

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This section provides a general overview of the environmental setting for the project. More detailed descriptions of the environmental setting for each environmental issue area can be found in Section 4.0, *Environmental Impact Analysis*.

3.1 REGIONAL SETTING

The project site is located within the City of Rancho Palos Verdes which encompasses approximately 13.6 square miles. The City of Rancho Palos Verdes is located in southwestern Los Angeles County on the Palos Verdes Peninsula and approximately 25 miles southwest of downtown Los Angeles. Arterial roadways that provide vehicular access to various parts of Rancho Palos Verdes include Palos Verdes Drive (South, East and West), Hawthorne Boulevard, Crenshaw Boulevard, and Crest Road. Figure 2-1 in Section 2.0, *Project Description*, shows the project site in its regional context. The January 2012 population of Rancho Palos Verdes was estimated at 41,897 persons. The City's housing stock currently consists of an estimated 16,218 units (California Department of Finance, January 2012). The average household size in the City is about 2.664 persons per unit (California Department of Finance, January 2012).

The Mediterranean climate of the region and the coastal influence produce moderate temperatures year round, with rainfall concentrated in the winter months. Average rainfall for the project region is 12.34 inches/year (Palos Verdes Est FC43D Station, <http://www.wrcc.dri.edu>). The sea breeze, which is the predominant wind, is a primary factor in creating this climate and typically flows from the west-southwest in a day-night cycle with speeds generally ranging from 5 to 15 miles per hour. The sea breeze maintains the cool temperatures and clean air circulation and generally prevents warmer inland temperatures and air pollution from permeating into the peninsula, except under certain seasonal conditions such as the offshore Santa Ana winds (City of Rancho Palos Verdes General Plan, 1975).

3.2 PROJECT SITE SETTING

The project site is situated at 5601 Crestridge Road in the north-central portion of the City. The approximately 9.76-acre project site is currently a vacant lot with native and non-native vegetation. The site has been highly disturbed by vegetation clearing (disking and grubbing) and past slope stabilization efforts. The site is situated on a ridgeline in a predominantly developed area. Site topography is generally undulating to moderately sloping, with elevations ranging from 1,116 to 1,227 feet above mean sea level (msl). No drainage features are located on the project site. Surface runoff from the site drains north and east into the Agua Negra Canyon system. Areas south and west of the project site drain towards the Pacific Ocean via unnamed drainages and Altamira Canyon. Figures 2-3(a) and 2-3(b) in Section 2.0 *Project Description* show photos of the existing conditions on site.

The project site is surrounded by open space, and residential and institutional development. Directly adjacent to the northern boundary of the site is an undeveloped hillside that slopes down towards Indian Peak Road. This undeveloped area is the City-owned Vista Del Norte Ecological Preserve, which is managed by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy and is



designated as reserve open space under the Rancho Palos Verdes Natural Communities Conservation Planning (NCCP) Subarea Plan (*City of Rancho Palos Verdes 2004*). This adjacent property also includes portions of the Indian Peak Trail as designated in the City’s Conceptual Trails Plan (1993). Further north, across Indian Peak Road, is an area of commercial/retail development.

To the south of the project, across Crestridge Road, are the Peninsula Community Church and its associated car parking areas as well as an electricity substation. Immediately to the west and to the east of the site are senior residential communities; the Belmont Assisted Living facility to the west and the Mirandela Senior Apartments to the east. Further east, across Crenshaw Boulevard, land uses are dominated by single-family residences. Further west are additional institutional land uses, including the Congregation Ner Tamid synagogue and the Canterbury senior housing development, and multi- and single-family residences. An electricity transmission easement and telecommunications tower is located in proximity to the westernmost edge of the site.

3.3 CUMULATIVE PROJECTS SETTING

In addition to the specific impacts of individual projects, CEQA requires an EIR to consider potential cumulative impacts. CEQA defines “cumulative impacts” as two or more individual impacts that, when considered together, are considerable or will compound other environmental impacts. Cumulative impacts are the changes in the environment that result from the incremental impact of development of the proposed project and other nearby projects. For example, traffic impacts of two nearby projects may be insignificant when analyzed separately, but could have a significant impact when analyzed together. Cumulative impact analysis allows the EIR to provide a reasonable forecast of future environmental conditions and can more accurately gauge the effects of a series of projects.

Currently planned and pending projects in Rancho Palos Verdes and the surrounding areas are listed in Table 3-1. Table 3-2 summarizes all cumulative development by land use; locations of projects on the list that are in proximity to the project site are shown on Figure 3-1. These projects are considered in the cumulative analyses in Section 4.0, *Environmental Impact Analysis*.

**Table 3-1
 Cumulative Projects in Rancho Palos Verdes and Surrounding Area**

Project/Location	Non-Residential Square Footage	Dwelling Units	Description
<i>City of Rancho Palos Verdes</i>			
Trump National Golf Club (Palos Verdes Drive South/west of Shoreline park)		63	59 single-family residential dwelling units (5 homes built, 3 under construction); 4 affordable housing units have been constructed. An 18-hole golf course with clubhouse and driving range. The golf course, clubhouse, driving range and parks/trails are complete and open to public.
Ocean Front Estates (Palos Verdes Drive South/Hawthorne)		79	Total of 79 single family dwelling units. 73 homes built, 1 under construction, 5 vacant lots.



**Table 3-1
 Cumulative Projects in Rancho Palos Verdes and Surrounding Area**

Project/Location	Non-Residential Square Footage	Dwelling Units	Description
Tentative Tract Map No. 52666 (3200 Palos Verdes Drive West)		13	13 total new homes (12 homes constructed, 1 remaining)
Marymount College Facilities Expansion (30800 Palos Verdes Drive East)	139,008		139,008 sf of floor area consisting of a new gymnasium and academic buildings
Hawthorne/Crest Office Building [29941 Hawthorne Blvd (northwest corner of Hawthorne and Crest)]	18,215		7,232 sf office building, 6,370 sf subterranean garage, and 4,613 sf parking lot (construction commenced May 2012)
Green Hills Master Plan Revision (27501 Western Avenue)			Revised Master Plan to allow additional mausoleums, grading and ground burials over the next 30 years throughout the cemetery site acres
Peninsula Community Church (5640 Crestridge Road)			Convert 2675 sf lower level storage area into 2207 sf multi-purpose room and 468 sf expansion of church offices
Highridge Condominium Project (28220 Highridge Road)		27	Construction of a 27-unit condominium building with subterranean parking
St. John Fisher Church Expansion (5448 Crest Road)	32,426		32,426 sf of new building area, the demolition of 10,329 sf of existing facilities, a remodel of 26,544 sf of existing facilities, a total of 30,688 cubic yards of grading and a new monument sign attached to the new sanctuary (Phase 1 under construction)
Point Vicente Animal Hospital (31270 Palos Verdes Drive West)	5,957		5,957 sf veterinary hospital (in operation)
Palos Verdes Art Center (5504 Crestridge Road)			Interior and exterior remodel to existing facility
Zone 2 Landslide Moratorium Ordinance Revision (multiple parcels in the Portuguese Bend Community)			Revisions to the Zone 2 Landslide Moratorium Ordinance to facilitate future development of up to 47 single-family residences on undeveloped lots
Chevron Gas Station and Car Wash (27774 Hawthorne Blvd)	1,044		1,044 sf convenience store and office, additional parking and modification to exterior of existing building
Grandview Park Master Plan (Montemalaga Drive between Grayslake and Via Panorama)			Construction of pathways, viewing node, picnic areas, storage/restroom building, and 22 space parking lot with designated drop off area
Lower Hesse Park Master Plan (29301 Hawthorne Blvd)			Install 3 tennis courts, outdoor basketball court, flex lawn areas, playground equipment, outdoor fitness station, Discovery Trail network; construct staff office/restroom/storage building; expand driveway and existing parking lot
Point View Master Plan (6001 Palos Verdes Drive South)			Master Plan to allow approximately 25-acres of agriculture uses; an executive golf course comprised of 5 tee locations with 9 holes; general improvements to the site, including a paved internal driveway; and use of the site for up to 30 events per year.
Approximate Rancho Palos Verdes Subtotal	196,650	182	



**Table 3-1
 Cumulative Projects in Rancho Palos Verdes and Surrounding Area**

Project/Location	Non-Residential Square Footage	Dwelling Units	Description
City of Rolling Hills Estates			
Rolling Hills Covenant Church (2221/2222 Palos Verdes Drive North)	16,232		16,232 sf South Campus expansion (no new sanctuary)
Butcher Subdivision (Palos Verdes Drive North and Montecillo Drive)		13	13 lot subdivision for single-family residential development (site grading underway)
Chandler Ranch (Chandler's Landfill, Palos Verdes Drive East)	61,411	114	114 residences, extend existing Rolling Hills Country Club to 7,000 yards and expand clubhouse to 61,411 sf
Deep Valley Condos (627 Deep Valley Drive)	5,810	58	58-unit mixed use condominiums and 5,810 sf of commercial on site of existing car wash (car wash demolished)
827 Deep Valley Drive (827 Deep Valley Drive)		16	16-unit senior condominium
Mediterranean Village (927 Deep Valley Drive)	2,000	75	75-unit mixed-used condominium and 2,000 sf commercial on site of existing medical office building
Brickwalk Condominiums (655-683 Deep Valley Drive & 924-950 Indian Peak Road)	14,200	148	148-unit mixed-use condominium and 14,200 sf commercial on site of existing and demolished office buildings
Chase Bank Project (828 Silver Spur Road)	4,404		4,404 sf freestanding bank
Tanglewood Subdivision (Rolling Hills Road at northern City boundary)		2	2 single-family homes
Approximate Rolling Hills Estates Subtotal	104,057	426	
City of Los Angeles			
Marymount College San Pedro Campus (166 W. Palos Verde Drive North)			20-year Master Plan to redevelop 86-unit student/faculty housing complex into satellite campus with 4 new academic/ campus service buildings, housing for 800 students and athletic fields
Ponte Vista Project (26900 S. Western Avenue)		1,135	1,135-unit planned development (992 multi-family and 143 single-family residences) on 61.53-acre former Navy housing site
Approximate Los Angeles Subtotal		1,135	
Approximate Cumulative Total^{ab}	300,707	1,743	

Source: City of Rancho Palos Verdes, 2012.

sf = square feet; du = dwelling unit

^a All totals are approximate based on standard uncertainties related to specific project information.

^b Cumulative Total includes cumulative development in the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, City of Rolling Hills Estates and City of Los Angeles.



Table 3-2
Approximate Cumulative Development
by Land Use

Land Use Type	Total Cumulative Development
Commercial/Retail	27,458
Office	85,583
Residential	1,743
Institutional	187,666

Source: City of Rancho Palos Verdes, 2012

sf = square feet; du = dwelling unit

All footnotes from Table 3-1 apply to this table.



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