1994, the Northridge earthquake caused even greater damage to the Sepulveda hospital. Building 3 was eventually torn down and replaced with a new outpatient building (Building 200).

Based on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-Minute Series Van Nuys, California Topographic Quadrangle Map, dated 2018, the Project Site is on a relatively flat area with an average surface elevation of approximately 900 ft above mean sea level (USGS, 2018).

3.4.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

Construction and operation of the Proposed Action would not require contacting or exposing the bedrock underlying or in vicinity of the Project Site or utility corridors. Additionally, the construction activities do not cross a known seismic fault line and would not have any mechanisms, such as bedrock fracturing, fluid injections, or blasting, to cause an increase in seismic activity. Therefore, the Proposed Action would have no impact on geological resources or lead to seismic events. Cemetery construction would comply with VA Seismic Design Requirements (H-18-8). Construction and operational activities associated with the Proposed Action would likewise not require any substantial modifications to the existing topography at the Project Site.

Cemetery construction activities would disturb the soil surface and compact the soil. The soil could then be susceptible to erosion by wind and surface runoff. Exposure of the soils during construction also has the potential to result in increased sedimentation to existing stormwater management systems and offsite discharges of sediment-laden runoff. To minimize the potential adverse impacts caused by construction activities, the construction contractor would be required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit and develop and implement a site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Construction contractors would also be required to comply with the requirements of VA specification 01 57 19, Temporary Environmental Controls, for the protection of erodible soils, including the installation of erosion and sedimentation control devices such as berms, dikes, drains, sedimentation basins, grassing, and mulching.

Once construction is completed, any soil erosion impacts would be managed by maintaining appropriately designed stormwater management features associated with the proposed cemetery.

3.4.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no construction at the site, and therefore no impacts to geology, topography and soils.

3.5 Hydrology and Water Quality

3.5.1 Affected Environment

There are no permanent or intermittent surface waters at the Project Site. The nearest body of water is Bull Creek, approximately 0.75 miles west of the Project Site. Because much of the Project Site consists of recreational fields, the site largely consists of pervious surfaces. The SACC has a storm drain network but does not operate under a stormwater management permit. The stormwater network does not appear to extend to the Project Site, as stormwater lines and catch basins could not be located during site reconnaissance. Rather, stormwater at the Project Site that does not infiltrate appears to flow over land into catch basins along Haskell Avenue (Figure 3). These catch basins tie into the storm drain system maintained by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (BKF Engineers, 2022).

3.5.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is anticipated to result in minor impacts to hydrology and water quality. No significant changes to drainage are expected at the Project Site. The proposed cemetery would be designed in concert with the natural topography and current drainage patterns. Limited paved areas would be designed to drain to a suitable, on-site, properly engineered and designed stormwater management system.

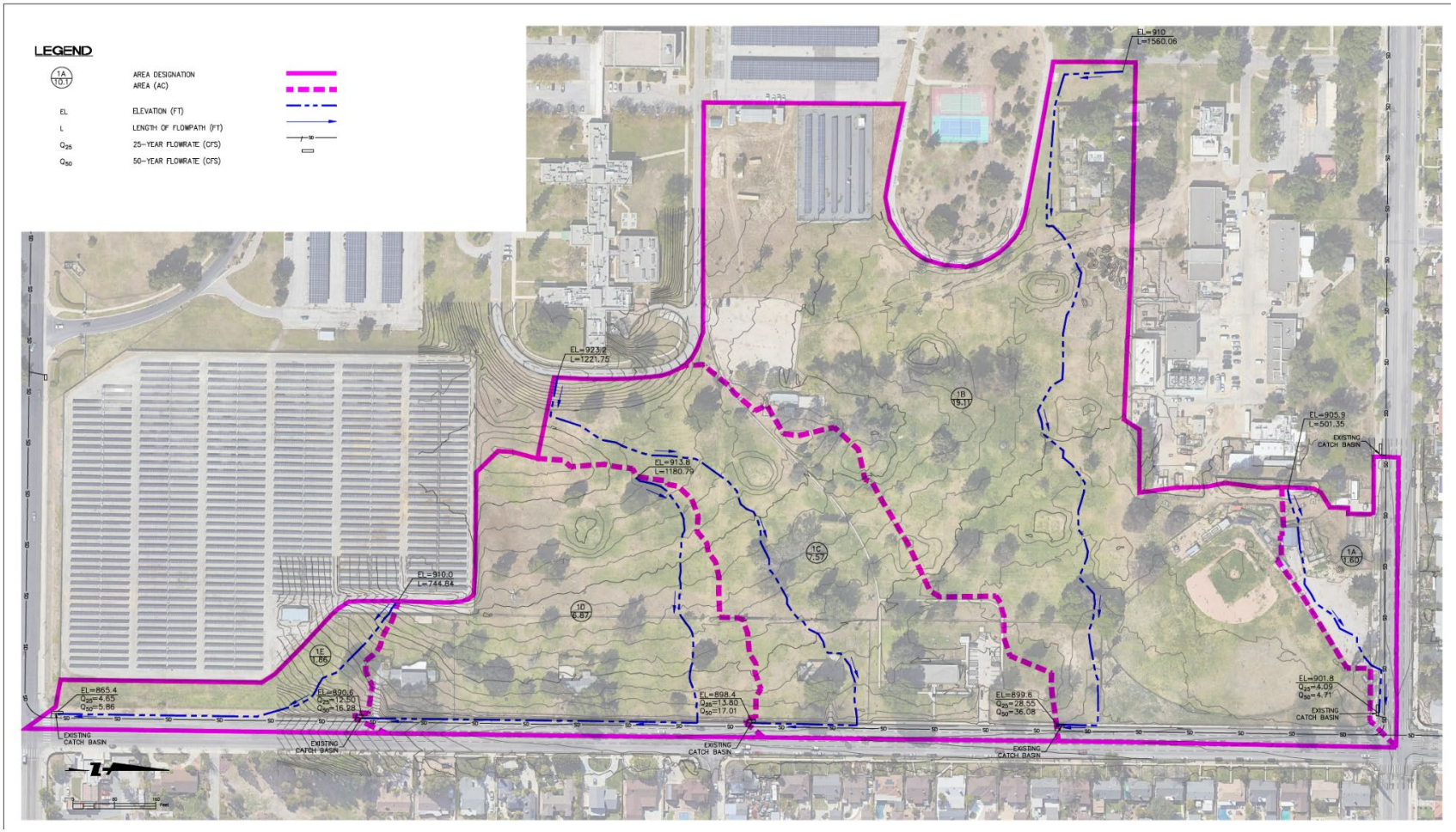

Figure 3. Existing Site Hydrology Map

3.5.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, existing hydrology and water quality would remain unchanged. This alternative would not involve any of the proposed cemetery development activities, as such, no impacts are anticipated.

3.6 Wildlife and Habitat

3.6.1 Affected Environment

The Project Site occurs in the middle of a highly urbanized region of San Fernando Valley, bordered by city streets and residential neighborhoods to the north and east, by a solar matrix to the south, and the partially developed areas of the medical center to the west. The site is mostly an undeveloped weedy field with rows of ornamental trees such as eucalyptus, pine and ash. Three buildings and parking areas are located near the eastern boundary, a paved area and baseball field and related structures are near the northern boundary, small structures and a paved area are to the west, and a paved walkway transects the field from west to east.

An official list of threatened and endangered species with potential to occur at the Project Site was obtained through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system (Project Code: 2022-0070601). No designated critical habitat for any species is present (USFWS, 2022). In addition, the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) was used to identify sensitive plant communities and special-status plant and wildlife species that may exist within the Project Site. All listed species identified in response to these queries are included in Table 6, along with information about their potential to occur at the Project Site.

A reconnaissance-level field survey was conducted in October 2022. Three terrestrial communities (and non-vegetated land cover types) were identified within the Project Site: non-native grassland/ornamental (approximately 21.7 acres of the Project Site), urban/developed land cover (approximately 4.5 acres), and disturbed lands (approximately 0.3 acre). During the survey, 23 species of ornamental trees and nine species of herbaceous plants were observed. Of the 23 tree species, coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) are protected under City of Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 46.00. The survey also identified 24 wildlife species, of which there were four mammals and 20 birds. Bird species included four raptor species and three cavity-nesting bird species (UltraSystems, 2022).

3.6.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

As summarized in Table 6, the 2022 field survey identified little potential habitat for protected species at the Project Site. No federally or state-listed endangered or threatened species or critical habitat are expected to occur on the Project Site, and therefore “no effect” is anticipated from implementation of the Proposed Action. As a result, no formal consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act was deemed necessary for the Proposed Action.

Table 6. Listed Species Potential Occurrence Determination

Common Name (*Scientific Name*) Federal/State Listing Status	**General Habitat Description**	**Potential to Occur at the Project Site**
Plants		
Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii =Mahonia nevinii*) **FE, SE**	Alluvial scrub community, chaparral community	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
Gambel's water cress (*Nasturtium Gambelii =Rorippa gambelii*) **FE, ST**	Freshwater and brackish marshes or swamps and grows on the margins of lakes and slowly flowing streams, drought, plants can be found growing on mud	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
Marsh sandwort (*Arenaria paludicola*) **FE, SE**	Saturated, acidic bog soils, freshwater marshes and swamps, bogs and fens, mostly sandy with a high organic content, and seems to prefer unshaded settings with dense undergrowth	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
Braunton's milkvetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*) **FE**	Valley grasslands, coastal sage scrub, and closed-pine cone coniferous forests	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
Spreading navarretia=Moran's nosegay (*Navarretia fossalis*) **FT**	Vernal pools and depressions and ditches in areas that once supported vernal pools, in alkaline or saline scrubs (chenopod scrub) and playas, shallow freshwater marshes and swamps	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
Slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*) **FE, SE**	Flood plains and in washes	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
California Orcutt grass *(Orcuttia californica)* **FE, SE**	Terrace pools on marine terraces, volcanic mesa pools, and valley pools	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
Santa Susana tarplant *(Deinandra minthornii =Hemizonia minthornii)* **SR**	Crevices of sandstone bluffs and outcrops in chaparral and coastal scrub communities	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
San Fernando Valley spineflower *(Chorizanthe parryi var. fernandina)* **SE**	Open areas associated with mixed grasslands, chaparral, and coastal sage scrub communities	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.

Common Name (*Scientific Name*) Federal/State Listing Status	**General Habitat Description**	**Potential to Occur at the Project Site**
Invertebrates		
Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*) **FT**	Ephemeral freshwater habitats, such as vernal pools and swales, prefers cool-water pools that have low to moderate dissolved solids	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus woottoni*) **FE**	Deep, long-lived, cool lowland vernal pools, vernal pool like ephemeral ponds, and stock ponds that retain water, minimum depth of 30 cm at maximum filing and the water is usually moderately turbid, seasonal grasslands	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) **FC**	Roosts located in wind-protected tree groves (eucalyptus, Monterey pine, cypress) with nectar and water sources nearby.	**Low potential to occur**. Although there is a row of eucalyptus and ash trees and several other small groups of trees within the project study area, these trees do not provide much wind protection. In addition, the nearest water source is 0.5 mile away. There is very minimal cover of nectar-producing forbs or trees within the project study area.
Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) **SCE**	Grasslands and shrublands. Hotter and drier environment than other bumblebee species. Prefers milkweeds, dusty maidens, lupines, medics, phacelias, sages, clarkias, poppies, and wild buckwheats. This species occurs primarily in California, including the Mediterranean region, Pacific Coast, Western Desert, Great Valley, and adjacent foothills through most of southwestern California. It has also been documented in southwest Nevada, near the California border.	**Not anticipated to occur**. The project study area does not contain suitable foraging habitat such as an abundant source of flowering forbs and shrubs to support this species.
Fish		
Santa Ana sucker *Catostomus santaanae* **FT**	Small, shallow streams, less than 25 feet in width, with currents ranging from swift in the canyons to sluggish in the bottom lands, permanent streams in water ranging in depth from a few centimeters to a meter or more	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.

Common Name (*Scientific Name*) Federal/State Listing Status	**General Habitat Description**	**Potential to Occur at the Project Site**
Amphibians		
Arroyo toad *(Anaxyrus californicus (=Bufo californicus))* **FE, SSC**	Sandy riverbanks, streams, washes, and arroyos, breeds in and near streams	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
Southern mountain yellow-legged frog (*Rana muscosa*) **FE, SE, WL**	Sunny riverbanks, meadow streams, isolated pools, lake borders, and rocky stream courses in the mountains of Southern California	**Not anticipated to occur.** The project study area lacks suitable habitat to support this species.
Birds		
California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*) **FE, SE**	Semi-arid, pine or chaparral covered rugged mountain ranges, higher elevations, foraging habitat lies in foothills predominately covered by grasslands or oak-savannah habitats	**Not anticipated to occur**. Suitable foraging habitat is not present in the project study area. The Project Site does not occur in the mountains or foothills, where condor normally frequent. The project study area occurs in an urbanized area where there is limited available foraging habitat. There are no reported occurrences of this species in the CNDDB database within a 10-mile radius of the project study area.
Western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*) **FT, SE**	Relatively dense growths of trees and shrubs in riparian habitats that line rivers and streams	**Not anticipated to occur**. Suitable foraging or nesting habitat is not present in the project study area. There is no riparian habitat or streams within the project study area or nearby. Although there are several trees onsite, these trees do not have the dense, low-lying canopy structure that is typically occupied by this species. The nearest reported occurrence of yellow-billed cuckoo is more than two miles from the project study area.
Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) **FE, SE**	Dense riparian tree and shrub communities associated with rivers, swamps, and other wetlands, including lakes, surface water, saturated soil, or herbaceous wetland plants present during the early summer months; woody riparian vegetation is present	**Not anticipated to occur**. Suitable foraging or nesting habitat is not present in the project study area. There is no riparian habitat or streams within the project study area or nearby. Although there are several trees onsite, these trees do not consist of riparian tree species that are typically occupied by this species. There are no reported occurrences of this species in the CNDDB database within a 10-mile radius of the project study area.

Common Name (*Scientific Name*) Federal/State Listing Status	**General Habitat Description**	**Potential to Occur at the Project Site**
Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) **FE, SE**	Dry, intermittent streams, on the desert slopes mesquite (Prosopis sp.) and sandbar willow in canyon locations, willow dominated riverine riparian habitats with well-developed overstories, understories, and low densities of aquatic and herbaceous cover	**Not anticipated to occur**. Suitable foraging or nesting habitat for least Bell's vireo is not present in the project study area. There is no riparian habitat or streams within the project study area or nearby. Although there are several trees onsite, these trees do not have the dense, low-lying canopy structure that is typically occupied by this species. The nearest reported occurrence of least Bell's vireo is more than two miles from the project study area.
Coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) **FT, SSC**	Small, non-migratory, permanent resident of coastal sage scrub	**Not anticipated to occur**. Suitable foraging or nesting habitat is not present in the project study area. There is no coastal sage scrub or other scrub habitat within the project study area and this species is not typically found in areas without scrub habitat. The nearest reported occurrence of this species in the CNDDB database is approximately four miles from the project study area.
Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) **ST**	Large, open areas with abundant prey in association with suitable nest trees, native grasslands or lightly grazed pastures and croplands, open deserts, sparse shrub lands	**Not anticipated to occur**. The project study area contains marginal foraging habitat but not suitable nesting habitat to support this species. There are no juniper trees within the project study area. There are no reported recent occurrences (<20 years) of this species within a 10-mile radius of the project study area.
Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*) **ST**	Fresh water, preferably in emergent wetland with tall, dense cattails (Typha sp.) or tules, natural grassland, woodland, or agricultural cropland	**Not anticipated to occur**. Suitable foraging or nesting habitat is not present in the project study area. There is no riparian habitat, streams, or dense grassland or cropland within the project study area or the nearby vicinity. There are no reported recent occurrences (<20 years) of this species within a 10-mile radius of the project study area.

(USFWS, 2022)

Federal/State Designations Key: FE = federal endangered; FT = federal threatened; FC = federal candidate; SE = state endangered; ST = state threatened; SCE = state candidate for listing as endangered; SR = state rare

During construction, there is the potential for negligible adverse impacts to other non-listed species or common wildlife that may inhabit or use portions of the Project Site for nesting, foraging, or temporary cover, due to noise disturbances and loss of vegetation. Following construction of the cemetery, the site would be maintained with grass and other landscaped vegetation, which would return these functions (nesting, foraging, and temporary cover) to the site.

3.6.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no change in the existing wildlife and habitat. The site would continue to be maintained by VA through periodic mowing and trimming. No significant impacts on wildlife and habitat would occur.

3.7 Noise

3.7.1 Affected Environment

The Project Site is located in a developed suburban area consisting of primarily residential, institutional, and recreational properties. The existing noise environment around the Project Site is characterized by noise from vehicle traffic along local roads and distant noise associated with I-405 traffic, located approximately 1,000 feet east of the Project Site. There are no significant sources of noise on the Project Site.

Noise-sensitive receptors include those land uses or populations where activities or people may be subject to stress or considerable interference from noise. Such locations or facilities include residential dwellings, hospitals, nursing homes, educational facilities, and libraries. Noise-sensitive receptors near the Project Site include the following:

- Residences to the north, east, and south
- Community Living Center and supportive housing units at the SACC campus to the west
- Various schools within 0.5 miles of the site (see Section 3.2 for listing)

3.7.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

3.7.2.1 Construction

Construction activities generate noise by their very nature and are highly variable, depending on the type, number, and operating schedules of equipment. Construction projects are usually executed in stages, each having its own combination of equipment and noise characteristics and magnitudes. Table 7 shows estimated construction noise levels by phase at 50 feet. For each doubling of distance from a point source, the sound pressure level decreases by approximately 6 dB.

Table 7. Estimated Outdoor Construction Noise Levels

Construction Phase	Noise Level (dBA Leq)	
	at 50 feet (dBA)	at 50 feet with mufflers (dBA)
Ground Clearing	84	82
Excavation, Grading	89	86
Foundations	78	77
Structural	85	83
Finishing	89	86

(USEPA, 1971)

The closest noise-sensitive receptors are the residences along Lassen St. and Haskell Ave., which are approximately 100 feet north and east, respectively, from the fence line of the Project Site. During the loudest phases of construction, these populations could potentially be exposed to estimated noise levels of 83 dBA assuming no attenuation, and about 80 dBA with mufflers. However, these short-term, intermittent, moderate effects would cease once construction was complete. All other identified noise-sensitive receptors are likely to experience negligible, if any, increases in noise during construction activities due to distance from the Project Site.

The construction contractor would be responsible for complying with noise-control measures outlined in VA specification 01 57 19, Temporary Environmental Controls, which requires providing sound-deadening devices on equipment, using shields or other physical barriers to restrict noise transmission, and providing sound-proof housings or enclosures for noise-producing machinery. Construction would also comply with the City of Los Angeles noise ordinance, which prohibits construction noise between the hours of 9:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M Monday through Friday, before 8:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m. on any Saturday or national holiday, or at any time on Sunday (LAMC 41.40).

Construction trucks would likely travel on I-405, exit at Devonshire or Nordhoff St., and travel south on Haskell Ave. to access the Project Site. Given the volume of traffic on I-405 and neighborhood streets, it is not expected that populations adjacent to these roadways would be significantly affected. These construction traffic noise impacts would also be short-term.

3.7.2.2 Operations

Routine noise sources from future operational activities at the new cemetery would include vehicle traffic to and from the site, use of powered equipment for gravesite preparation and overall cemetery maintenance, and intermittent rifle salutes during committal ceremonies.

When full military funeral honors are provided, committal services may include rifle salutes. Committal services are conducted only on weekdays (except for federal holidays) between 9 AM and 3 PM. The potential noise impacts from the rifle salutes are a function of the distance between the rifle salutes and sensitive receptors. The location of the rifle salute would vary based on the burial site, but will more frequently occur in the interior of the cemetery property rather

than the periphery, thereby providing greater distance to sensitive receptors. The further away from sensitive resources, the less likely the rifle salutes will be heard above the existing level of traffic noise. The rifle salute is not a chronic noise source; it is short-term, infrequent, and non-repetitive, and would occur only during the daytime on weekdays. Based on anticipated burial demand at the new cemetery, an estimated four to five burials a day are projected, and only a portion of those would include rifle salutes.

To minimize operational noise impacts, VA will design and install landscaping that provides a buffer to the surrounding properties, which will reduce some of the noise. Therefore, adverse noise impacts to nearby sensitive receptors, while noticeable (minor), are not expected to be significant.

3.7.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would not be implemented at the Project Site. The noise environment would be consistent with noise levels described under the existing conditions. No significant impacts on the noise environment would occur.

3.8 Land Use

3.8.1 Affected Environment

The Project Site has been part of the VA-owned SACC since the 1950s and has always been a relatively undeveloped area of the campus. As previously described, most of the Project Site consists of recreational facilities (golf course and baseball field) that were permanently closed in 2020. There are four small buildings on the Project Site fronting Haskell Ave. Three of these buildings (Buildings 85, 88, and 91) were former quarters and are now vacant. The only active use of the Project Site is the Sepulveda Vet Center Outstation operated out of Building 63. The rest of the Project Site is characterized by scattered trees and grass.

The entire SACC, including the Project Site, is zoned as Public Facility (PF-1). Surrounding properties are low density residential, zoned as either RA or RS suburban (City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, 2022).

3.8.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

As a Federal agency, VA is not subject to local zoning regulations; however, reasonable compatibility with existing and future land use designations and zoning ordinances in the project area must be considered (40 U.S.C. § 619(b)). Cemeteries are not a listed permitted use under the current PF-1 zoning designation for the Project Site. However, cemeteries are allowed under any zoning designation as a "Public Benefit" per LAMC Section 14.00 provided certain design criteria are met, such as setbacks and landscaping. Development of a cemetery at the site would therefore have a negligible effect on land use, since the proposed use of the Project Site is allowable under current zoning provisions and are consistent with the current institutional use of the SACC.

3.8.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no land use impacts due to VA's Proposed Action would occur. The continued use of the Project Site by VHA would result in no land use impacts.

3.9 Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Zone Management

3.9.1 Affected Environment

A review of the Flood Insurance Rate Map for the SACC indicates that the entire property, including the Project Site, is in Zone X (unshaded) outside of the nearest floodplain. Zone X (unshaded) describes areas that are not subject to inundation by the 1-percent or 2-percent-annual chance flood events.

The USFWS National Wetland Inventory (NWI) Mapper indicates there are no wetlands at the Project Site. The closest wetland is an intermittent riparian wetland (Bull Creek) approximately 0.75 miles west of the Project Site (USFWS, 2022).

The proposed project is not within a Coastal Zone Management Area, and therefore this is not a consideration for the proposed action (California Coastal Commission, 2022).

3.9.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

Because the Project Site is not located within a floodplain or designated coastal zone and has no wetlands at or near the site, the Proposed Action would have no effect on these resources.

3.9.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Because the Project Site is not located within a floodplain or designated coastal zone and has no wetlands at or near the site, the No Action Alternative would have no effect on these resources.

3.10 Community Services

3.10.1 Affected Environment

The Project Site is located within the Los Angeles Unified School District. Six schools are located within one mile of the Project Site (see section 3.2 for listing).

The VA Police provides protection to the SACC, including the Project Site, and the City of Los Angeles Police Department (Devonshire Station) provides protection to surrounding community. The City of Los Angeles Fire Department (Station 87) provides fire protection and emergency medical services to the Project Site and its vicinity (City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, 2022).

Recreational facilities in the vicinity of the Project Site include the North Hills Community Park and the Sepulveda Recreation Center approximately 1.25 and 1.5 miles southeast, respectively, and the Granada Hills Recreation Center located approximately 1.5 miles northwest. The recreational facilities at the SACC, including the golf course and baseball field at the Project Site, were permanently closed in 2020.

Other than the SACC, which provides ambulatory care services exclusively to Veterans, the closest major medical facility is Providence Holy Cross Medical Center approximately 2.5 miles northeast of the Project Site. The Sepulveda Vet Center Outstation, which provides community-based social and psychological services to eligible Veterans, active-duty service members, and their families, is located in Building 63 at the Project Site.

3.10.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

Implementing the Proposed Action would not result in additional load to the local school system, fire or police departments, or any other community services. While the golf course and baseball field at the Project Site would be demolished as part of the Proposed Action, these recreational facilities were already permanently closed by VA and have not been a community resource since 2020. In addition, the Sepulveda Vet Center Outstation at the Project Site would close, and services would be relocated elsewhere. However, the Vet Center has already been operating through virtual appointments only since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic; Veterans are not currently receiving in-person services at this location. Therefore, the future development of a cemetery at the Project Site would have no anticipated community services impacts.

3.10.3 Effect of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the continued limited use of the Project Site by VA would have no community services impacts.

3.11 Solid Waste and Hazardous Materials

3.11.1 Affected Environment

The Project Site has been part of the VA-owned SACC since it was established in the 1950s; prior to that time, the area was agricultural land. No healthcare facilities were ever constructed at the Project Site. At the inception of the SACC, former quarters buildings ringed the property and were oriented towards the bounding streets rather than the hospital complex. Five of those buildings were constructed at the Project Site along Haskell Ave. (Buildings 60, 63, 85, 88, and 91). These buildings were used as residences for hospital staff. Some of those buildings were later repurposed as research facilities (Buildings 60 and 85). With the exception of Building 63, all buildings at the Project Site are currently vacant. Recreational facilities and associated infrastructure at the Project Site date from the 1970s and later.

Current operations at the Project Site are limited to the Sepulveda Vet Center Outstation in Building 63, which generates typical office waste only. No aboveground or underground storage

tanks are known to be present or formerly present at the Project Site. Existing Buildings 85, 88, and 91 at the Project Site are known to have asbestos containing materials, lead based paint, and mercury thermostats (Millenium Consulting, 2017). While similar data is not available for Building 63, its age of construction is similar to that of the other buildings at the Project Site and is assumed to contain similar hazardous building materials.

As part of efforts to evaluate and dispose of vacant property, VA commissioned a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) for various vacant buildings at SACC in 2017 and 2018. The 2017 Phase I ESA of former research facilities, including Buildings 60, 85, and mobile building T2 at the Project Site, identified historic agricultural use of pesticides and potential chemical discharges from former laboratory operations as recognized environmental conditions (Millenium Consulting, 2017). Phase II ESA soil sampling was also conducted in 2017 and reached the following conclusions associated with the Project Site:

- Pesticide residues were not identified above Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) Residential Environmental Screening Limits (ESL) for any samples. Therefore, former pesticide use does not appear to be an environmental concern for the property.
- Arsenic was detected in soil at concentrations that exceed the Water Board ESLs for residential soils. However, arsenic concentrations were within the range of naturally occurring and anthropogenic background arsenic concentrations in greater Los Angeles area soils.
- Soil samples adjacent to sewer laterals had detectable levels of some volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds. At the Project Site, only one sample near Building 85 exceeded Water Board ESLs for residential soil for benzo(a)pyrene. The concentration was below health-based ESLs for construction workers and ESLs for commercial soil (Millenium Consulting, 2017).

The 2018 Phase I ESA for SACC Buildings 21, 60, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 88, and 91 did not identify additional recognized environmental conditions (Booz Allen Hamilton, 2018). In 2020, Buildings 60 and T-2 at the Project Site were demolished. Buildings 85, 88, and 91 at the Project Site are pending demolition (see Section 3.16).

3.11.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

Construction of the Proposed Action would generate solid waste consisting of cleared vegetation, excess soil, excess construction materials, and demolition debris from Building 63 and other infrastructure associated with the recreational facilities (e.g., golf clubhouse, baseball bleachers). The nature of the solid wastes generated during construction of the Proposed Action would be similar to a typical construction project, and the volumes generated would be anticipated to make a negligible contribution to the overall solid waste volume generated and disposed of in Los Angeles County. Construction contractors would be required to develop and implement a construction and demolition debris recycling plan to divert project waste from local landfills.

Based on assumed presence of hazardous building materials in Building 63, VA anticipates having to conduct pre-demolition abatement activities in accordance with federal, state, and local requirements, and VA specifications. This includes removal of asbestos by licensed asbestos abatement contractors in accordance with EPA and SCAQMD Rule 1403 requirements, as discussed in section 3.2 of this EA.

Operation of the new cemetery is expected to have negligible long-term effects on solid waste and hazardous materials management. A small increase in the volume of solid waste is expected as a greater number of visitors would come to the property. Solid waste would be collected and transferred by a private contractor to an appropriate off-site municipal solid waste landfill. Landscape maintenance for the cemetery is expected to be more intensive than the current minimally maintained grounds. However, only approved herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers will be applied according to the manufacturers' labeled instructions. Because grounds maintenance activities are expected become independent to those of the SACC, a small amount of onsite hazardous materials storage is anticipated; appropriate storage facilities would be provided in accordance with VA and NCA directives and procedures.

The SACC has a Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) permit (CERS ID# 10197043), which is required in California for all businesses that store, handle or use hazardous materials in reportable quantities. VA may need to amend the existing CUPA permit and/or obtain a separate CUPA permit for the new cemetery depending on the functions included in the final design. Similarly, if fuel storage tanks are included in the final design, for example to support new emergency generators, VA will comply with all applicable federal (40 CFR Part 280), state and local requirement for their design, installation, and operation. See Appendix A for more information on potential permit requirements.

3.11.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no changes to the generation of solid waste or use or storage of hazardous materials is anticipated. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

3.12 Traffic, Transportation and Parking

3.12.1 Affected Environment

3.12.1.1 Roadways

The SACC is in the North Hills community of the City of Los Angeles and is bounded by Chester W. Nimitz Drive to the west, Haskell Avenue to the east, Lassen Street to the north, and Plummer Street to the south. Except for Chester W. Nimitz drive, all of the streets are under the jurisdiction of the City of Los Angeles.

The San Diego Freeway (I-405, Interstate 405) lies approximately 0.25 miles east of the site, and the Simi Valley Freeway (SR-118, State Route 118) is approximately 1.3 miles north of the site. These freeways provide regional access to and from the Project Site. The major east/west streets

in the area are Lassen Street and Plummer Street, and the north/south street is Haskell Avenue. The City's Mobility Element classifies each of these streets as Avenues II (Fehr & Peers, 2022).

3.12.1.2 Public Transit

The Project Site is served by two local bus lines. Metro Route 167 provides weekday and weekend service to Chatsworth, Northridge, North Hills, Panorama City, North Hollywood, and Studio City. In the vicinity of the Project Site, Route 167 runs on Plummer Street and includes stops at both Haskell Avenue & Lassen Street and at Haskell Avenue & Plummer Street. Route 237 provides service to Encino, Northridge, Granada Hills, Van Nuys, and North Hollywood. Near the Project, Route 237 runs on Woodley Avenue approximately one-half mile west of the Project Site and has stops at both Woodley Avenue & Lassen Street and at Woodley Avenue & Plummer Street (Fehr & Peers, 2022).

3.12.1.3 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

There is an existing bike lane (Class II Bikeway) on Woodley Avenue adjacent to the Project Site, along with an existing bicycle route (Class III Bikeway) along Plummer Street. The area has sidewalks on most streets, though crosswalks are limited to signalized intersections.

Plummer Street and Lassen Street are part of the Neighborhood Enhanced Network in the *Mobility Plan 2035*. The Neighborhood Enhanced Network is a selection of streets that provide comfortable and safe routes for localized travel of slower-moving modes such as walking, bicycling, or other slow speed motorized means of travel. Plummer Street is also a part of the Pedestrian-Enhanced Network. The Pedestrian-Enhanced Districts identify where pedestrian improvements on arterial streets could be prioritized to provide better walking connections to and from the major destinations within communities (Fehr & Peers, 2022).

3.12.1.4 Traffic Characteristics

A Transportation Impact Analysis was prepared in 2022 for the Project Site and surrounding roadways to evaluate traffic and transportation impacts related to the proposed cemetery (Fehr & Peers, 2022). Traffic operations, including intersection level of service and queueing, were evaluated. The methodology employed is consistent with guidance provided in the *Los Angeles Department of Transportation: Transportation Assessment Guidelines*.

Level of Service (LOS) is used to rank traffic operation based on traffic volumes and roadway capacity using letter designations ranging from A (free flow of conditions) to F (forced flow or breakdown conditions). LOS A through D is generally considered acceptable in an urbanized area such as North Hills.

The study intersections selected for analysis are based on the intersections immediately adjacent to the Project Site that provide direct access to the proposed cemetery. The study intersections are shown on Figure 4.

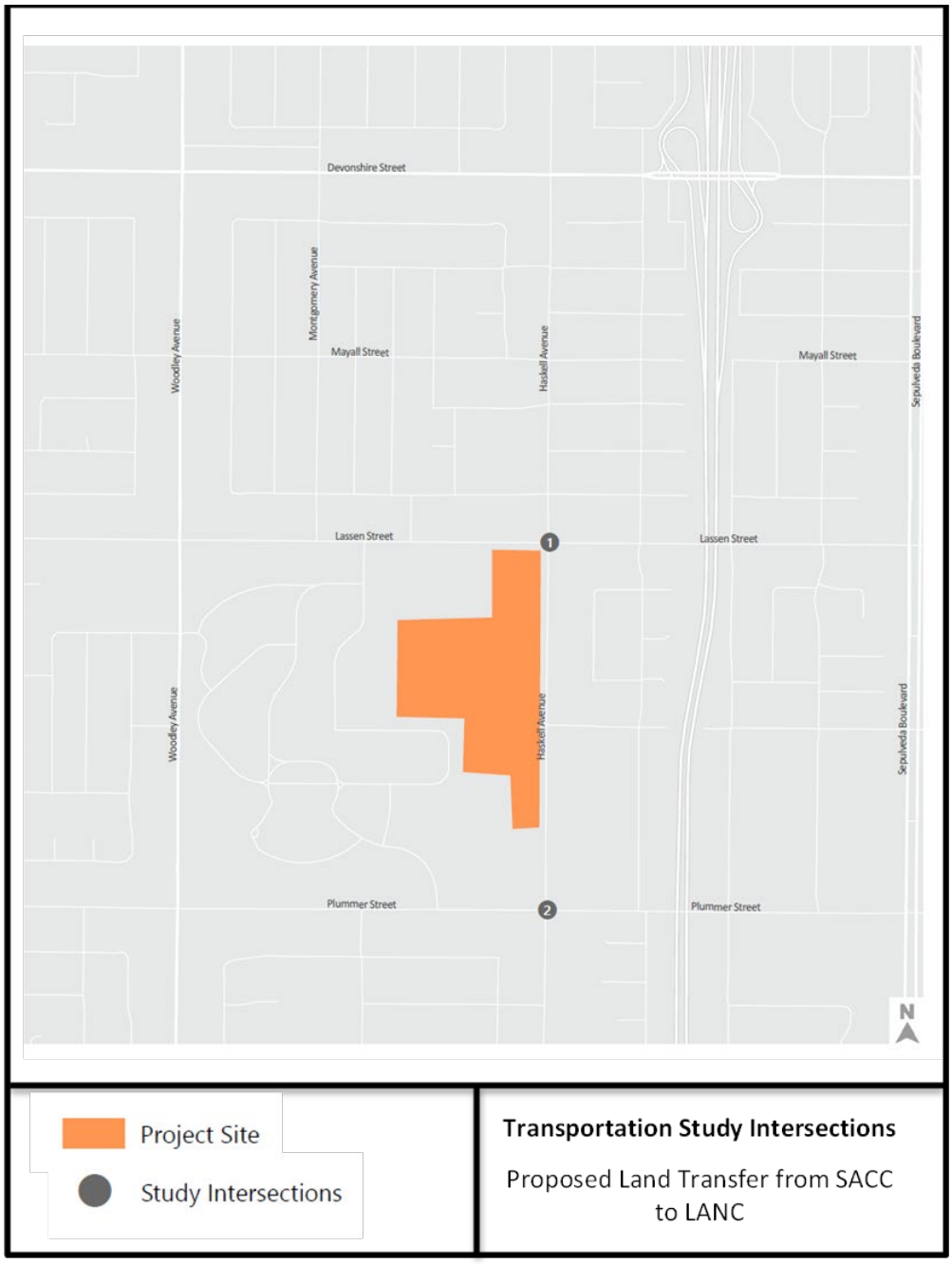

Figure 4. Transportation Study Intersections

Weekday peak hour turning movement counts were collected between 7:00 AM and 10:00 AM and between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM at the study intersections on Wednesday, August 24, 2022. Counts were also taken on that date at the existing driveway on the Project Site that provides access to the Sepulveda Vet Center Outstation. The existing traffic volumes were analyzed using the standard intersection analysis methodology from the Transportation Research Board's *Highway Capacity Manual, 6th Edition* to determine the existing operating conditions at the study

intersections. Table 8 summarizes the results of the analysis of the existing weekday afternoon peak hour delay and LOS at each of the analyzed intersections. Both intersections operate at LOS C or better during the PM peak period. As noted later in Section 3.12.2.2, the project is not expected to generate increased traffic in the AM peak period.

Table 8. Existing Conditions (Year 2022) Level of Service

#	Study Intersection	Peak Hour	Delay [a] (seconds/vehicle)	LOS
1	Haskell Avenue & Lassen Street	PM	16	B
2	Haskell Avenue & Plummer Street	PM	20	C

[a] Intersection control delay analyzed using HCM 6th Edition and Synchro 11 software. At these signalized intersections, delay results show the average control delay experienced at the intersection.

(Fehr & Peers, 2022)

3.12.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

3.12.2.1 Construction

During the construction period, short-term, adverse effects on traffic would be expected. The initial delivery of various construction vehicles and equipment, as well as daily passenger vehicles for construction workers, the delivery of construction materials, and the removal of construction debris, would all affect local traffic. Construction-generated traffic would be temporary and would not result in any long-term degradation of operating conditions on any roadways. Construction traffic would be dispersed throughout the day and would not be expected to result in significant impacts on traffic near the Project Site during peak construction periods.

Implementation of the following management measure would lessen the impacts to traffic impacts on area roadways during project construction:

- Prior to the start of construction of the Proposed Action, VA or its contractor would prepare and implement a Work Zone Transportation Management Plan to reduce impacts associated with the Proposed Action. The Plan would include, at a minimum, the following elements:
  - Schedule project-generated construction truck trips outside the peak commute hours to reduce potential traffic congestion during peak morning and evening commute periods.
  - Comply with transportation permit requirements of Caltrans and California Highway Patrol when scheduling construction truck trips carrying oversized loads. In addition, provide pre-notification to local police, fire, and emergency service providers of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities that could affect the movement of emergency vehicles on area roadways.

- Place signs along appropriate roads to notify drivers of construction traffic throughout the duration of the construction period. Advance warning signs (e.g., "ROAD WORK AHEAD," "SLOW TRUCKS," and/or "TRUCKS TURNING AHEAD"), flaggers, and speed control (including signs informing drivers of state-legislated double fines for speed infractions in a construction zone) shall be provided to achieve required speed reductions for safe traffic flow through the work zone.

3.12.2.2 Operations

The 2022 Transportation Impact Analysis estimated the future traffic conditions in the project study area for 2027, which for analysis purposes was assumed to be the year in which the proposed cemetery could become operational. To define the future conditions baseline, estimates of traffic growth were developed for the study area to forecast future conditions without the project. These forecasts included traffic increases as a result of both regional ambient traffic growth and traffic generated by specific developments in the vicinity of the project (related projects). These projected traffic volumes, identified herein as the "Future Base" conditions, represent the future conditions without the proposed project. The traffic generated by the proposed project was then estimated and assigned to the surrounding street system. Project traffic was added to the Future Base conditions to form "Future (Year 2027) plus Project" traffic conditions, which were analyzed to determine the incremental traffic impacts attributable to the project itself.

Trip generation rates from the Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition* were used to estimate the number of trips associated with the cemetery land use. The total number of trips generated by the new development were adjusted to account for trips generated by the existing land uses. To provide a conservative analysis, no transit credit, internalization, or pass-by credits were taken. A vehicle trip credit (using data from an observed driveway 24-hour traffic count) was applied to the trip generation calculations to account for the activity at the existing Sepulveda Vet Center driveway on Haskell Avenue. The existing trips of 6 AM peak hour trips (3 inbound/3 outbound) and 7 PM peak hour trips (1 inbound/6 outbound) were subtracted from the project's overall trip generation. With the trip generation credit from the existing land use, the project is estimated to generate a net increase of 169 daily trips: -1 AM peak hour trip (1 inbound, -2 outbound) and 4 PM peak hour trips (2 inbound, 2 outbound). Because the project would not increase the trip generation in the AM peak hour that scenario was not evaluated. Therefore, the proposed project conditions are evaluated and compared against future baseline conditions in the PM peak hour.

As indicated in Table 9, the study intersections are projected to continue operating at LOS C or better during the PM peak hour under Future (Year 2027) plus Project conditions. Due to the very low net increase in project trips, the LOS and delay results for the intersections in the Future Base and Future Plus Project do not vary.

Table 9. Projected Future Conditions (Year 2027) Levels of Service

#	Study Intersection	Peak Hour	2027 Future Base		2027 with Project	
			Delay [a] (secs/vehicle)	LOS	Delay [a] (secs/vehicle)	LOS
1	Haskell Avenue & Lassen Street	PM	16	B	16	B
2	Haskell Avenue & Plummer Street	PM	24	C	24	C

[a] Intersection control delay analyzed using HCM 6th Edition and Synchro 11 software. At these signalized intersections, delay results show the average control delay experienced at the intersection.
(Fehr & Peers, 2022)

In addition to assessing LOS impacts, the 2022 Transportation Impact Analysis looked at weekday peak hour 95th percentile queues for key turning movements at study intersections. The *LADOT Transportation Assessment Guidelines* considers project access constrained if the project's traffic would contribute to unacceptable queuing on an avenue or boulevard at project driveway(s) or would cause or substantially extend queuing at nearby signalized intersections. Neither intersection meets these criteria.

Table 10. Future Conditions Projected Queues (Year 2027)

#	Study Intersection	Control	Movement	Storage Length (feet)	Maximum Queue (feet)	
					Future base	Future plus Project
					PM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
1	Haskell Avenue & Lassen Street	Signal	EBL	150	100	100
			WBL	150	50	50
			NBL	200	50	50
			SBL	75	75	75
2	Haskell Avenue & Plummer Street	Signal	EBL	225	250	250
			WBL	200	175	175
			NBL	175	100	100
			SBL	200	125	125

Notes:
1. Queue lengths are outputs from the 2027 Baseline and 2027 with Project Synchro 11 PM peak hour models developed for this Project. The 95th percentile queue length is a conservative assumption commonly employed for intersection design considerations and does not represent the typical queue length that an average driver would experience.
2. Movement acronyms represent the cardinal direction (first two letters) and the turn movement (last letter). For example, NBL=Northbound-left movement, etc.
3. Storage lengths and queues are shown in feet and rounded up to the nearest 25.

(Fehr & Peers, 2022)

An additional screening was completed to determine if a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis is required. As part of changes to the California Environmental Quality Act guidelines that became effective in July 2020, VMT has become the metric for assessing the significance of transportation impacts of proposed land use projects. The City of Los Angeles requires the preparation and

submission of a VMT assessment for development projects or transportation projects that meet certain criteria, including *"if the Development Project is estimated to generate a net increase of 250 or more daily vehicle trips and requires discretionary action."*

Based on the 2022 Transportation Impact Analysis, operation of the new cemetery is expected to generate 169 net new daily trips. Even without considering the removal of the existing use on the site, the project would generate 202 daily trips. Therefore, the project can be screened out from further VMT analysis under this criterion, and it is presumed to have a less-than-significant VMT impact.

No parking impacts are expected from the Proposed Action. The new cemetery will be provided with the necessary parking for staff and visitors as part of project design in accordance with the *NCA Design Guide.*

No mitigation measures would be required since there are no significant operational impacts on transportation and parking.

3.12.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would not be implemented at the Project Site, which would remain undeveloped. The transportation and parking environment would remain similar to what was described under the existing conditions, and the traffic LOS would be the same as the future baseline traffic conditions, which is quantified as the 2027 Future Base LOS in Table 9. As other development occurs in the area, traffic would continue to increase regardless of the Proposed Action.

3.13 Utilities

3.13.1 Affected Environment

Basic utilities at the Project Site (i.e., water, sewer, electric, and natural gas) are provided by various utility providers and generally connected through the SACC. Electrical service is provided by Los Angeles Department of Power and Water (LADPW). Potable water is also supplied to the Project Site by LADPW. This water is sourced from the Los Angeles Aqueduct Filtration Plant, which obtains water from the Los Angeles Aqueduct and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's State Water Project. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's 444-mile State Water Project draws water from the crossroads of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers.

The SACC campus has a permit to discharge its wastewater to the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The permit was issued in 1983 and has no expiration date, although it was amended in 2011. The SACC campus does not operate under a permit for stormwater; however, it does have a stormwater collection system that discharges into the Los Angeles County Storm Drain System. More information about stormwater is provided in section 3.5.

3.13.2 Effects of the Proposed Action

Operation of a new cemetery at the Project Site would result in the consumption of utilities; however, the expanded cemetery would have generally minor increases in utility needs compared to the existing uses. Water is anticipated to have the largest increase in demand due to the need for maintaining landscaped areas of the cemetery. Low-moisture-tolerant species suited to the Los Angeles area would be used as much as possible to minimize irrigation needs, and irrigation systems would be designed to be water efficient. The proposed new cemetery would likely require some reconfiguration of utility lines and possibly separate connections and metering from the SACC. However, overall utility consumption impacts would be less than significant.

3.13.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, changes in utility needs are not expected to occur. The likely continued use of the Project Site by VA would result in no utility impacts.

3.14 Socioeconomics

This section identifies and describes the socioeconomic environment of the City and County of Los Angeles and the State of California. The Project Site is located in a generally suburban residential area of the City of Los Angeles in Los Angeles County. The total population of the City of Los Angeles, California is 3,849,297 individuals, making it the largest city in California. Age distribution and high school graduation rates for the City of Los Angeles are generally similar to those of the county and the State of California. The minority population for the City of Los Angeles is similar to that of the county but higher than for the State of California as a whole. Details on minority population rates are discussed in Section 3.15 (Environmental Justice).

Table 11. Demographic Data for the City and County of Los Angeles and the State of California

Area	All Individuals	Population Under 18 Age Years	Population Over 65 Age Years	Minority[a]	High School Graduates	Veterans
California	39,237,836	22.4%	15.2%	64.8%	83.9%	1,525,746
County of Los Angeles	9,829,544	21.1%	14.6%	74.5%	79.8%	252,329
City of Los Angeles	3,849,297	20.4%	12.9%	71.5%	78.3%	82,183

[a] Includes all races and ethnicities except for “white, non-Hispanic”
(U.S. Census Bureau, 2022)

The City of Los Angeles has a slightly lower median household income and a higher population below the poverty line than the county and the State of California (Table 12). The unemployment rate in the City of Los Angeles is similar to that of the county and higher than the state as a whole. Incomes specific to the Project Site area are further discussed in Section 3.15.

Table 12. Economic Data for the City and County of Los Angeles and the State of California

Area	Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 2020 (millions of current dollars)[a]	Median Household Income[b]	Persons in Poverty[b]	Unemployment Rate, June 2022[c]
California	$3,007,187.7	$78,672	12.6%	4.0%
County of Los Angeles	$747,523.558	$71,358	14.2%	5.2%
City of Los Angeles	---	$65,290	16.9%	5.6%

[a] (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2022) ; [b] (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022); [c] (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022)

3.14.1 Effects of the Proposed Action

Construction of the new cemetery at the Project Site would require temporary employment of skilled laborers by the construction contractor. Additionally, construction supplies and materials may be purchased from local and regional vendors. Thus, the temporary increase in employment and spending on materials would have a short-term, negligible beneficial impact on the local economy. However, based on the scale of economic activity in the county of Los Angeles (Table 12), cemetery construction would not be considered to result in a significant impact on income or employment rates in the area.

Once operational, additional maintenance staff may be hired by LANC to maintain the new cemetery grounds. While hiring would benefit these individuals, maintaining or slightly increasing staff levels would have no measurable impact on city or county socioeconomic conditions. The Proposed Action would not induce population growth and would not displace existing housing or people. Extending the longevity of LANC allows Veterans in the greater Los Angeles area to continue choosing to be interred at this National Cemetery, and allows their families, who may also reside locally, to avoid traveling longer distances to access other National Cemeteries outside of this region. Therefore, operation of the Proposed Action may have a long-term, negligible beneficial impact on socioeconomics.

3.14.2 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, the Proposed Action would not be implemented, and the capacity of the LANC would not be expanded. The benefits to local construction companies and suppliers, as well as Veteran families and visitors, associated with the Proposed Action would not be realized. Therefore, the No Action alternative would have a short-and long-term, negligible adverse impact on socioeconomics.

3.15 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations” was enacted in 1994 to focus federal agencies attention on the environmental and human health conditions in minority communities and low-income

communities with the goal of achieving environmental justice. Under this order, federal agencies must identify and address disproportionate high and adverse effects to human health and the environment of its actions on minority and low-income populations.

For this analysis, data for minority and low-income populations were obtained for the area within a two-mile radius of the Project Site, Los Angeles County, and the state of California using the U.S. EPA-developed EJSCREEN tool. EJSCREEN is an environmental justice mapping and screening internet application that combines demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2015 – 2019 estimates and environmental indicators. According to these data, the area within a two-mile radius of the Project Site has a higher minority population than Los Angeles County and California. The area within a two-mile radius of the Project Site also has a higher percentage of low-income population than Los Angeles County and California (defined as the percent of individuals whose ratio of household income to poverty level in the past 12 months was less than 2).

Table 13. Environmental Justice Indicators

Area	Minority Population	Low-Income Population
Two-mile radius of Project Site	82%	42%
Los Angeles County	74%	35%
State of California	63%	31%

(USEPA, 2022)

3.15.1 Effects of the Proposed Action

Although the Project Site is located in an area with higher percentages of minority and low-income populations compared to the county and state, the Proposed Action would not have a high and adverse effect to residents in the area. The Proposed Action has no reasonable mechanisms to cause changes in population, income levels, housing, local tax revenues, or community services. During construction, effects on nearby residents, such as noise, dust, and traffic, would be minor and controlled through BMPs described in Section 5, thereby minimizing adverse effects. Once operational, the new cemetery would provide minor beneficial effects to local Veteran minority and low-income populations who would have access to cemetery services closer to home. Therefore, the future cemetery development at the Project Site would have less-than-significant environmental justice effects.

3.15.2 Effects of the No Action Alternative

No changes at the Project Site would occur under the No Action alternative, and therefore, no impacts to environmental justice conditions would occur in the short term. However, VA would not secure land necessary to meet its long-term cemetery needs for the greater Los Angeles area, which could have a disproportionate, albeit minor, adverse effect on local minority and low-income populations in the long-term.

3.16 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are those impacts on the environment that result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time (40 CFR 1508.7). This EA considers past, present, and reasonably foreseeable short-term and long-term future effects from implementing the Proposed Action and other projects (not part of this action) that coincide with the location and timetable of the Proposed Action.

3.16.1 Considered Cumulative Actions

Given that the expected timeline of the Proposed Action is unknown, but likely not to happen until 2027 or beyond, it is difficult to forecast projects that will be happening on a similar timeline and will have cumulative effects when considered along with the Proposed Action. The following projects in the Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills Community Plan area are considered to be of a scale, timeline and/or location to potentially result in cumulative effects. The list of related projects is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather is intended to demonstrate the reasonably anticipated magnitude of development that may occur in the study area based on projects currently on file with regulatory agencies or publicly advertised.

3.16.1.1 Transportation Projects

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) has various transportation projects under development in the vicinity of the Project Site that could have construction-related adverse impacts in the short term and beneficial impacts to traffic congestion in the long term. These projects include:

- **I-405 Sepulveda Pass ExpressLanes Project:** LCAMTA is working in coordination with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to evaluate alternatives to convert the existing high occupancy toll (HOV) lanes to dynamically priced, high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, called ExpressLanes, in both directions of I-405 between I-10 and US-101 (metro.net/405ExpressLanes). I-405 is approximately 1,000 east of the project Site.
- **Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project:** LACMTA is in the process of evaluating high-capacity fixed guideway transit options between the San Fernando Valley and the Westside of Los Angeles. The northern end of the project would be at the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak station (approximately 3 miles from the Project Site) and the southern end point at the Metro E Line (Expo). The project is anticipated to become operational in 2033-2035 (https://www.metro.net/projects/sepulvedacorridor/).

3.16.1.2 VA SACC Projects

The SACC campus, of which the Project Site is currently a part, continues to operate as an ambulatory care facility, and various projects are planned or underway to maintain the property and support improved healthcare services to Veterans. These projects include:

- **Demolition of vacant buildings:** In 2018, VA identified 15 vacant buildings at SACC that due to their conditions and characteristics were not suitable for continued use or redevelopment. VA planned to demolish the buildings and associated walkways and driveways, followed by the addition of irrigation and landscaping to blend in with the surrounding areas on the medical campus. The project is currently underway. Of the 15 buildings identified for demolition, 11 were demolished in 2019-2020, including Building 60 at the Project Site. The four remaining buildings planned for demolition include Building 21 (former theater) and three buildings at the Project Site (Buildings 85, 88 and 91). These demolitions are expected to be executed in the next two to three years and are independent of the Proposed Action (i.e., they are planned to occur regardless of whether the land transfer to NCA occurs).
- **Demolition of seismically deficient Research Buildings and construction of a new Research annex:** VA plans to demolish two seismically deficient buildings (Buildings 47 and 103) that support animal research and replace them with a consolidated single-story 7,500 SF addition to the main research facility (Building 7). Project execution is expected to start in 2023.

3.16.1.3 Other Area Projects

Housing demand in the area has spurred redevelopment of underutilized property in the vicinity of the Project Site, with a focus on affordable housing. Two large development projects are being planned approximately two miles southeast of the Project Site:

- **ICON at Panorama:** The project will demolish three vacant buildings, including a former Montgomery Ward store, and parking lots on the 8.9-acre site at Roscoe Boulevard just west of Van Nuys Boulevard. A new, 584,000-square-foot seven-building complex, named ICON at Panorama, is expected to have 422 apartments and 200,000 square feet of commercial space (Case No. ENV-2016-1061-EIR).

- **Panorama Mall redevelopment:** The project would include the demolition of the Panorama Mall, two fast food restaurants, a Walmart retail building, and associated surface parking lot and the construction of a mixed-use project consisting of 5,187,006 square feet of development that would include residential, retail, offices, hotel rooms, and other uses. The project would occur in up to four phases, completed over 20 years with full operation in 2043 (Case No. ENV-2017-575-EIR).

3.16.2 Environmental Consequences of Cumulative Actions under the Proposed Action

No significant cumulative adverse effects would be anticipated from implementation of the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action would result in the effects identified throughout Chapter 3 of this EA. These include potential adverse effects ranging from minor to moderate on air quality (Section 3.2), noise (Section 3.7), and transportation and parking (Section 3.12). The Proposed Action's contribution to cumulative effects would be negligible or less than significant with implementation of minimization and management measures for aesthetics, cultural resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, land use, floodplains, wetlands, coastal zone management, community services, solid waste and hazardous materials, and utilities. There would be negligible or minor net beneficial effects on the local socioeconomic and environmental justice from increased employment opportunities during cemetery construction as well as availability of Veteran cemetery services to local Veteran populations.

As the San Fernando Valley area continues to experience redevelopment, increases in residential and commercial uses would result in commensurate increases in traffic congestion, noise, and air quality. Long-term growth in the area would increase criteria pollutant emissions and noise, particularly those associated with increased traffic. Expanded public transit, such as the Sepulveda Transit Corridor, will promote increased reliance on mass transit and decreased reliance on cars for transportation, decreasing cumulative criteria pollutant emissions and traffic congestion. Furthermore, the City and County of Los Angeles promote green building codes that target long-term efficiencies aimed at decreasing carbon footprints. Therefore, in the context of anticipated regional and local development, the Proposed Action would be expected to contribute only minimally to adverse cumulative effects as it pertains to these resource areas.

Close coordination between the agencies listed in Chapter 7 of this EA, coupled with enforcement of applicable current and future regulations, ordinances, and laws, and application of BMPs identified in Chapter 4, would serve to manage and control cumulative effects.

3.16.3 Environmental Consequences of Cumulative Actions under the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the new cemetery would not be developed at the Project Site, and, as such, the cemetery would have no contributions to cumulative impacts. The current burial capacity would not be increased. Veterans and their eligible family members electing to be buried at a National Cemetery would have to select another location with available capacity. This could have the effect of increasing travel distances for family members, thereby contributing to traffic congestion and increased air emissions. Lack of a new cemetery in the Los Angeles area could also increase gravesite depletion rates at other National Cemeteries, requiring other facilities to consider expansions sooner than planned. Thus, considered cumulatively, the No Action alternative would have a minor adverse impact.

3.17 Potential for Generating Substantial Public Controversy

As discussed in Chapter 5 of this EA, VA solicited scoping input from various Federal, State, and local government agencies, Indian tribes, and interested stakeholders regarding the Proposed Action. Several of these entities provided input, but none of the input identified opposition or controversy related to the Proposed Action.

VA published and distributed the draft EA for a 30-day public comment period; during this time, there was additional opportunity for stakeholders to identify any issues of controversy. Only two comments were provided during the public comment period (comments are included in Appendix B). Based on the significant positive effects of the Proposed Action, the findings of this EA (no significant adverse environmental impact), and limited public comments received, it is not anticipated that there will be substantial public controversy regarding the Proposed Action.

4 MINIMIZATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

This chapter summarizes the minimization and management measures identified in Chapter 3 that are proposed to avoid or minimize potential adverse effects of the Proposed Action. Implementation of the minimization and management measures identified in Table 14 will maintain potential impacts at less-than-significant levels for all resource areas.

Table 14. Minimization and Management Measures Incorporated into the Proposed Action

Technical Resource Area	Minimization and Management Measures
Air Quality (Section 3.2)	Apply SCAQMD Rule 403 Best Available Control Measures for fugitive dust, including: • Apply water or other soil stabilizers to exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas, and unpaved access roads) in sufficient quantity to prevent generation of dust plumes • Stabilize exposed soil with vegetation or mulching to minimize erosion and dust generation • Pre-water soils prior to trenching • Limit vehicle speeds on unpaved areas to 15 miles per hour. • Apply gravel/paving to all haul routes as soon as possible to all future roadway areas • Install and utilize a wheel washing system to remove bulk material from tires and vehicle undercarriages before vehicles exit the site • Cover all haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site.
	Require nonroad trucks and construction equipment to meet or exceed USEPA Tier 4 exhaust emissions standards for heavy-duty nonroad compression-ignition engines
	Require a registered Cal/OSHA asbestos abatement contractor to perform all disturbance and/or removal of asbestos containing material (ACM). Removal work shall be conducted in accordance with SCAQMD's Rule 1403 and Cal/OSHA requirements for removal work as well as other applicable state and federal rules and regulations.
Cultural and Historic Resources (Section 3.3)	In the event that cultural resources are discovered during ground disturbing activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) will cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards will assess the find to determine eligibility. As requested by the FTBMI, after the archaeologist makes an initial assessment of the nature of the find, the tribe will be contacted about any pre-contact and/or post-contact finds to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. If the finding is deemed significant, a professional Native American monitor procured by the FTBMI will be retained to observe all remaining ground-disturbing activities.
Geology and Soils (Section 3.4)	Obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit and develop and implement a site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)
	Comply with the requirements of VA specification 01 57 19, Temporary Environmental Controls, for the protection of erodible soils, including the installation of erosion and sedimentation control devices such as berms, dikes, drains, sedimentation basins, grassing, and mulching.

Technical Resource Area	Minimization and Management Measures
Noise (Section 3.7)	Implement noise control as outlined in VA specification 01 57 19, Temporary Environmental Controls, which requires providing sound-deadening devices on equipment, using shields or other physical barriers to restrict noise transmission, and providing sound-proof housings or enclosures for noise-producing machinery.
	Comply with City of Los Angeles construction noise ordinance limits on construction hours (LAMC 41.40)
	Design and install landscaping that provides a noise buffer from sensitive receptors surrounding the Project Site
Solid Waste and Hazardous Materials (Section 3.11)	Develop and implement a construction and demolition debris recycling plan to divert project waste from local landfills
Transportation and Parking (Section 3.12)	Prepare and implement a Work Zone Transportation Management Plan including the following elements: • Schedule project-generated construction truck trips outside the peak commute hours to reduce potential traffic congestion during peak morning and evening commute periods. • Comply with transportation permit requirements of Caltrans and California Highway Patrol when scheduling construction truck trips carrying oversized loads. In addition, provide pre-notification to local-police, fire, and emergency service providers of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities that could affect the movement of emergency vehicles on area roadways. • Place signs along appropriate roads to notify drivers of construction traffic throughout the duration of the construction period. Advance warning signs (e.g., "ROAD WORK AHEAD," "SLOW TRUCKS," and/or "TRUCKS TURNING AHEAD"), flaggers, and speed control (including signs informing drivers of state-legislated double fines for speed infractions in a construction zone) shall be provided to achieve required speed reductions for safe traffic flow through the work zone.
Utilities (Section 3.13)	Use low-moisture-tolerant species suited to the Los Angeles area to minimize irrigation needs

5 AGENCY AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

VA invites public participation in decision-making on new proposals through the NEPA process. Public participation with respect to decision-making on the Proposed Action is guided by the VA NEPA regulations (38 CFR Part 26). Additional guidance is provided in VA's *NEPA Interim Guidance for Projects* (VA, 2010). Consideration of the views and information of all interested persons promotes open communication and enables better decision-making. Agencies, organizations, and members of the public with a potential interest in the Proposed Action are urged to participate. A record of agency coordination and public involvement associated with this EA is provided in Appendix B.

5.1 Scoping

VA initiated the public scoping process for the Proposed Action with publication of a notice in the *Los Angeles Times*, a daily newspaper with circulation throughout Los Angeles County, announcing the opportunity to provide early input on the Proposed Action. The notice was published on August 31 and September 4, 2022. No comments from the public were received.

A notice requesting early input was also emailed to stakeholders who may have interest in the Proposed Action, including federal, state, and local elected officials; federal, state, and local regulatory agencies; Native American Tribes; and other stakeholders who have had previous involvement in VA actions at the VAGLAHS. A list of agencies and individuals notified, a copy of the notice, and scoping input received are provided in Appendix B.

5.2 Draft EA

VA published and distributed a draft EA for a 30-day public comment period, as announced by an NOA published in the *Los Angeles Times* on January 27 and 29, 2023 (see Appendix B for copies of the notices). The NOA was also mailed to selected federal, state, and local agencies, elected officials, and Native American Tribes, to inform them of the 30-day review and comment period. The draft EA was made available for review in print at the Mid-Valley Regional Library, 16244 Nordhoff Street, North Hills, CA 91343, and available for electronic download from the VA website: https://www.cfm.va.gov/environmental/index.asp. VA received two comments during the comment period (see Appendix B).

6 LIST OF PREPARERS

Department of Veterans Affairs Staff

Mr. Jason Sturm, Environmental Engineer
Office of Construction and Facilities Management

Ms. Rita Franklin, Project Manager
Office of Construction and Facilities Management

Consultants

Lorena Alvarez, Awen Solutions Group
Senior Environmental Specialist
M.S., Environmental Science
B.A., Biology
26 years of experience

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8 GLOSSARY

Aesthetics – Pertaining to the quality of human perception of natural beauty. Ambient - The environment as it exists around people, plants, and structures.

Asbestos - Incombustible, chemical-resistant, fibrous mineral forms of impure magnesium silicate used for fireproofing, electrical insulation, building materials, brake linings, and chemical filters. Asbestos is a carcinogenic substance.

Attainment Area - Region that meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for a criteria pollutant under the CAA.

Bedrock - The solid rock that underlies all soil, sand, clay, gravel and loose material on the earth's surface.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) - Methods, measures, or practices to prevent or reduce the contributions of pollutants to U.S. waters. Best management practices may be imposed in addition to, or in the absence of, effluent limitations, standards, or prohibitions.

Commercial land use – Land use that includes private and public businesses (retail, wholesale, etc.), institutions (schools, churches, etc.), health services (hospitals, clinics, etc.), and military buildings and installations.

Compaction - The packing of soil together into a firmer, denser mass, generally caused by the pressure of great weight.

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) - An Executive Office of the President composed of three members appointed by the President, subject to approval by the Senate. Each member shall be exceptionally qualified to analyze and interpret environmental trends, and to appraise programs and activities of the Federal Government. Members are to be conscious of and responsive to the scientific, economic, social, aesthetic, and cultural needs of the Nation; and to formulate and recommend national policies to promote the improvement of the quality of the environment.

Criteria Pollutants - The CAA of 1970 required the USEPA to set air quality standards for common and widespread pollutants in order to protect human health and welfare. There are six "criteria pollutants": ozone (O3), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO2), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), and particulate matter.

Cultural Resources - The physical evidence of our Nation's heritage. Included are archaeological sites; historic buildings, structures, and districts; and localities with social significance to the human community.

Decibel (dB) - A unit of measurement of sound pressure level.

Effects or impacts - changes to the human environment from the proposed action or alternatives that are reasonably foreseeable and include the following:

1) Direct effects, which are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place.

2) Indirect effects, which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.
3) Cumulative effects, which are effects on the environment that result from the incremental effects of the action when added to the effects of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.
4) Effects include ecological (such as the effects on natural resources and on the components, structures, and functioning of affected ecosystems), aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, or health, whether direct, indirect, or cumulative. Effects may also include those resulting from actions which may have both beneficial and detrimental effects, even if on balance the agency believes that the effects will be beneficial.

Emission - A release of a pollutant.

Endangered Species - Any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Environmental Assessment (EA) - An EA is a publication that provides sufficient evidence and analyses to show whether a proposed system will adversely affect the environment or be environmentally controversial.

Erosion - The wearing away of the land surface by detachment and movement of soil and rock fragments through the action of moving water and other geological agents.

Floodplain - The relatively flat area or lowlands adjoining a river, stream, ocean, lake, or other body of water that is susceptible to being inundated by floodwaters.

FONSI - Finding of No Significant Impact, a NEPA document.

Fugitive Dust - Particles light enough to be suspended in air, but not captured by a filtering system. For this document, this refers to particles put in the air by moving vehicles and air movement over disturbed soils at construction sites.

Geology - Science which deals with the physical history of the earth, the rocks of which it is composed, and physical changes in the earth.

Groundwater - Water found below the ground surface. Groundwater may be geologic in origin and as pristine as it was when it was entrapped by the surrounding rock, or it may be subject to daily or seasonal effects depending on the local hydrologic cycle. Groundwater may be pumped from wells and used for drinking water, irrigation, and other purposes. It is recharged by precipitation or irrigation water soaking into the ground. Thus, any contaminant in precipitation or irrigation water may be carried into groundwater.

Hazardous Substance - Hazardous materials are defined within several laws and regulations to have certain meanings. For this document, a hazardous material is any one of the following: Any substance designated pursuant to section 311 (b)(2)(A) of the Clean Water Act. Any element, compound, mixture, solution, or substance designated pursuant to Section 102 of Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). Any hazardous substance as defined under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Any toxic pollutant listed under TSCA. Any hazardous air pollutant listed under Section 112 of CAA. Any imminently hazardous chemical substance or mixture with respect to which the EPA Administrator has taken action pursuant to Subsection 7 of TSCA. The term does not include: 1) Petroleum, including crude oil or any thereof, which is not otherwise specifically listed or designated as a hazardous substance; 2) Natural gas, natural gas liquids, liquefied natural gas, or synthetic gas usable for fuel (or mixtures of natural gas and such synthetic gas). A list of hazardous substances is found in 40 CFR Part 302.4.

Hazardous Waste - A solid waste which, when improperly treated, stored, transported, or disposed of, poses a substantial hazard to human health or the environment. Hazardous wastes are identified in 40 CFR Part 261.3 or applicable foreign law, rule, or regulation.

Impacts – see Effects

Industrial Land Use – Land uses of a relatively higher intensity that are generally not compatible with residential development. Examples include light and heavy manufacturing, mining, and chemical refining.

Listed Species - Any plant or animal designated as a State or Federal threatened, endangered, special concern, or candidate species.

Low-income population - individuals whose ratio of household income to poverty level in the past 12 months was less than 2

Minority population - individuals who list their racial status as a race other than white alone and/or list their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino. That is, all people other than non-Hispanic white-alone individuals. The word "alone" in this case indicates that the person is of a single race, not multiracial.

Mitigation - Measures taken to reduce adverse impacts on the environment.

Mobile Sources - Vehicles, aircraft, watercraft, construction equipment, and other equipment that use internal combustion engines for energy sources.

Monitoring - A process of inspecting and recording the progress of mitigation measures implemented.

National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) - Nationwide standards set up by the USEPA for widespread air pollutants, as required by Section 109 of the Clean Air Act (CAA). Currently, six pollutants are regulated by primary and secondary NAAQS: carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), ozone (O3), particulate matter, and sulfur dioxide (SO2). National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) - U.S. statute that requires all Federal agencies to consider the potential effects of Proposed Actions on the human and natural environment.

Non-attainment Area - An area that has been designated by the EPA or the appropriate State air quality agency as exceeding one or more National or State ambient air quality standards. Parcel - A plot of land, usually a division of a larger area.

Particulates or Particulate Matter - Fine liquid or solid particles such as dust, smoke, mist, fumes, or smog found in air.

Pollutant - A substance introduced into the environment that adversely affects the usefulness of a resource.

Potable Water - Water which is suitable for drinking.

Sensitive Receptors - Include, but are not limited to, asthmatics, children, and the elderly, as well as specific facilities, such as long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, retirement homes, residences, schools, playgrounds, and childcare centers.

Significant Impact - According to 40 CFR Part 1508.27, "significance" as used in NEPA requires consideration of both context and intensity. Context. The significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Significance varies with the setting of the Proposed Action. For instance, in the case of a site-specific action, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. Both short- and long-term effects are relevant. Intensity. This refers to the severity of impact. Responsible officials must bear in mind that more than one agency may make decisions about partial aspects of a major action.

Solid Waste - Any discarded material that is not excluded by section 261.4(a) or that is not excluded by variance granted under sections 260.30 and 260.31.

Threatened species - Any species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Topography - The relief features or surface configuration of an area.

Toxic Substance - A harmful substance which includes elements, compounds, mixtures, and materials of complex composition.

Wetlands - Areas that are regularly saturated by surface or groundwater and, thus, are characterized by a prevalence of vegetation that is adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Examples include swamps, bogs, fens, marshes, and estuaries.

Wildlife Habitat - Set of living communities in which a wildlife population live.

APPENDIX A. PERMITS

This appendix lists environmental permits, licenses, or other agreements that may need to be obtained by VA or its contractors to implement the Proposed Action. Key federal, state, or local requirements are identified for both construction and operation.

Agency	Permit/Requirement	Need/Basis
SCAQMD	Permit to Construct (Rule 201)	Required for new or relocated equipment that generates air emissions, as well as alteration (both physical modification and change of operating conditions) of existing equipment.
SCAQMD	Permit to Operate/ Registration (Rule 219/222)	Required for operation of equipment with the potential to emit air pollutants, unless exempt. Exempt equipment may require registration under Rule 222.
SCAQMD	Notification of Demolition or Asbestos Removal (Rule 1403)	Rule 1403 establishes survey requirements, notification, and work practices to prevent asbestos emissions from emanating during building renovation and demolition activities. Notification is required prior to projects involving the removal of more than 100 linear feet of asbestos.
Los Angeles County Department of Public Works	Grading Permit/Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESCP)	If the final design involves grading, a grading permit will be required, either for “engineered grading” (in excess of 5,000 cubic yards or that is proposed to support any structure) or “regular grading.” Plans for engineered grading projects must also include an ESCP.
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board	Storm Water – Construction General Permit	Projects disturbing one or more acres of soil must obtain coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activities (2009-0009-DWQ). The Construction General Permit requires submittal of a Notice of Intent (NOI) and development of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) by a certified Qualified SWPPP Developer (QSD).
Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning	Oak Tree Permit	Proposed development within the protected zone of an oak tree requires an Oak Tree Permit. This applies for all oak trees with trunks that are 8 inches or larger in diameter, and the protected zone is defined as 5 feet outside the dripline (or canopy) of the oak tree, or 15 feet from the trunk, whichever is greater.
City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works	Tree Removal Permit	Required for the relocation or removal of certain Southern California native tree and shrub species that are protected.

Agency	Permit/Requirement	Need/Basis
Los Angeles County Department of Public Works	Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse Plan	Los Angeles County Code requires projects to recycle 50 percent of the construction and demolition debris generated (Chapter 20.87). A Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse Plan must be submitted and approved before construction, demolition, grading, or other permits are issued.
Los Angeles County Fire Department	CUPA Permit/Hazardous Materials Business Plan	All businesses that store, handle or use hazardous materials in reportable quantities must obtain a Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) permit. In addition, each business is required to submit a Hazardous Materials Business Plan with the local CUPA.
Los Angeles County Fire Department	Aboveground Petroleum Storage Tank Facility Statement Notification / Change in Status	Notification and permits are required in the event a new tank is installed or when an existing tank is closed (e.g., temporary or permanent closure) or removed. Applies to facilities that are subject to oil pollution prevention regulations (40 CFR Part 112) that have a storage capacity of 1,320 gallons or the tank facility has a storage capacity of less than 1,320 gallons of petroleum and has one or more tanks in an underground area meeting the conditions specified in HSC §25270.2(o)(1).
City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering	Sewer Connection Permit (S-Permit)	Required for constructing a new sewer connection or connecting to an existing lateral at the property line (LAMC 64.12)
City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering	Utilities permit (U-Permit)	Required if a public right-of-way needs to be trenched or excavated for any utilities work (LAMC 62.02(a) and 62.05).
City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering	Street construction permits (A-Permit, B-Permit)	Construction on any property, street, or other right-of-way owned by the City of Los Angeles requires either an A-Permit for minor street construction or a B-Permit for major street construction (LAMC 62.106). Major projects also require design plans prepared by a licensed engineer.
Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety	Haul Route Permit	Required for import or export of more than 1000 cubic yards of soil in the “hillside” area.

APPENDIX B. AGENCY CONSULTATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

SCOPING

NHPA SECTION 106 CONSULTATION

DRAFT EA

Los Angeles Times Scoping Notice (8/31/2022)

Los Angeles Times

Publication Date: 08/31/2022

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B4 WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2022 ★ Los Angeles Times LATIMES.COM

Second replacement for Ridley-Thomas is blocked

[**Seat,** from B1]
move to keep it from being considered on the council floor — and sending it to a committee instead.

Martinez's request to take up Hutt's nomination needed 10 votes but stalled out at nine. Its failure leaves the 10th District, which stretches from Koreatown to Leimert Park in South L.A., without a voting representative for the time being.

Councilwoman Monica Rodriguez, who opposed a vote on Hutt, said the council moved too swiftly last time it tried to fill the seat — selecting Wesson, only to have two judges conclude he is ineligible because of term limits. Councilman Bob Blumenfield had similar concerns, saying he only learned that Hutt was in consideration on Thursday.

"What gives me great discomfort," he said, "is the speed at which we are doing this."

Rodriguez and Blumenfield were joined by Councilmembers Mike Bonin, Marqueece Harris-Dawson and Nithya Raman in blocking the nomination. The proposal was referred back to the council's rules committee, which Martinez heads.

Martinez quickly scheduled a vote on Hutt's nomination for Wednesday, keeping it on a fast track. She also apologized to Hutt, saying during the council meeting she would keep fighting to put her in the seat.

"I am sorry that a few did not have the courage to have this conversation, and deal with the merits of this Black woman that's here today," Martinez said, referring to Hutt.

After the vote, Hutt issued a statement saying she remains committed to the district. "Although I am disappointed with today's decision, I will continue to fight to provide the resources and services our constituents need," she said.

Residents of the 10th have been without a voting representative off and on since last fall, when Ridley-Thomas was indicted on charges of bribery, conspiracy and fraud in a case that centers on allegations that he steered public money to USC in exchange for a job and full scholarship for his son. He has pleaded not guilty.

The council suspended Ridley-Thomas on an 11-3 vote. Martinez picked Karly Katona, Ridley-Thomas' then-chief of staff, to serve as a nonvoting caretaker.

Residents of the district protested that they had been disenfranchised by that move, because Katona did not have the power to cast votes.

IRFAN KHAN Los Angeles Times

SUPPORTERS OF Heather Hutt show their disappointment with the council at City Hall on Tuesday.

In February, the council selected Wesson to serve in the interim post. But that effort was challenged in court by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and district residents who aligned with Ridley-Thomas. Two judges sided with those plaintiffs and Wesson resigned last week.

Since Martinez announced the nomination of Hutt, the political debate over the district's future has expanded, with an increasing number of candidates, elected officials and advocacy groups from across the city wading into the fray.

Labor organizer Hugo Soto-Martinez, now running to unseat Councilman Mitch O'Farrell in the Nov. 8 election, called for the council to take more input on the appointment. O'Farrell signed on to the proposal to appoint Hutt last week.

Councilwoman-elect Eunisses Hernandez, who defeated Councilman Gil Cedillo in June but won't be seated until December, also weighed in, saying the choice of an interim councilmember should not be kept "in the hands of a few."

Cedillo, in turn, said the district deserves to have a voting representative right away. "Democracy delayed is democracy denied," he said.

For some, the handling of the temporary vacancy has become a referendum on Martinez's tenure as leader of the council.

Rob Quan, a frequent Martinez critic, accused her of selecting Hutt as part of a larger strategy to remain council president. Several of Martinez's allies on the council will be stepping down at the end of the year, when a vote on the presidency will be held.

"She cares about one vote," said Quan, who is part of the group Unrig LA. "And that's in January 2023, when they vote for council president."

Martinez called that assertion "insulting," saying she acted because the 10th District needs a voting representative. If critics want new leadership, "then line up the votes and take me out anytime you want," she said.

"I'm not afraid of that," Martinez added.

Dallas Fowler, who lives in the Mid-City section of the 10th District, praised Martinez for moving to fill the seat. Appearing before the council, she berated councilmembers who blocked the vote on Hutt, calling it "an insult to every woman in this district."

"For over 200 days, this district has gone without a voting member on this council, and you would never let that happen in North Hollywood or Sherman Oaks," said Fowler.

Bonin, Harris-Dawson and Rodriguez have offered a separate plan, which would instruct city officials to come back in 60 days with eligibility criteria for an interim appointment. That timetable, if followed, would force the council to make a decision a few weeks before Ridley-Thomas' trial, which is set for mid-November.

Bonin said Monday that his search process wouldn't need to last a full two months. Meanwhile, even some who opposed the vote on Hutt said they don't want to wait 60 days.

Harry McElroy, who lives in Leimert Park, said council members should conduct two rounds of hearings on the search for a replacement, allowing multiple candidates to seek the post.

"I don't think it should need to last more than a week or two," he said. "It shouldn't take that long if we do it properly."

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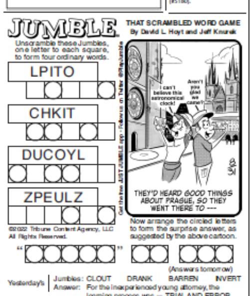
LEGAL NOTICES 1300

Legal Notices

Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed transfer of approximately 26.4 acres on the east side of the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center at 16111 Plummer St., North Hills, California, 91343, to the National Cemetery Administration for expansion of the Los Angeles National Cemetery.

VA requests input on the scope of issues for analysis, potential alternatives, or information/analyses relevant to the Proposed Action. Scoping comments will be accepted through September 30, 2022. Comments may be submitted via email to vacoenvironmental@va.gov. Please include the subject line "Sepulveda Land Transfer EA" in all correspondence. For additional information or questions, please contact Jason Sturm at jason.sturm@va.gov.



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EMPLOYMENT 1500

Legal Notices

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CASE NUMBER 2022 L 000116

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)
Case Number (Numero del Caso): 21STCV08832

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Los Angeles Times

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LATIMES.COM Los Angeles Times ★ EST SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2022 B5

Abortion sanctuary bills head to Newsom's desk

[**Bills,** from B1]
state women on the condition they end their pregnancies. This is not pro-choice."

Antiabortion groups, which opposed the package of legislation, focused their attention on AB 2223, which would prohibit a coroner from holding an inquest after a fetal death, including in cases in which drugs are suspected of causing a stillbirth.

Republicans blasted the bill by Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland), saying it would make it difficult for law enforcement to investigate the death of a newborn.

Wicks said pregnancy loss should not be a crime, regardless of the circumstances.

"The reason we did this bill was because we wanted to ensure and enshrine that no person can be criminally prosecuted for something that happens in utero, which has happened in California," Wicks said.

SB 1142 by Sen. Anna Caballero (D-Salinas) would create a website with information on abortion services in the state.

SB 1245 by Sen. Sydney Kamlager (D-Los Angeles) would set aside $20 million for the Los Angeles County Abortion Access Safe Haven Pilot Program, which would expand reproductive care services.

That money was included in the $200 million in new funding for reproductive care in the state's current budget, which will also help pay for abortion services for the uninsured, workforce programs to increase the number of providers and financial assistance to patients traveling from other states.

Newsom signed an executive order in June to prevent patient data and medical records from being shared by state agencies in response to any out-of-state investigation into abortion care provided in California.

California law allows abortion until the point that a physician determines "there is a reasonable likelihood of the fetus' sustained survival outside the uterus without the application of extraordinary medical measures," or if the procedure is necessary in order to "protect the life or health of the woman." In most cases, doctors have considered a fetus viable at 24 weeks.

Voters will be able to weigh in on California's abortion protections in November, after lawmakers placed a measure on the ballot that would explicitly protect the right to an abortion.

Proposition 1 has strong support among Californians; a UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies poll shows that 7 in 10 voters support it.

The poll also gauged California voters' attitudes toward new laws proposed in the aftermath of the Supreme Court's decision. Nearly two-thirds said they support legislative fixes that would help women from other states obtain abortions in California.

"I think this is the largest bill package in the country that protects and expands abortion access, and it speaks to the commitment the Legislature has had," said Jodi Hicks, president of Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California. "It speaks to working toward California values to ensure that California remains a reproductive freedom state despite this post-Roe reality we are living in."

Hicks said abortion providers have seen an uptick in out-of-state patients, particularly in cities with airports and in areas close to Arizona, where the procedure is restricted.

Newsom signed a bill in June that created immediate liability protections for California abortion providers when caring for patients traveling from areas where the procedure is banned or access has been narrowed. Under AB 1666 by Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D-Orinda), providers and patients in California can't be held civilly liable for judgments based on claims made in antiabortion states.

In March, Newsom signed SB 245 by Sen. Lena Gonzalez (D-Long Beach), which eliminates out-of-pocket costs for abortions, including average co-pays that range from $300 for a medication abortion to nearly $900 for a procedural abortion, according to the California Health Benefits Review Program.

"As more and more states institute bans on abortions, California will be the state that continues to see patients coming here to receive care," Hicks said.

RICH PEDRONCELLI Associated Press

STATE LAWMAKERS last week sent Gov. Gavin Newsom the last of 15 bills aimed at strengthening California's already robust abortion protections. Above, abortion rights supporters rally in Sacramento in 2019.

LEGAL NOTICES 1300

Legal Notices

Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed transfer of approximately 26.4 acres on the east side of the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center at 16111 Plummer St., North Hills, California, 91343, to the National Cemetery Administration for expansion of the Los Angeles National Cemetery.

VA requests input on the scope of issues for analysis, potential alternatives, or information/analyses relevant to the Proposed Action. Scoping comments will be accepted through September 30, 2022. Comments may be submitted via email to vacoenvironment@va.gov. Please include the subject line "Sepulveda Land Transfer EA" in all correspondence. For additional information or questions, please contact Jason Sturm at jason.sturm@va.gov.

Stakeholder Scoping Letter

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Office of Construction & Facilities Management
Washington DC 20420

August 30, 2022

SUBJECT: Notice of Scoping for the Proposed Land Transfer from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center to the Los Angeles National Cemetery

Dear Valued Stakeholder:

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed land transfer from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center (SACC) located at 16111 Plummer St., North Hills, CA 91343 (Figure 1) and managed by the Veterans Health Administration to the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) for expansion of the Los Angeles National Cemetery (LANC). SACC proposes to transfer approximately 26.4 acres on the east side of the SACC for construction of a new national cemetery to expand the LANC (Figure 2).

The **purpose** of the Proposed Action is to provide expanded burial options at the LANC for Veterans and eligible family members in the greater Los Angeles area. The Proposed Action is **needed** because the LANC is currently limited to columbaria burials and subsequent internments only.

This scoping notice will also be published in the *Los Angeles Times* to inform and solicit input from the public. The notice will also be made available on the VA website at https://www.cfm.va.gov/environmental.

VA will prepare the Draft EA according to the regulations for the implementation of the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S. Code 4321-4370h), as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508), and VA Implementing Regulations (38 CFR Part 26).

VA is requesting input on the scope of issues for analysis, potential alternatives, or information/analyses relevant to the Proposed Action. The EA will evaluate the potential direct and indirect impacts to the environment resulting from the Proposed Action and alternatives, as well as cumulative impacts with other actions and projects in the project area.

Cemetery development would require the demolition of the existing golf course and baseball field (and associated infrastructure), which have been closed since 2020. In addition, the Sepulveda Vet Center Outstation operations at SACC Building 63 (street address 9737 Haskell Ave.) would need to be relocated to another suitable location that is yet to be determined, and the building demolished to accommodate cemetery plans. However, these actions would not necessarily to take place until after NCA is ready to proceed with cemetery development.

Scoping comments are requested by no later than September 30, 2022. Comments may be submitted via email to vacoenvironment@va.gov. Please include the subject line "Sepulveda Land Transfer EA" in all correspondence.

VA will address and incorporate relevant comments in the Draft EA. Once VA completes the Draft EA, it will be published and made available for a 30-day public review and comment period. VA will announce the start of this review period by publishing a notice of availability (NOA) of the Draft EA in the *Los Angeles Times*.

For additional information or questions, please contact Jason Sturm at jason.sturm@va.gov with the subject line "Sepulveda Land Transfer EA".

Respectfully,

Glenn Elliott

Glenn Elliott
Director, Environmental Program Office
Office of Construction and Facilities Management

Figure 1. Site Location

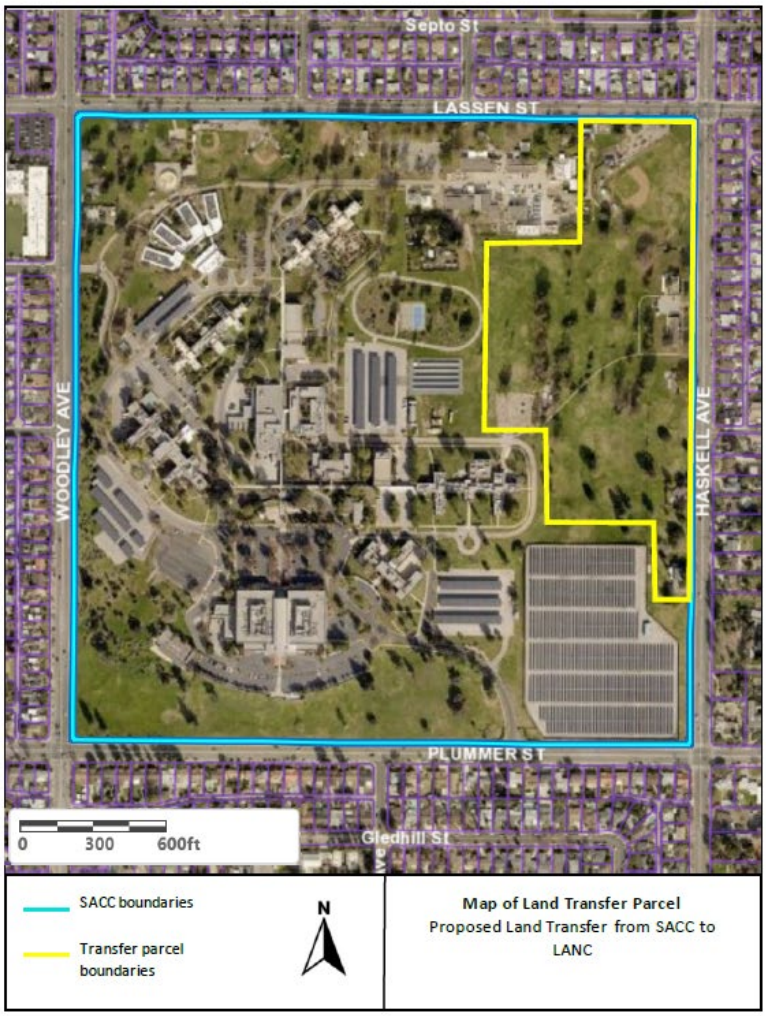


Figure 2. Map of Land Transfer Parcel

Scoping Letter Distribution List

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	CONTACT INFO	EMAIL	ADDRESS
Federal/State Elected Officials			
U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein	Chief of Staff David Grannis	senator@feinstein.senate.gov; david_grannis@feinstein.senate.gov	331 Hart Senate Office Bldg. Washington, D.C. 20510
U.S. Senator Alex Padilla	Chief of Staff David Montes	senator@padilla.senate.gov david_montes@padilla.senate.gov	112 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510
U.S. Representative Tony Cardenas (29th Congressional District)	Chief of Staff Ahmed Elsayed	ahmed.elsayed@mail.house.gov	2438 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515
State Senator Robert Hertzberg (District 18)	N/A	senator.hertzberg@senate.ca.gov	6150 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 400 Van Nuys, CA 91401
Assembly Member Adrin Nazarian (District 46)	N/A	assemblymember.nazarian@assembly.ca.gov	6150 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 300 Van Nuys, CA 91401
Local Elected Officials			
Mayor Eric Garcetti	N/A	mayor.helpdesk@lacity.org	Office of the Mayor 200 N. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90012
City Council Member John Lee (District 12)	N/A	Councilmember.Lee@lacity.org	Los Angeles City Council 200 N. Spring St., Room 405 Los Angeles, CA 90012
Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila James Kuehl (District 3)	N/A	sheila@bos.lacounty.gov	Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors 821 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration 500 W. Temple St. Los Angeles, CA 90012
Federal Agencies			
U.S. EPA Region 9	Jean Prijatel, Manager Environmental Review Branch	prijatel.jean@epa.gov	75 Hawthorne Street San Francisco, CA 94105
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region 8	Paul Souza Regional Director, Pacific Southwest Region	paul_souza@fws.gov	Federal Building 2800 Cottage Way Sacramento, CA 95825
State of California Agencies			
California Department of Conservation	David Shabazian, Director	David.Shabazian@conservation.ca.gov	715 P Street, MS 1900 Sacramento, CA 95814

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	CONTACT INFO	EMAIL	ADDRESS
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Ed Pert, Regional Manager South Coast Region (Region 5)	Ed.Pert@wildlife.ca.gov	3883 Ruffin Road San Diego, CA 92123
California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery	Rachel Machi Wagoner, Director	Rachel.Wagoner@CalRecycle.ca.gov	P.O. Box 4025 Sacramento, CA 95812-4025
California Department of Toxic Substances Control	Meredith Williams, Director	Meredith.Williams@dtsc.ca.gov	P.O. Box 806 Sacramento, CA 95812-0806
California Environmental Protection Agency	Jared Blumenfeld, Secretary	SectyBlumenfeld@calepa.ca.gov	P.O. Box 2815 Sacramento, CA 95812-2815
California Department of Transportation	Gloria Roberts, District 7 Acting Director	gloria_roberts@dot.ca.gov	100 South Main Street Los Angeles, CA 90012
State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) California Office of Historic Preservation Department of Parks & Recreation	Julianne Polanco State Historic Preservation Officer	calshpo.ohp@parks.ca.gov	1725 23rd Street, Suite 100 Sacramento, California 95816
Regional Agencies			
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board	James Stahl, Acting Chair	James.stahl@waterboards.ca.gov	320 West Fourth Street, Suite 200 Los Angeles, CA 90013
South Coast Air Quality Management District	Sarah Rees, Deputy Executive Officer Planning, Rule Development & Implementation	srees@aqmd.gov	21865 Copley Drive Diamond Bar, CA 91765-4178
County/Local Agencies			
Los Angeles County Department of Public Works	Mark Pestrella, Director	mpestrel@dpw.lacounty.gov	900 S. Fremont Ave. Alhambra, CA 91803
City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works	Aura Garcia, President	aura.garcia@lacity.org	200 N. Spring Street, Room 361 Los Angeles, CA 90012-4801
City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety	Osama Younan, General Manager	osama.younan@lacity.org	201 N. Figueroa St. Los Angeles, CA 90012
City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning	Vincent P. Bertoni, Director	planning@lacity.org	200 North Spring Street Los Angeles, CA 90012-2601
City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation	Seleta Reynolds, General Manager	ladot@lacity.org	100 S. Main St., 10th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90012

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	CONTACT INFO	EMAIL	ADDRESS
Native American Organizations (*federally recognized tribes indicated with asterisk)			
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians*	Isaiah Vivanco, Chairperson Joseph Ontiveros, Cultural Resource Department	ivivanco@soboba-nsn.gov jontiveros@soboba-nsn.gov	P. O. Box 487 San Jacinto, CA, 92581
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians*	Mary Resvaloso, Chairperson	tmchair@tmdci.org	PO Box 1160 Thermal, CA 92274-1160
Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians	Julie Tumamait-Stenslie, Chairperson	jtumamait@hotmail.com	365 North Poli Avenue Ojai, California 93023
Chumash Council of Bakersfield	Julio Quair, Chairperson	N/A	729 Texas Street Bakersfield, CA, 93307
Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation	Mariza Sullivan, Chairperson	cbcntribalchair@gmail.com	P. O. Box 4464 Santa Barbara, CA, 93140
Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians	Jairo Avila, Tribal Historic and Cultural Preservation Officer	jairo.avila@tataviam-nsn.us	1019 Second Street, Suite 1 San Fernando, CA, 91340
Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation	Andrew Salas, Chairperson	admin@gabrielenoindians.org	P.O. Box 393 Covina, CA, 91723
Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians	Anthony Morales, Chairperson	GTTribalcouncil@aol.com	P.O. Box 693 San Gabriel, CA, 91778
Gabrielino /Tongva Nation	Sandonne Goad, Chairperson	sgoad@gabrielino-tongva.com	106 1/2 Judge John Aiso St., #231 Los Angeles, CA, 90012
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	Robert Dorame, Chairperson Christina Conley, Tribal Consultant and Administrator	gtongva@gmail.com christina.marsden@alumni.usc.edu	P.O. Box 490 Bellflower, CA, 90707
Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe	Charles Alvarez	roadkingcharles@aol.com	23454 Vanowen Street West Hills, CA, 91307
Northern Chumash Tribal Council	Violet Walker, Chairperson	violetsagewalker@gmail.com	P.O. Box 6533 Los Osos, CA, 93412
San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council	N/A	N/A	1030 Ritchie Road Grover Beach, CA, 93433
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians	Lovina Redner, Tribal Chair	lsaul@santarosa-nsn.gov	P.O. Box 391820 Anza, CA, 92539
Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians	Kenneth Kahn, Chairperson	kkahn@santaynezchumash.org	P.O. Box 517 Santa Ynez, CA, 93460

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	CONTACT INFO	EMAIL	ADDRESS
Non-Governmental Organizations			
North Hills West Neighborhood Council	N/A	board@nhwnc.net	P.O. Box 2091 North Hills, CA 91393
San Fernando Valley Historical Society	N/A	sfvhistory@gmail.com	10940 Sepulveda Boulevard Mission Hills, CA 91346
American Legion Woodland Hills Post 826	N/A	info@post826calegion.org	P. O. Box 189 Woodland Hills CA 91316-0189
Jewish War Veterans San Fernando Valley Post 603	Attn: Commander Earl Roth	earlr45@gmail.com	American Legion Hall 5320 Fallbrook Avenue Woodland Hills CA 91316
Los Angeles County Veterans Advisory Commission	Attn: Chair Anthony Allman	contact@veteranadvocate.org	1816 S. Figueroa Street Los Angeles, California 90015
Military Order of the Purple Heart San Fernando Chapter #83	Attn: Luis Rivera	N/A	P.O. Box 950214 Mission Hills, CA 91395
Student Veteran Organization California State University, Northridge	Attn: April Chamchalaem	csunsvo@gmail.com	18111 Nordhoff St. Northridge, CA 91330

Scoping Comments

From: Jairo Avila <jairo.avila@tataviam-nsn.us>
Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 12:45 PM
To: VACO Environment <VACOEnvironment@va.gov>; Sturm, Jason R. (CFM) <Jason.Sturm@va.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Sepulveda Land Transfer EA

Dear Jason Sturm,

On behalf of the Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Division of the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI), thank you for the formal notification and opportunity to consult on the Proposed Land Transfer from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center to the Los Angeles National Cemetery.

The CRM Division has reviewed the proposed undertaking and requests that the following conditions/measures be included in the Project's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) report under Cultural Resources or Tribal Cultural Resources.

FTBMI-TCR1: If cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall assess the find. Work on the portions of the Projects outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. The Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) shall be contacted about any pre-contact and/or post-contact finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes their initial assessment of the nature of the find, to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.
FTBMI-TCR2: Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), the Project applicant shall retain a professional Native American monitor procured by the FTBMI to observe all remaining ground-disturbing activities including, but not limited to, excavating, digging, trenching, plowing, drilling, tunneling, quarrying, grading, leveling, clearing, driving posts, auguring, blasting, stripping topsoil or similar activity, and archaeological work.
FTBMI-TCR3: The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with the FTBMI on the disposition and treatment of any Tribal Cultural Resource encountered during all ground disturbing activities.

Should there be any issues with this request, we can schedule a consultation meeting to discuss the Project and all issues related to tribal cultural resources. I appreciate your time and look forward to further updates on this Project.

Respectfully,

Jairo F. Avila, M.A., RPA.
Tribal Historic and Cultural Preservation Officer
Cultural Resources Management Division
Tribal Historic and Cultural Preservation Department

Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
1019 Second Street, Suite 1
San Fernando, California 91340
Office: (818) 837-0794
Website: http://www.tataviam-nsn.us

From: VACO Environment <VACOEnvironment@va.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 7:38 AM
To: Sturm, Jason R. (CFM) <Jason.Sturm@va.gov>
Subject: Sepulveda Land Transfer EA

[CAUTION] EXTERNAL Email. Exercise caution.

Dear Valued Stakeholder:

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is proposing to transfer approximately 26.4 acres of land from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center (SACC) in Los Angeles, California from the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) to the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) for cemetery expansion. As part of the decision-making process, VA will undertake activities to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA). VA is seeking input on issues to be addressed during the NEPA process, including environmental concerns.

VA invites your input to the NEPA process. Please see the attached scoping notice for information on the proposed project and how to submit any comments or input on alternatives and issues VA should analyze in the EA.

Respectfully,

Jason Sturm
Environmental Engineer

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

September 21, 2022

Jason Sturm
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Construction & Facilities Management Office
425 I Street, NW
Washington DC 20001

Subject: Scoping comments for the Sepulveda Land Transfer Environmental Assessment, North Hills, Los Angeles, California

Dear Jason Sturm:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Notice of Scoping for the Proposed Land Transfer from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center to the Los Angeles National Cemetery. The following comments are provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The VA proposes to transfer approximately 26.4 acres from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center in North Hills, California to the National Cemetery Administration for expansion of the Los Angeles National Cemetery to provide expanded burial options for veterans and eligible family members in the greater Los Angeles area. We offer the following comments and recommendations for the VA to consider when preparing the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA).

Air Quality

The DEA should provide a brief discussion of ambient air conditions (baseline or existing conditions), National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and nonattainment areas, and potential air quality impacts of the project and alternatives. Emissions should be estimated for the construction phase, including emissions from construction vehicles and transportation. Identify probable routes for construction traffic on nearby roadways and indicate whether project truck traffic will pass near or through any communities with environmental justice concerns.

The project site is located in an area designated as "extreme" nonattainment for the 8-hour ozone; therefore, it is important to reduce emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) as much as possible, especially during construction. In general, NOx emissions can be minimized by requiring the use of high-efficiency equipment (i.e. require nonroad trucks and construction equipment to meet, or exceed, the U.S. EPA Tier 4 exhaust emissions standards for heavy-duty nonroad compression-ignition engines), proper maintenance of equipment, shutting off engines when not in use and prohibiting idling for more than 5 minutes or within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors, and exploring the use of lower-emitting equipment, engines and fuels, including electric, liquified gas, hydrogen fuel cells, and/or alternative diesel formulations if feasible. Other mitigation

measures could include timing construction activities to not coincide with peak-hour traffic and reducing construction-related trips of workers by encouraging ridesharing and transit use.

The project area is also in an area designated as moderate nonattainment for annual $PM_{2.5}$ (particulate matter less than 2.5 microns). Many of the measures described above for reducing NOx will also reduce $PM_{2.5}$ emissions.

Because the proposed project is located in nonattainment areas, the DEA should address the applicability of Clean Air Act Section 176 and EPA's general conformity regulations at 40 CFR Parts 51 and 93. Federal agencies need to ensure that their actions, including construction emissions subject to state jurisdiction, conform to an approved implementation plan. When determining conformity applicability, note that the de minimis threshold is 10 tons per year for NOx and VOCs, and 100 tons per year for $PM_{2.5}$.

To reduce air quality impacts, we also recommend using lighting systems that are energy efficient, such as LED technology, locating equipment staging areas as far as possible from residential areas and other sensitive receptors, such as residents across the street, schools (e.g. Vintage Magnet Elementary) and hospitals (locations of patients in the onsite facility), and avoiding the routing of truck traffic near sensitive land uses to the fullest extent feasible.

Noise impacts

The DEA should assess noise impacts from both the construction and operations phase. Identify the closest sensitive receptors and identify measures to mitigate construction noise, including working with neighbors, schools, and the onsite hospital.

It is not clear how much construction noise would occur for the project, but if there would be significant construction equipment, due to the proximity of the on-site health care center, residences, and Vintage Magnet Elementary School less than 1,000 feet north, we recommend including construction noise mitigation measures. Examples could include:

- Prohibit construction, consistent with Los Angeles Noise Ordinance, on Sundays, or at any other time between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 6:30 a.m.
- Use properly functioning mufflers on appropriate machinery and locate generators, compressors, and staging areas as far from sensitive receptors as possible
- Provide written notice to residents and businesses within 1,000 feet of the construction zone, advising them of the estimated construction schedule, and display notices with contractor contact telephone number(s) and proposed construction dates and times in a conspicuous manner, such as on construction site fences.
- Employ equipment that is powered by electric or natural gas engines.
- Employ temporary noise barriers or fencing, as appropriate.

The Draft EA should also identify impacts from operational noise including from sources such as power equipment for grave site preparation, maintenance and upkeep, and any periodic ceremonial rifle discharges. Discuss operational noise in relation to Los Angeles' exterior noise standards.

Drought-tolerant and pollinator-friendly landscaping

We strongly recommend the VA utilize drought-friendly landscaping and ground cover that requires minimal irrigation, appropriate to increased drought conditions being experienced in California. The following guidance, while no longer in effect, was prepared in collaboration with the VA and still

provides a useful resource to consult when designing landscape plans. See https://www.sustainability.gov/pdfs/sustainable_landscaping_practices.pdf

EPA appreciates the opportunity to review this scoping notice. When the Draft EA is completed, please send a weblink to an electronic copy of the document to me, lead reviewer for this project, at vitulano.karen@epa.gov. If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 947-4178.

Sincerely,

KAREN VITULANO

Digitally signed by KAREN VITULANO
Date: 2022.09.21 11:55:37 -07'00'

Karen Vitulano
Environmental Review Branch

3

NHPA Section 106 Consultation Letter to SHPO

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Office of Construction & Facilities Management
Washington DC 20420

November 10, 2022

Ms. Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer
California Office of Historic Preservation
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816

RE: Initiation of Section 106 Consultation for Transfer and Development of Land from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center to the Los Angeles National Cemetery, North Hills, California

Dear Ms. Polanco:

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S.C. § 306108), the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is initiating consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) on implementation of the above-referenced project in North Hills, California.

Property Description
VA proposes to transfer approximately 26.4 acres of land from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center (SACC) to the NCA for the purpose of future expansion and development of the Los Angeles National Cemetery (LANC). The 26.4 acres of land the northeastern portion of the SACC property. The property contains six buildings, an electrical substation and its associated equipment, and various athletic fields; the buildings and other development are sited along the north and east portions of the parcel, leaving the majority of the parcel vacant. The property is bordered by Lassen Street on the north, Haskell Avenue on the east, and the SACC on the south and west (see Location Map in Attachment A).

The LANC is located approximately 14 miles to the south of SACC.

Undertaking
VA seeks to transfer approximately 26.4 acres of land to NCA for future expansion of the LANC. Site-specific plans and designs have not been finalized at the time, but it as anticipated development will be keeping with typical National Cemetery development, such as in-ground interments and above ground columbaria. It is anticipated any new construction will not exceed one or two stories in height.

Area of Potential Effects
As the parcel under consideration is for the expansion of the LANC, the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for this undertaking is a discontinuous one that includes both the parcel under consideration for transfer and the LANC. The APE for the parcel extends 50 feet around the parcel to address any potential indirect effects due to the construction of above-ground features. However, ground disturbance is limited to within the parcel. No construction or ground disturbance is anticipated at the LANC as part of this project (see APE map in Attachment B).

Historic Properties

Buildings and Structures
The APE contains eight buildings, one electrical substation and its associated equipment, and athletic fields, including the location of the former Mission Hills Golf Course, and the LANC. Other than the LANC, all these features are part of the SACC. The SACC was determined not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 2017 due to the accumulation of changes, primarily demolition of original buildings and construction of new buildings incompatible in design and appearance with the original buildings on the campus. The California Office of Historic Preservation concurred with this finding in 2018.

The LANC was dedicated in 1893; the property is currently 127 acres in size and is located approximately 14 miles south of the SACC. The LANC and its buildings, monuments, and resources are a contributing element to the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Historic District. The LANC is also individually eligible for inclusion in the NRHP as a national cemetery under the 2011 clarification of policy on NRHP eligibility of National Cemeteries put forth by the National Park Service. This policy specified all National Cemeteries are eligible for inclusion in the NRHP as nationally significant places of burial and commemoration.

Archaeological Sites
A recent review of California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) data stated there were no archaeological resources on the SACC campus. A recent review of the Sacred Lands File (SLF) of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was completed. The findings were negative for the SACC campus.

Traditional Cultural Properties
Research conducted during the course of this assessment did not identify any traditional cultural properties.

Determination of Finding
The APE contains one identified historic property, the LANC. The 2011 Policy notes that the significance of National Cemeteries, and the individual resources in National Cemeteries, is drawn from "the presence of the remains of military personnel who have served the country throughout its history." The 2011 Policy also recognizes that "national cemeteries continue to expand" and are "properties considered ever-changing and recognized for their continuing exceptional importance." It also recognizes that "It is anticipated that most cemeteries will represent multiple layers of expansion with new sections being acquired and developed for use periodically as available grave sites are depleted." Further, it notes that "This policy means that recently developed areas are to be included with the boundaries of the district and recently constructed resources are to be recognized as contributing resources." Consequently, NCA is aware that the proposed development will automatically become a contributing resource to the LANC once built. As a result, the proposed undertaking—which will construct similar resources that currently exist in the LANC—will not trigger the criteria of adverse effect.

Therefore, pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1), VA has determined that historic properties identified in the APE will not be affected by the undertaking and requests the SHPO's concurrence with this finding.

Please contact me at william.hooker@va.gov if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM E. HOOKER 911259

Digitally signed by WILLIAM E. HOOKER 911259
Date: 2022.11.10 14:44:43 -05'00'

W. Edward Hooker, III
Historic Architect and Cultural Resources Manager
National Cemetery Administration

cc: Héctor Abreu-Cintrón, VA Federal Preservation Officer
Ed Carroll, Historian II, California Office of Historic Preservation

Attachment A: Location Map

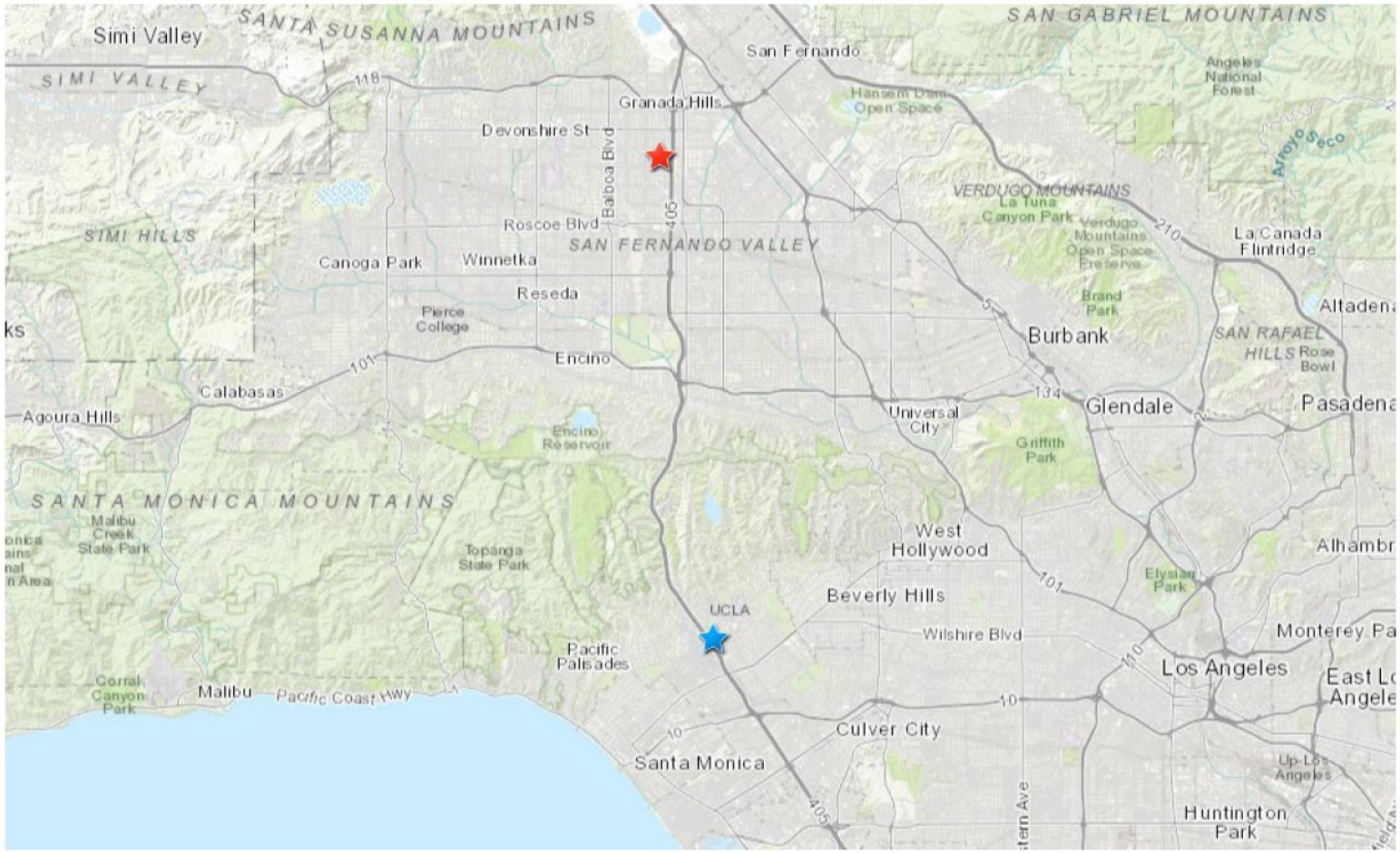


Figure 1: Location of the Sepulveda Ambulator Care Center (SACC) indicated by red star and location of Los Angeles National Cemetery indicated with the blue star.

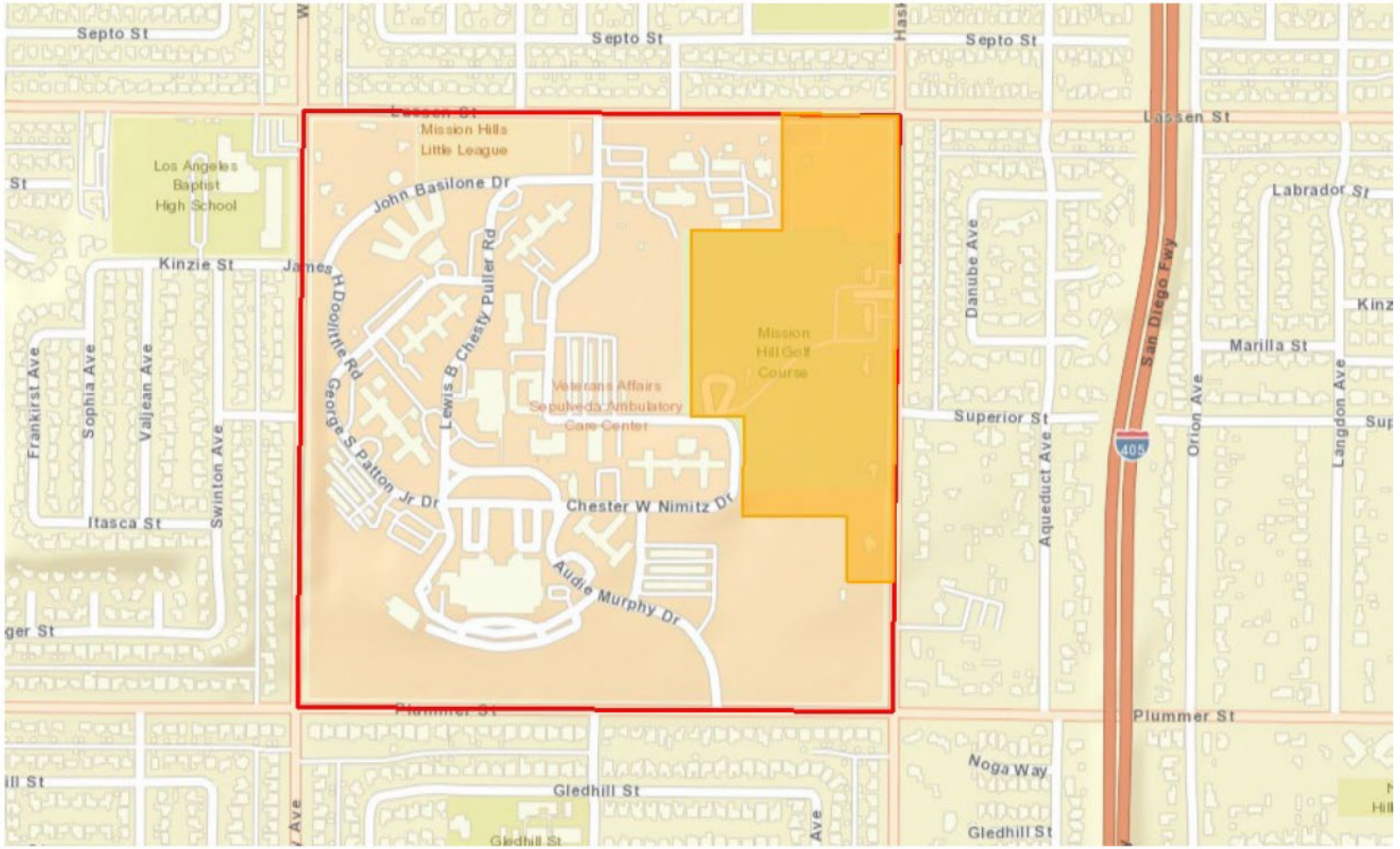


Figure 2: Parcel under consideration shaded in orange. Red line indicates the boundary of the SACC.

Attachment B: APE map

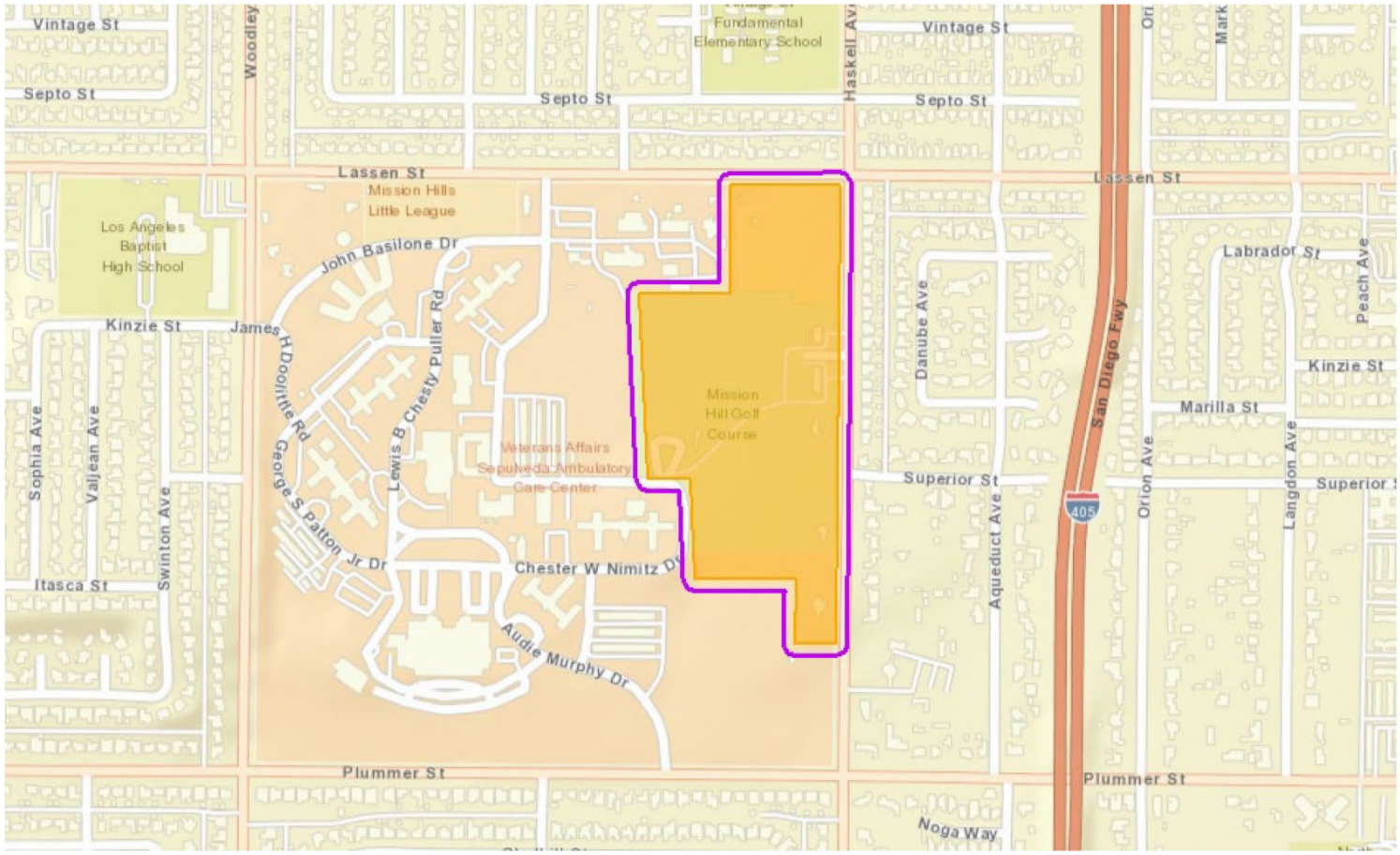


Figure 1: APE for the parcel under consideration indicated in purple.

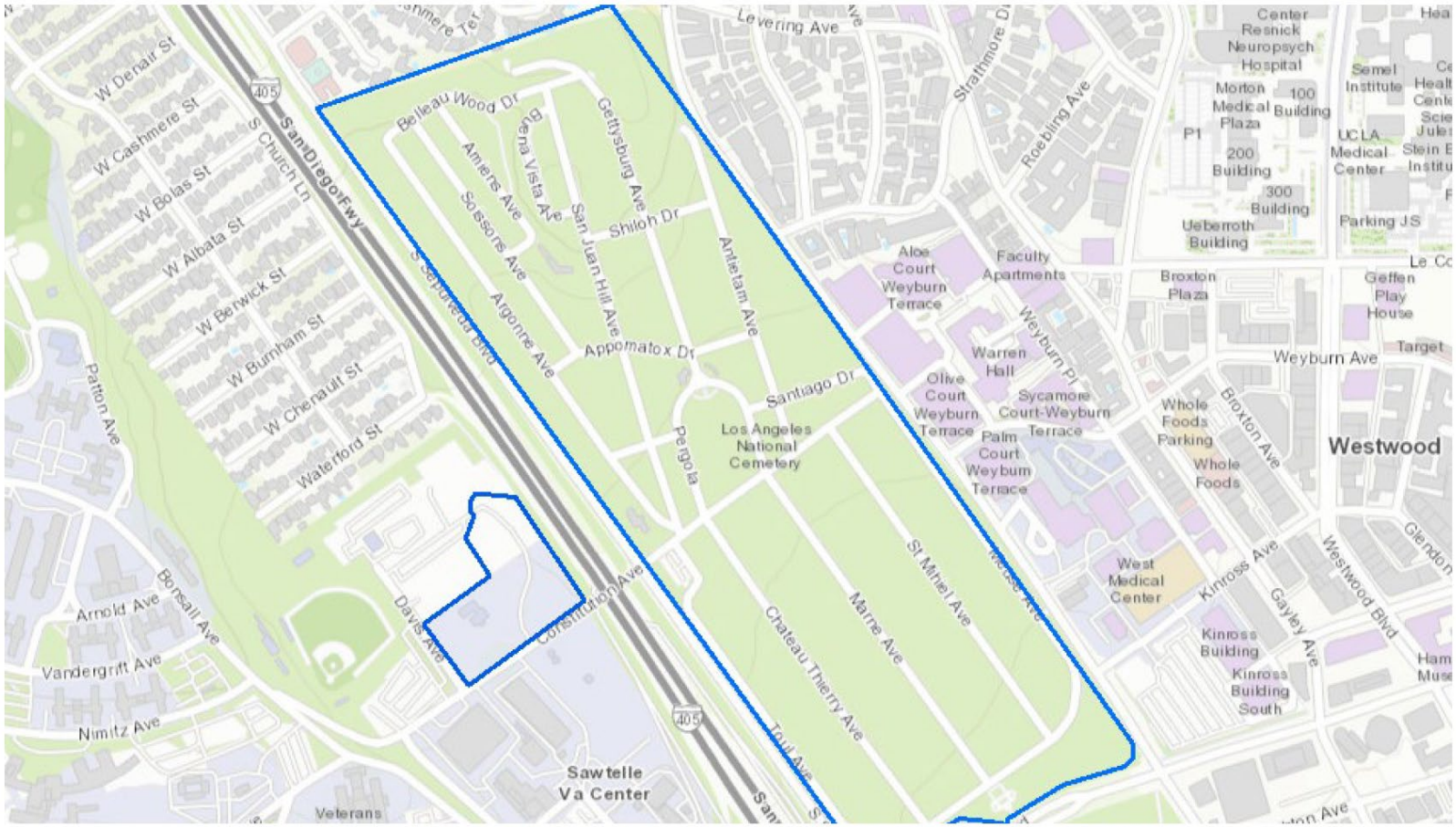


Figure 2: APE for the Los Angeles National Cemetery indicated in blue.

SHPO Response/Concurrence

State of California • Natural Resources Agency Gavin Newsom, ***Governor***

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION Armando Quintero, ***Director***
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95816-7100
Telephone: (916) 445-7000 FAX: (916) 445-7053
calshpo.ohp@parks.ca.gov www.ohp.parks.ca.gov

December 6, 2022

Reply in Reference to: VA_2022_1115_001

W. Edward Hooker III
Historic Architect
National Cemetery Administration
Department of Veterans Affairs
425 I Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Re: Section 106 Consultation for Transfer and Development, Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center to LA National Cemetery, North Hills, Los Angeles County

Dear Mr. Hooker:

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA), under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), is initiating consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (54 U.S.C. §306108), as amended, and its implementing regulation found at 36 CFR Part 800.

The VA is proposing to transfer approximately 26.4 acres of land from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center to the NCA for the purpose of future expansion and development of the Los Angeles National Cemetery.

The VA's historic property identification efforts identified the Riverside National Cemetery as a listed NRHP property. Other buildings on the parcel are associated with the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center, a property formally determined not eligible for NRHP inclusion. Furthermore, a records search and a review of the Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File were negative.

The VA are requesting concurrence with its finding of no adverse effect to historic properties. Upon review of the VA's documentation, the SHPO concurs with this finding of effect. Be advised that under certain circumstances, such as an unanticipated discovery or a change in project description, the VA may have future responsibilities for this undertaking.

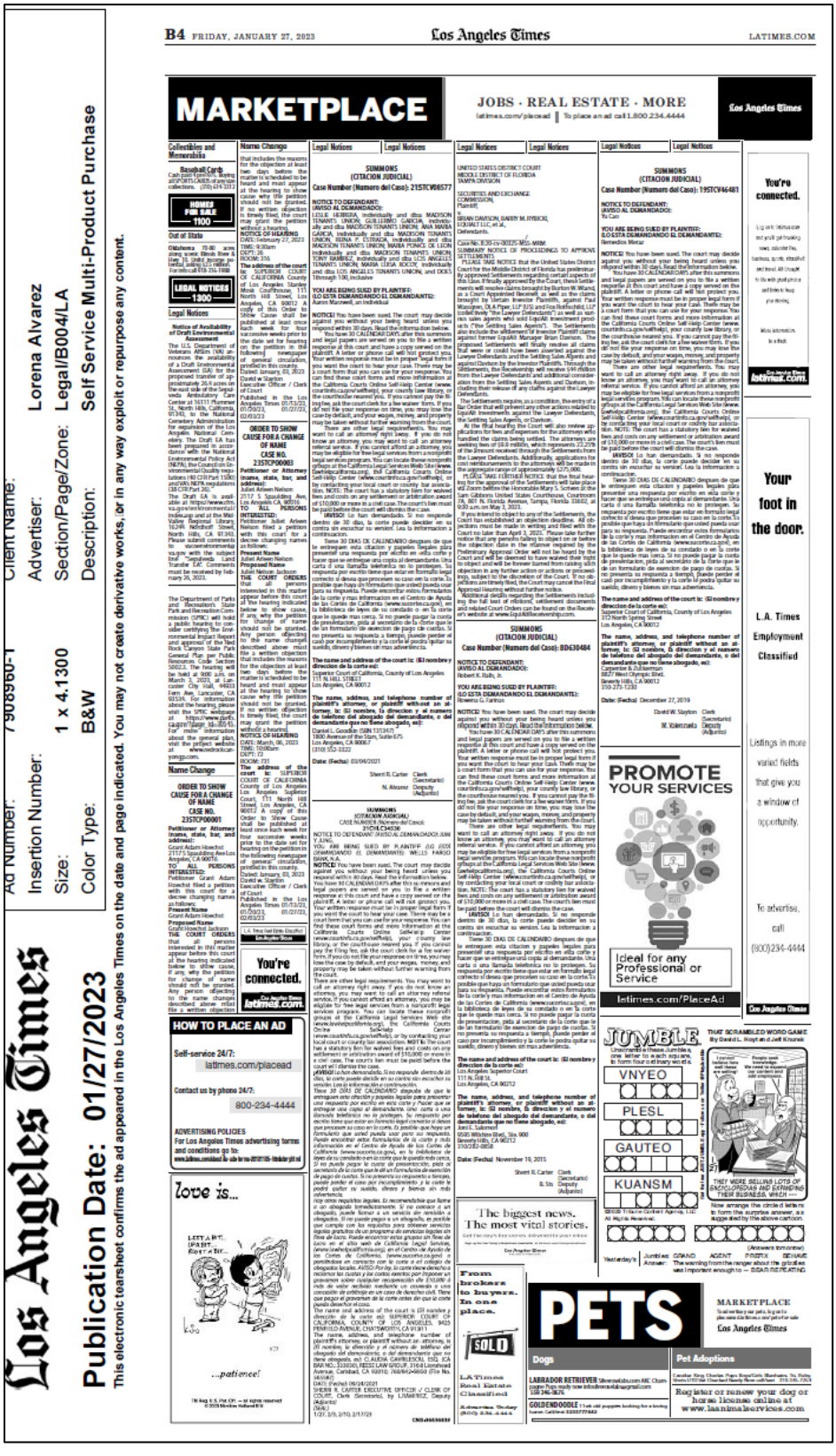
December 6, 2022 VA_2022_1115_001
W. Edward Hooker III
Page 2

This letter is being sent in electronic format only. Please confirm receipt of this letter. Please notify Ed Carroll, Historian II, at Ed.Carroll@parks.ca.gov or (619) 678-2609 if there are any questions or to request a hard copy of this letter.

Sincerely,

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer

Los Angeles Times **NOA (1/27/2023)**



Los Angeles Times
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LEGAL NOTICES 1300

Legal Notices

Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Assessment
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announces the availability of a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed transfer of approximately 26.4 acres on the east side of the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center at 16111 Plummer St, North Hills, California, 91343, to the National Cemetery Administration for expansion of the Los Angeles National Cemetery. The Draft EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Part 1500) and VA's NEPA regulations (38 CFR Part 26).
The Draft EA is available at https://www.cfm.va.gov/environmental/nepa.asp and at the Mid-Valley Regional Library, 16244 Nordhoff Street, North Hills, CA 91343. Please submit comments to vacemetcomments@va.gov with the subject line "Sepulveda Land Transfer EA." Comments must be received by February 26, 2023.

The Department of Parks and Recreation's State Park and Recreation Commission (SPRC) will hold a public hearing to consider certifying the Environmental Impact Report and approval of the Red Rock Canyon State Park General Plan per Public Resources Code Section 5002.2. The hearing will be held at 9:00 a.m. on March 3, 2023, at Lancaster City Hall, 44933 Fern Ave, Lancaster, CA 93534. For information about the hearing, please visit the SPRC website at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30076. For more information about the general plan, visit the project website at www.redrockcanyongp.com.

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR A CHANGE OF NAME
CASE NO. 23STCP00001
Petitioner or Attorney (name, state, bar, and address):
Grant Adam Hoechst
21175 Spaulding Ave Los Angeles, CA 90070
TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED:
Petitioner Grant Adam Hoechst filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
Present Name
Grant Adam Hoechst
Proposed Name
Grant Hoechst Jackson
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING
DATE: March, 06, 2023
TIME: 10:00am
DEPT: 72
ROOM: 251
The address of the court is: SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA County of Los Angeles Superior Court, 111 North Hill Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: Daily Journal
Dated: January, 03, 2023
David w. Slayton
Executive Officer / Clerk of Court
Published in the Los Angeles Times 01/13/23, 01/20/23, 01/27/23, 02/03/23

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR A CHANGE OF NAME
CASE NO. 23STCP00003
Petitioner or Attorney (name, state, bar, and address):
Juliet Arleen Nelson
2117 S Spaulding Ave, Los Angeles, CA, 90016
TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED:
Petitioner Juliet Arleen Nelson filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
Present Name
Juliet Arleen Nelson
Proposed Name
Juliet Nelson Jackson
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING
DATE: March, 06, 2023
TIME: 10:00am
DEPT: 72
ROOM: 251
The address of the court is: SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA County of Los Angeles Superior Court, 111 North Hill Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: Daily Journal
Dated: January, 03, 2023
David w. Slayton
Executive Officer / Clerk of Court
Published in the Los Angeles Times 01/13/23, 01/20/23, 01/27/23, 02/03/23

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SUMMONS
(CITACION JUDICIAL)
Case Number (Numero del Caso): 21STCV06577
NOTICE TO DEFENDANT:
(AVISO AL DEMANDADO:
LESLIE HERRERA, individually and dba MADISON TENANTS UNION; GUILLERMO GARCIA, individually and dba MADISON TENANTS UNION; ANA MARIA GARCIA, individually and dba MADISON TENANTS UNION; REINA P. ESTRADA, individually and dba MADISON TENANTS UNION; MARIA PONCE DE LEON individually and dba MADISON TENANTS UNION; TONY RAMIREZ, individually and dba LOS ANGELES TENANTS UNION; MARIA LIDIA ROCOP, individually and dba LOS ANGELES TENANTS UNION, and DOES Through 100, inclusive
YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF:
(LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):
Ronnie Mirkarimi
NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.
You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.
There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web Site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.
¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.
Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.
Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 o más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.
The name and address of the court is (El nombre y dirección de la corte es): SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, 9425 PENFIELD AVENUE, CHATSWORTH, CA 91311
The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): CLAUDIA CAVALESCU, ESQ. (CA BAR NO.: 233030), REISS LAW GROUP, 3168 Lionshead Avenue, Carlsbad, CA 92010, 760/804-9650 (File No. 18-0087)
DATE: (Fecha) 09/24/2021
SHERRI R. CARTER EXECUTIVE OFFICER / CLERK OF COURT, Clerk (Secretario), by LAMARREZ, Deputy (Adjunto)
SEAL
1/27, 2/3, 2/10, 2/17/23
CNS-3553553#

Legal Notices

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
TAMPA DIVISION
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION,
Plaintiff,
v.
BRIAN DAVISON, DARRY M. RYBICKI, EQUIALT LLC, et al.,
Defendants.
Case No: 8:20-cv-00322-MSS-MRM
SUMMARY NOTICE OF PROCEEDINGS TO APPROVE SETTLEMENTS
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida has preliminarily approved Settlements regarding certain aspects of this Litigation. If finally approved by the Court, these Settlements will resolve claims brought by Burton W. Wiand, as Court Appointed Receiver, as well as the claims brought by Certain Investor Plaintiffs, against Paul Wassgren, DLA Piper, LLP (US) and Fox Rothschild, LLP (collectively "the Lawyer Defendants"), as well as various sales agents who sold EquiAlt investment products ("the Settling Sales Agents"). The Settlements also include the settlement of Investor Plaintiff claims against former EquiAlt Manager Brian Davison. The proposed Settlements will finally resolve all claims that EquiAlt, or could have been asserted against the Lawyer Defendants and the Settling Sales Agents and against Davison by the Investor Plaintiffs. Through the Settlements, the Receivership will receive $44 million from the Lawyer Defendants and additional consideration from the Settling Sales Agents and Davison, including their release of any claims against the Lawyer Defendants.
The Settlements require, as a condition, the entry of a Bar Order that will prevent any other actions related to EquiAlt investments against the Lawyer Defendants, the Settling Sales Agents, or Davison.
At the Final hearing the Court will also review applications for fees and expenses for the attorneys who handled the claims being settled. The attorneys are seeking fees of 18.6 million, which represents 22.25% of the Amount received through the Settlements from the Lawyer Defendants. Additionally, applications for cost reimbursements to the attorneys will be made in the aggregate range of approximately $275,000.
PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the final hearing for the approval of the Settlements will take place via Zoom before the Honorable Mary S. Scriven at the Sam Gibbons United States Courthouse, Courtroom 7A, 801 N. Florida Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33602, at 9:00 a.m. on May 3, 2023.
If you intend to object to any of the Settlements, the Court has established an objection deadline. All objections must be made in writing and filed with the Court no later than April 3, 2023. Please take further notice that any persons failing to object on or before the objection date in the manner required by the Preliminary Approval Order will not be heard by the Court and will be deemed to have waived their right to object and will be forever barred from raising such objection in any further action or actions or proceedings, subject to the discretion of the Court. If no objections are timely filed, the Court may cancel the Final Approval Hearing without further notice.
"Additional details regarding the Settlements including the full text of affidavit," settlement documents and related Court Orders can be found on the Receiver's website at www.EquiAltReceivership.com.

SUMMONS
(CITACION JUDICIAL)
Case Number (Numero del Caso): BD630484
NOTICE TO DEFENDANT:
(AVISO AL DEMANDADO:
Robert E. Ruth, II
YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF:
(LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):
Rowena G. Farmer
NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.
You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.
There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web Site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.
¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.
Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.
The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y dirección de la corte es):
Los Angeles Superior Court
111 N. Hill St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012
The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es):
Joni E. Salomon
9100 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 900
Beverly Hills, CA 90212
310/282-6858
Date: (Fecha) November 19, 2015
Sherri R. Carter Clerk (Secretario)
E. Sis Deputy (Adjunto)

PETS
MARKETPLACE
Los Angeles Times

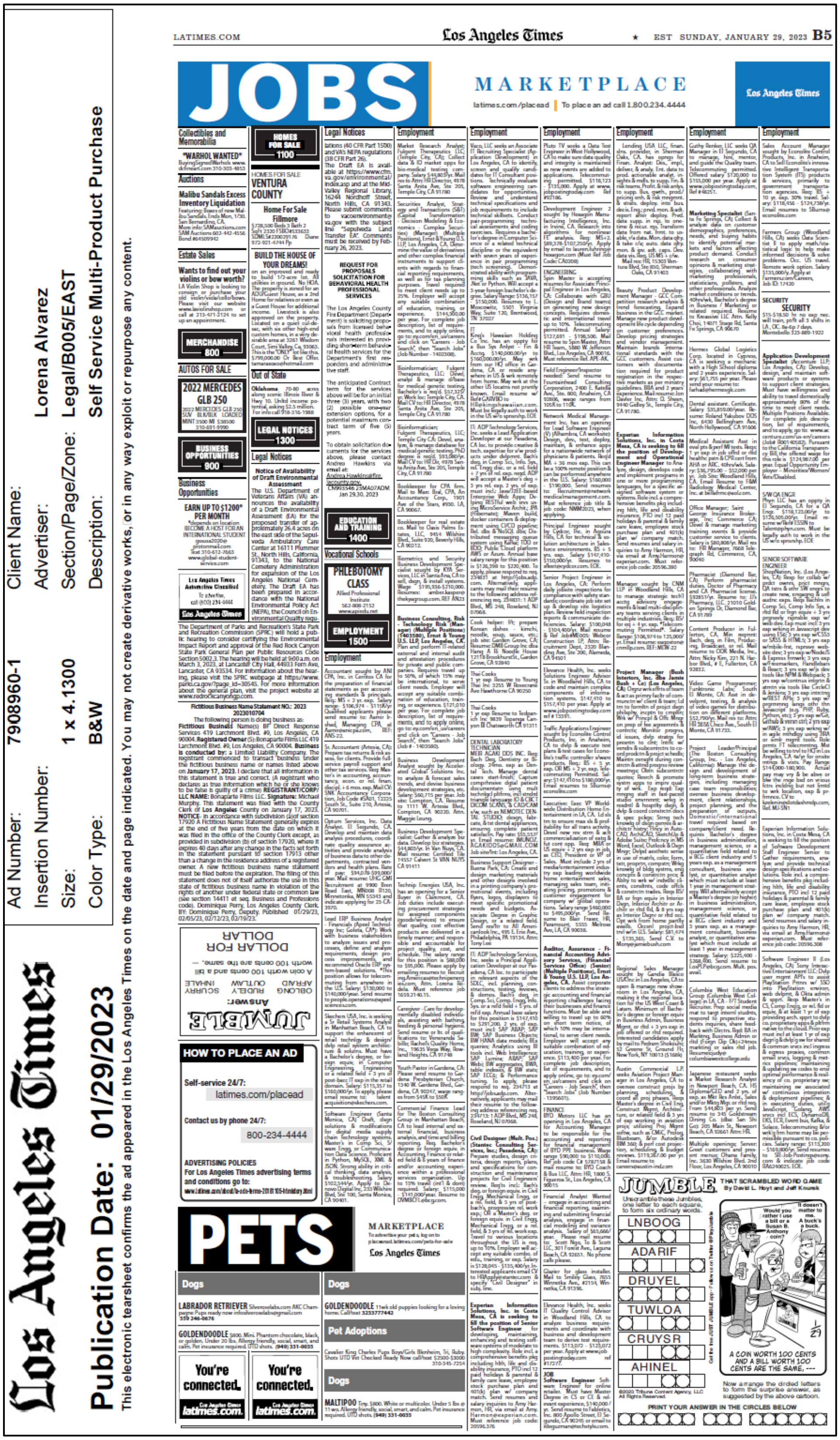
Dogs
LABRADOR RETRIEVER
GOLDENDOODLE

Pet Adoptions

Register or renew your dog or horse license online at www.lacanimalservices.com

JUMBLE
THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek
VNYEO
PLESL
GAUTEO
KUANSM
THEY WERE SELLING LOTS OF ENCYCLOPEDIAS AND EXPANDING THEIR BUSINESS, WHICH ---
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.
Yesterday's Jumbles: GRAND AGENT PREFIX BEHAME
Answer: The warning from the ranger about the grizzlies was important enough to — ISSUE BEFOREHAND

Los Angeles Times NOA (1/29/2023)



Stakeholder NOA Letter

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Office of Construction & Facilities Management
Washington DC 20420

January 20, 2023

Subject: Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Land Transfer from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center to the Los Angeles National Cemetery

Dear Valued Stakeholder:

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announces the availability of a draft environmental assessment (Draft EA) for public review and comment. The Draft EA evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the proposed land transfer from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center (SACC) located at 16111 Plummer St., North Hills, CA 91343 (Figure 1) and managed by the Veterans Health Administration to the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) for expansion of the Los Angeles National Cemetery (LANC). SACC proposes to transfer approximately 26.4 acres on the east side of the SACC for construction of a new national cemetery to expand the LANC (Figure 2).

The proposed action would provide expanded burial options at the LANC for Veterans and eligible family members in the greater Los Angeles area. Conceptual designs and details of the new cemetery at the SACC do not exist at this time, but based on parcel size, NCA planners are projecting to be able to provide approximately 56,265 gravesites. Cemetery development would require the demolition of the existing golf course and baseball field at the SACC (and associated infrastructure), which have been closed since 2020. In addition, the Sepulveda Veterans Center Outstation operations at SACC Building 63 (street address 9737 Haskell Ave.) would need to be relocated to another suitable location that is yet to be determined, and the building demolished to accommodate cemetery plans. These actions would not necessarily take place until after NCA is ready to proceed with cemetery development.

The Draft EA is available for review online at https://www.cfm.va.gov/environmental/index.asp. A hard copy for review is also on file at the Mid-Valley Regional Library, 16244 Nordhoff Street, North Hills, CA 91343. Comments will be accepted for a 30-day period closing on February 26, 2023. Please address all comments to vacoenvironment@va.gov and include the subject line "Sepulveda Land Transfer EA" in the correspondence.

VA will prepare and publish a Final EA following the 30-day comment period. The Final EA will summarize and address comments received on the Draft EA. For additional information or questions, please contact Jason Sturm at jason.sturm@va.gov.

Respectfully,

GLENN ELLIOTT Digitally signed by GLENN ELLIOTT
Date: 2023.01.24 15:24:07 -05'00'

Glenn Elliott
Director, Environmental Program Office
Office of Construction & Facilities Management

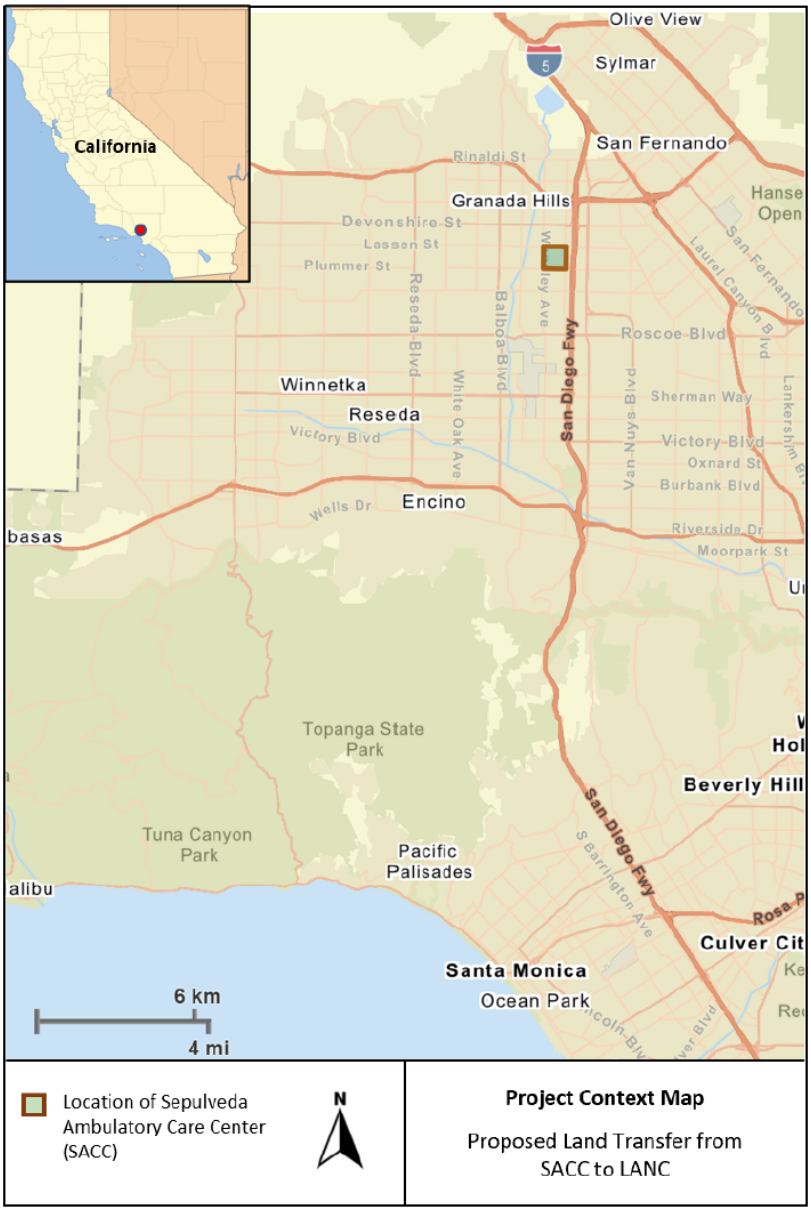


Figure 1. Site Location

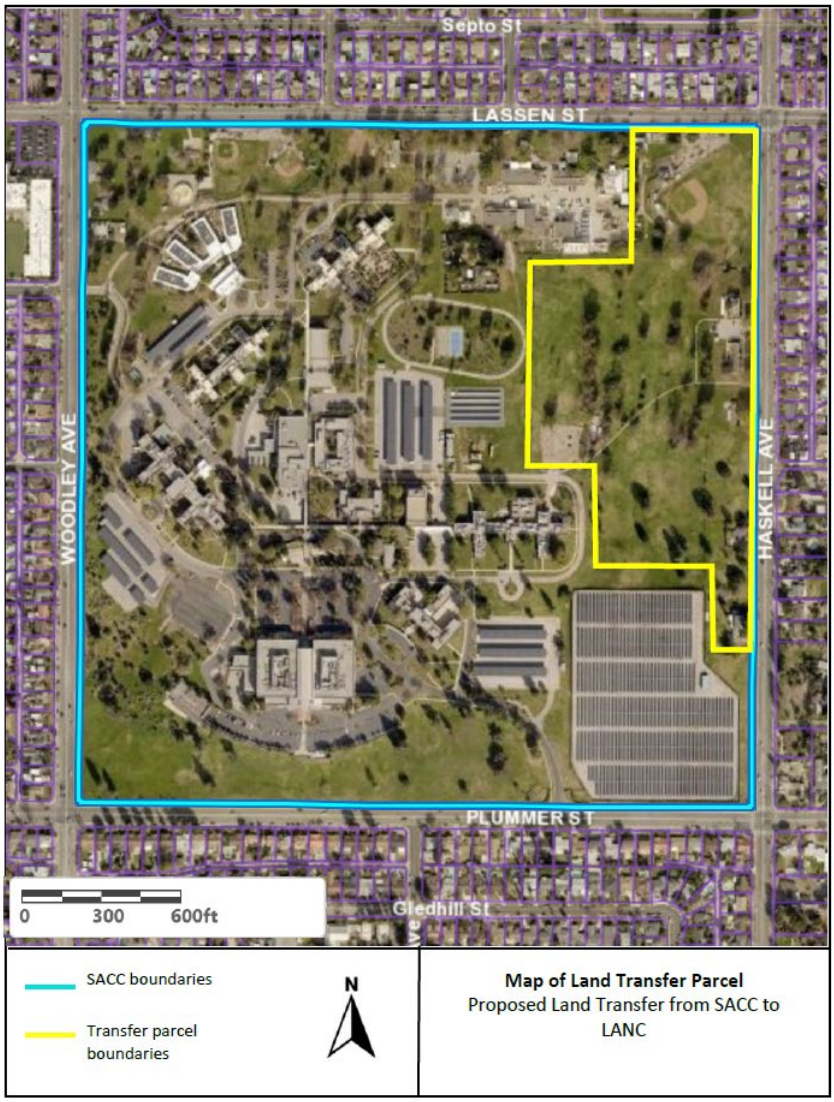


Figure 2. Map of Land Transfer Parcel

Draft EA NOA Distribution List

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	CONTACT INFO	EMAIL	ADDRESS
Federal/State Elected Officials			
U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein	Chief of Staff David Grannis	senator@feinstein.senate.gov; david_grannis@feinstein.senate.gov	331 Hart Senate Office Bldg. Washington, D.C. 20510
U.S. Senator Alex Padilla	Chief of Staff David Montes	senator@padilla.senate.gov david_montes@padilla.senate.gov	112 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510
U.S. Representative Brad Sherman (32nd Congressional District)	Chief of Staff Don MacDonald	Brad.Sherman@mail.house.gov don.macdonald@mail.house.gov	2181 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515
State Senator Benjamin Allen (District 24)	N/A	senator.allen@senate.ca.gov	1021 O Street, Suite 6610 Sacramento, CA 95814-4900
Assembly Member Pilar Schiavo (District 40)	N/A	assemblymember.schiavo@assembly.ca.gov	P.O. Box 942849 Sacramento, CA 94249-0040
Local Elected Officials			
Mayor Eric Garcetti	N/A	mayor.helpdesk@lacity.org	Office of the Mayor 200 N. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90012
City Council Member John Lee (District 12)	N/A	Councilmember.Lee@lacity.org	Los Angeles City Council 200 N. Spring St., Room 405 Los Angeles, CA 90012
Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila James Kuehl (District 3)	N/A	sheila@bos.lacounty.gov	Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors 821 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration 500 W. Temple St. Los Angeles, CA 90012
Federal Agencies			
U.S. EPA Region 9	Karen Vitulano Environmental Review Branch	Vitulano.Karen@epa.gov	75 Hawthorne Street San Francisco, CA 94105
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region 8	Paul Souza Regional Director, Pacific Southwest Region	paul_souza@fws.gov	Federal Building 2800 Cottage Way Sacramento, CA 95825
State of California Agencies			
California Department of Conservation	David Shabazian, Director	David.Shabazian@conservation.ca.gov	715 P Street, MS 1900 Sacramento, CA 95814

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	CONTACT INFO	EMAIL	ADDRESS
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Ed Pert, Regional Manager South Coast Region (Region 5)	Ed.Pert@wildlife.ca.gov	3883 Ruffin Road San Diego, CA 92123
California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery	Rachel Machi Wagoner, Director	Rachel.Wagoner@CalRecycle.ca.gov	P.O. Box 4025 Sacramento, CA 95812-4025
California Department of Toxic Substances Control	Meredith Williams, Director	Meredith.Williams@dtsc.ca.gov	P.O. Box 806 Sacramento, CA 95812-0806
California Environmental Protection Agency	Yana Garcia, Secretary	sectygarcia@calepa.ca.gov	P.O. Box 2815 Sacramento, CA 95812-2815
California Department of Transportation	Gloria Roberts, District 7 Acting Director	gloria_roberts@dot.ca.gov	100 South Main Street Los Angeles, CA 90012
State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) California Office of Historic Preservation Department of Parks & Recreation	Julianne Polanco State Historic Preservation Officer	calshpo.ohp@parks.ca.gov	1725 23rd Street, Suite 100 Sacramento, California 95816
Regional Agencies			
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board	James Stahl, Acting Chair	James.stahl@waterboards.ca.gov	320 West Fourth Street, Suite 200 Los Angeles, CA 90013
South Coast Air Quality Management District	Sarah Rees, Deputy Executive Officer Planning, Rule Development & Implementation	srees@aqmd.gov	21865 Copley Drive Diamond Bar, CA 91765-4178
County/Local Agencies			
Los Angeles County Department of Public Works	Mark Pestrella, Director	mpestrel@dpw.lacounty.gov	900 S. Fremont Ave. Alhambra, CA 91803
City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works	Aura Garcia, President	aura.garcia@lacity.org	200 N. Spring Street, Room 361 Los Angeles, CA 90012-4801
City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety	Osama Younan, General Manager	osama.younan@lacity.org	201 N. Figueroa St. Los Angeles, CA 90012
City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning	Vincent P. Bertoni, Director	planning@lacity.org	200 North Spring Street Los Angeles, CA 90012-2601
City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation	Seleta Reynolds, General Manager	ladot@lacity.org	100 S. Main St., 10th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90012

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	CONTACT INFO	EMAIL	ADDRESS
Native American Organizations (*federally recognized tribes indicated with asterisk)			
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians*	Isaiah Vivanco, Chairperson Joseph Ontiveros, Cultural Resource Department	ivivanco@soboba-nsn.gov jontiveros@soboba-nsn.gov	P. O. Box 487 San Jacinto, CA, 92581
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians*	Thomas Tortez, Chairperson	thomas.tortez@torresmartinez-nsn.gov	PO Box 1160 Thermal, CA 92274-1160
Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians	Julie Tumamait-Stenslie, Chairperson	jtumamait@hotmail.com	365 North Poli Avenue Ojai, California 93023
Chumash Council of Bakersfield	Julio Quair, Chairperson	N/A	729 Texas Street Bakersfield, CA, 93307
Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation	Mariza Sullivan, Chairperson	cbcntribalchair@gmail.com	P. O. Box 4464 Santa Barbara, CA, 93140
Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians	Jairo Avila, Tribal Historic and Cultural Preservation Officer	jairo.avila@tataviam-nsn.us	1019 Second Street, Suite 1 San Fernando, CA, 91340
Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation	Andrew Salas, Chairperson	admin@gabrielenoindians.org	P.O. Box 393 Covina, CA, 91723
Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians	Anthony Morales, Chairperson	GTTribalcouncil@aol.com	P.O. Box 693 San Gabriel, CA, 91778
Gabrielino /Tongva Nation	Sandonne Goad, Chairperson	sgoad@gabrielino-tongva.com	106 1/2 Judge John Aiso St., #231 Los Angeles, CA, 90012
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	Robert Dorame, Chairperson Christina Conley, Tribal Consultant and Administrator	gtongva@gmail.com christina.marsden@alumni.usc.edu	P.O. Box 490 Bellflower, CA, 90707
Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe	Charles Alvarez	Chavez1956metro@gmail.com	23454 Vanowen Street West Hills, CA, 91307
Northern Chumash Tribal Council	Violet Walker, Chairperson	violetsagewalker@gmail.com	P.O. Box 6533 Los Osos, CA, 93412
San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council	N/A	N/A	1030 Ritchie Road Grover Beach, CA, 93433
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians	Lovina Redner, Tribal Chair	lsaul@santarosa-nsn.gov	P.O. Box 391820 Anza, CA, 92539
Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians	Kenneth Kahn, Chairperson	kkahn@santaynezchumash.org	P.O. Box 517 Santa Ynez, CA, 93460

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	CONTACT INFO	EMAIL	ADDRESS
Non-Governmental Organizations			
North Hills West Neighborhood Council	N/A	board@nhwnc.net	P.O. Box 2091 North Hills, CA 91393
San Fernando Valley Historical Society	N/A	sfvhistory@gmail.com	10940 Sepulveda Boulevard Mission Hills, CA 91346
American Legion Woodland Hills Post 826	N/A	info@post826calegion.org	P. O. Box 189 Woodland Hills CA 91316-0189
Jewish War Veterans San Fernando Valley Post 603	Attn: Commander Earl Roth	earlr45@gmail.com	American Legion Hall 5320 Fallbrook Avenue Woodland Hills CA 91316
Los Angeles County Veterans Advisory Commission	Attn: Chair Anthony Allman	contact@veteranadvocate.org	1816 S. Figueroa Street Los Angeles, California 90015
Military Order of the Purple Heart San Fernando Chapter #83	Attn: Luis Rivera	N/A	P.O. Box 950214 Mission Hills, CA 91395
Student Veteran Organization California State University, Northridge	Attn: April Chamchalaem	csunsvo@gmail.com	18111 Nordhoff St. Northridge, CA 91330

Draft EA Public Comments

Comment date	Commenter	Section/Topic	Comment	VA Response
1/30/23	*Private citizen*	2.0 Proposed Action	Hello. In response to the ad in the classified section of the LA Times. I am a Navy veteran, served in the Vietnam War and would like to add my comments on the land transfer at the Sepulveda campus of the VA. I believe that this land should be used for the living homeless veterans by building housing for them. Not for the dead soldiers. Land for a cemetery could be found out-of-the-area, not in a residential area. I understand that the VA cemetery in Westwood is crowded but building another cemetery so close to residential housing that has been there for years is not the best way to go.	VA is committed to supporting Veterans experiencing homelessness in the Greater Los Angeles area. The Sepulveda campus has two buildings (Buildings 4 and 5) that provide a combined 149 units of supportive housing for Veterans through VA's enhanced-use lease (EUL) program. This program authorizes VA to lease real property under VA's control or jurisdiction to other public and private entities on a long-term basis (up to 99 years) for the provision of supportive housing or for the direct or indirect benefit of Veterans. Through the EUL program, VA is also working to develop at least 1,200 units of supportive housing at the West Los Angeles campus at 11301 Wilshire Blvd. over the next 10 years. Information about this effort can be found at https://westlamasterplan.org/p/masterplanupdate.
2/23/23	SCAQMD	3.2 Air Quality	*[excerpted from attached comment letter]* …it is unclear if emissions (e.g., hauling truck emissions) associated with demolition activities are quantified in the construction emissions. If the demolition emissions are not quantified in the current analysis, South Coast AQMD staff recommends that the NEPA Lead Agency revise the air quality analysis and include the revision in the Final EA.	The estimated period of construction of 18 months is inclusive of both demolition and construction. The entire 18-month period was used in calculating air emissions for the Proposed Action. The text in section 3.2 has been edited to clarify this.

South Coast
Air Quality Management District
21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765-4178
(909) 396-2000 • www.aqmd.gov

SENT VIA E-MAIL: February 23, 2023
vacoenvironment@va.gov
Glenn Elliott, Director – Environmental Program Office
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Construction & Facilities Management
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington DC 20420

Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA) for the Proposed Land Transfer from the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center to the Los Angeles National Cemetery Project (Proposed Action)

South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) staff appreciates the opportunity to comment on the above-mentioned document. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Lead Agency for the Proposed Action. The following comments recommended revisions to the air quality analysis that the Lead Agency should include in the Final EA.

South Coast AQMD Staff's Summary of Project Information in the Draft EA

Based on the Draft EA, the Lead Agency proposes transferring approximately 26.4 acres of land from the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center (SACC) to the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) for the expansion of the Los Angles National Cemetery (LANC).[1] Based on the ariel photographs, South Coast AQMD staff found that the nearest sensitive receptor (residence) is 70 feet east and north of the Proposed Action, and the Sepulveda VA Medical Center facility is adjacent to the west and south of the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action's construction is anticipated to last approximately 18 months.[2]

South Coast AQMD Staff's Comments on the Draft EA

Recommended Revision to the Air Quality Analysis

Based on the Draft EA, the NEPA Lead Agency quantifies the Proposed Action's annual emissions, compares those emissions to the General Conformity *de minimis* emissions thresholds, and summarizes the results in Table 5.[3] As mentioned in the Draft EA, the Proposed Action also requires demolishing the existing golf course, baseball field, and associated infrastructure for the development of the cemetery.[4] However, it is unclear if emissions (e.g., hauling truck emissions) associated with demolition activities are quantified in the construction emissions. If the demolition emissions are not quantified in the current analysis, South Coast AQMD staff recommends that

[1] Draft EA. Page 5.
[2] *Ibid.* Page 15.
[3] *Ibid.* Page 17.
[4] *Ibid.* Page 11.

Glenn Elliott February 23, 2023

the NEPA Lead Agency revise the air quality analysis and include the revision in the Final EA. In the event that the analysis in the Draft EA already included the demolition emissions, it is recommended that the Lead Agency provide all the emissions information and calculations in detail in the Final EA for clarification.

Conclusion

South Coast AQMD staff is available to work with the NEPA Lead Agency to address any air quality questions that may arise from this comment letter. Please contact Danica Nguyen, Air Quality Specialist, at dnguyen1@aqmd.gov should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sam Wang

Sam Wang
Program Supervisor, CEQA-IGR
Planning, Rule Development & Implementation

SW:DN
LAC230126-02
Control Number

2