

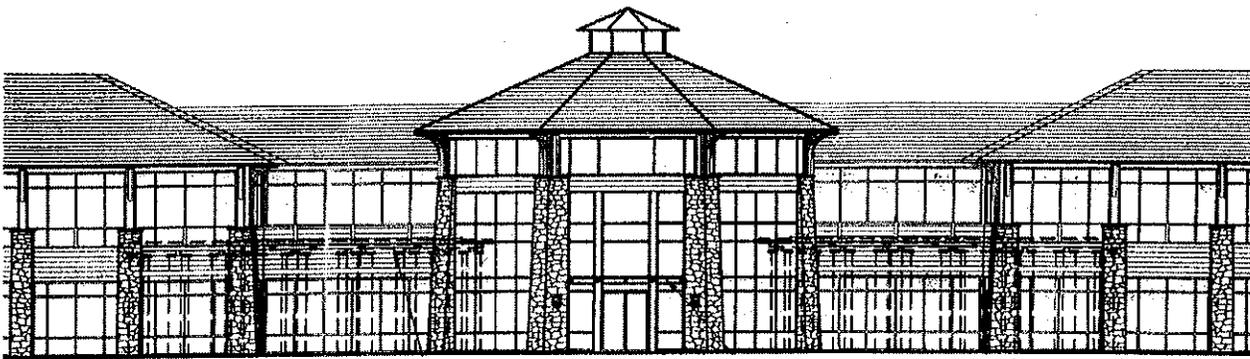
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CITY OF SCOTTS VALLEY

Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report

Gateway South Office Building and Fire Station



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- A. Initial Study
- B. Biology Technical Report
- C. Draft Section 404 Clean Water Act Jurisdictional Delineation
- D. Tree Survey Technical Report
- E. Entomological Resources Assessment
- F. Hydrology Technical Report
- G. Scotts Valley Water District Will Serve Letter
- H. Paleontological Resources Assessment

Summary

S.1 PURPOSE

In accordance with Section 15123 of the CEQA Guidelines, the summary provides the reader with a clear and simple description of the proposed project and its potential environmental impacts. The summary identifies each significant effect and recommended mitigation measures, and alternatives that would minimize or avoid potential significant impacts. The summary is also required to identify areas of controversy known to the lead agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public, and issues to be resolved. This section focuses on the major areas of the proposed project that are important to decision makers.

S.2 PROJECT OVERVIEW

This Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) addresses an amendment to the *Gateway South Specific Plan* that, if approved, would allow for the construction of a 136,000-square-foot office building and a 12,000-square-foot fire station on two parcels totaling approximately 19 acres in the City of Scotts Valley. The proposed developments would require a Specific Plan Amendment because they would be more intensive than the land uses proposed in the Specific Plan and evaluated in the Specific Plan Final EIR (Scotts Valley, 1995). The Specific Plan states that the maximum total building area shall be 151,000 square feet (sf) in Planning Area B, which includes the project site, and that any proposal to exceed this limitation shall require a Specific Plan amendment. Total existing and approved building area in Planning Area B is 136,000 sf, including the newly constructed Hilton Hotel, located to the north of the office building/open space site, and an approved retail project just north of the fire station site, leaving 15,000 sf of developable space in Planning Area B. The proposed office building and fire station would total 148,000 sf of development, or 133,000 sf above the maximum development envisioned for Planning Area B of the *Gateway South Specific Plan* and evaluated in the Specific Plan EIR. As a result, a Specific Plan Amendment would be required to allow an additional 133,000 sf of project-related development in the Specific Plan area.

S.3 SITE LOCATION

The project site is located on the west side of SR-17 in Scotts Valley on La Madrona Drive, generally southwest of the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive exit. La Madrona Drive is the frontage road to the west of SR-17. The proposed office building/open space site is bound by the Hilton Hotel to the north, Silverwood Drive and open space to the south, residential uses of the Monte Fiore community to the west, and La Madrona Drive to the east. The proposed fire station site is just east of the office building/open space site, on the eastern side of La Madrona Drive. This parcel is bound by an approved but unbuilt retail center to the north, the SR-17 southbound on-ramp to the east, and La Madrona Drive to the west. On the southern tip of this teardrop-shaped parcel is La Madrona Drive/SR-17.

S.4 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site consists of two parcels that are currently undeveloped. The 17.6-acre office building/open space site consists of grassland on the lower, flatter portions of the parcel with forested upper slopes, and the 1.5-acre fire station site is relatively flat and composed of disturbed open space.

The office building component of the project would include a two-story 136,000 sf office building on approximately 6.6 acres of the lower, flatter portions of the site, while the remaining 11.0 acres of the site would remain as natural or landscaped open space, including the forested upper slopes on the western side of the property. The building would be approximately 460 feet long, 190 feet wide, approximately 38 feet tall to the top of the roof (main portion), and approximately 46 feet tall to the peak of the entrance portion of the roof. The property would be landscaped with trees and shrubs along La Madrona Drive, and a mixture of maples, fruit trees, oaks, and redwoods throughout the development. Parking areas would surround the building on all sides, providing parking for approximately 550 automobiles, including 11 handicap spaces. Two access driveways leading to the parking areas would be located on La Madrona Drive. Parking areas would be a series of interconnected lots linked by a loop road on the periphery.

Opposite La Madrona Drive from the office building/open space site, the Scotts Valley Fire District would develop a one-to-two-story fire station approximately 12,000 sf in size, with administration, training, and operations uses, as well as temporary/shift living quarters for fire station personnel. The fire station would have five fire truck bays and 23 parking spaces, including two handicap spaces, for employees and visitors. The building would be located on the northern end of the parcel with parking on the southern end. Access to the site for both fire trucks and automobile parking would be from La Madrona Drive, with a loop driveway for returning fire trucks at the rear of the building.

S.5 TOPICS OF KNOWN CONCERN

The environmental factors addressed in this SEIR are listed below by general category:

- Transportation
- Visual Quality
- Land Use, Plans, and Zoning
- Biological Resources
- Hydrology
- Noise
- Air Quality

S.6 IMPACTS, MITIGATION MEASURES, AND UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

The SEIR evaluates each potentially significant impact that could result from implementation of the proposed project. In accordance with CEQA, a summary of the project's significant and potentially significant impacts is provided in Table S-1. Also provided in the Table S-1 is a list of the proposed mitigation measures that are recommended in response to the significant impacts identified in this SEIR, as well as a determination of the level of significance of the impact after implementation of the recommended mitigation measures.

S.7 ALTERNATIVES

The SEIR evaluates a No Project Alternative which assumes development on the office building/open space site of a 15,000 sf commercial service or retail use and parking for approximately 60 vehicles. This development proposal would be consistent with the development limits of Planning Area B of the *Gateway South Specific Plan* and the C-S zoning of the parcel. No other alternatives, including high-density residential or "big box" retail uses on the site, were determined feasible. The proposed fire station site would remain undeveloped.

If the project site developed as described above, potentially significant cumulative traffic impacts at the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Road intersection, the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive/SR-17 Southbound Off-Ramp intersection, and the Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive intersection would be avoided, due to the reduced number of trips from the substantially smaller development at this location. Although no significant adverse impacts to visual resources were identified with the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would be a substantially smaller development than the proposed project, would preserve more views of the surrounding ridgelines in the project area, and would appear less visible from public viewpoints and scenic corridors such as SR-17. Potentially significant visual impacts associated with the proposed project, such as potential design conflicts with the proposed fire station, would be eliminated under the No Project Alternative. Potential light and glare effects on motorists traveling on SR-17 would be reduced under the No Project Alternative, given the less intensive development. Although no impact to land use, plans, or zoning were identified with the proposed project, no amendment to the *Gateway South Specific Plan* would be required under the No Project Alternative, because commercial square footage would remain within the allowable 151,000 sf in the project area under the Specific Plan.

Potentially significant biological impacts associated with the proposed project, such as the filling of freshwater seeps and potential effects to nesting birds, would be similar with the No Project Alternative. Although the No Project Alternative would be substantially smaller than the proposed project, avoidance of wetland seeps would likely be infeasible due to their central location within the site. The smaller development may, however, avoid protected trees on the northwest corner of the project site, potentially avoiding damage or removal of these biological resources. Potentially significant hydrological impacts associated with the proposed project, such as construction-related increases in erosion and downstream sedimentation, potential erosion and flooding due to increased

surface runoff, would be reduced under the No Project Alternative due to the less intensive development, but not likely to a less-than-significant level.

Potentially significant air quality impacts associated with the proposed project, such as emissions from project construction, would be reduced under the No Project Alternative, but not likely to a less-than-significant level. Potentially significant noise impacts associated with the proposed project, such as temporary construction-related noise, would be reduced under the No Project Alternative given the reduced level of development, but not likely to a less-than-significant level.

S.8 ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED/AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

Areas of known controversy, including those raised by public agencies, include traffic congestion, visual and aesthetic concerns, and biological issues including impacts to wetland seeps. Each of these areas of controversy are addressed in Chapter III of the SEIR.

S.9 SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Table S-1 contains a summary of significant and potentially significant project impacts and mitigation measures. Chapter III of this SEIR contains a full analysis and discussion of the project's potential environmental impacts and, when appropriate, the associated mitigation measures. The Impacts and Level of Significance column in Table S-1 describes individual impacts and whether these impacts would be "Less Than Significant" (LTS), "Potentially Significant" (PS), or "Significant/Unavoidable" (SU). "Less Than Significant" includes project effects that would not exceed significance criteria defined for each topic. "Potentially Significant" effects are those that could occur if identified mitigation measures discussed were not included as part of the project. "Significant/Unavoidable" effects are those which would occur even if mitigation measures were incorporated in the project.

Table S-1

Summary of Significant and Potentially Significant Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impacts and Level of Significance after Mitigation

Mitigation Measures

TRANSPORTATION

TR-1. The Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp is projected to degrade to an unacceptable level of service under Project Conditions. (S)

TR-1.1 *Improve the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound Off-Ramp.* The project sponsor shall be responsible for providing the La Madrona Drive leg of the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp intersection with one separate left-turn lane, one shared left-through lane, and one right-turn lane with an overlap phase. This mitigation would result in a delay of 39.1 seconds (LOS D). However, when the cycle length is optimized at 130 seconds, the intersection would operate at LOS C with the control delay of 32.6 seconds during the AM peak hour.

LTS

TR-5. A lack of adequate warning devices in the vicinity of the fire station could pose a potentially significant traffic hazard to other motorists on La Madrona Drive in the event of an emergency. (PS)

TR-5.1 *Install Warning Devices on La Madrona Drive.* Signs and amber warning lights shall be posted in both directions on La Madrona Drive to indicate to drivers when fire vehicles are exiting under Code 3 or emergency status. The lights shall be activated by loop detectors or remotely from within the station. In addition, sight distance of 250 feet to the north shall be maintained at the fire station driveway.

LTS

TR-9. Under Cumulative Plus Project Conditions, unacceptable operations at the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive and the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp intersections would be exacerbated. Also, the addition of project-generated traffic would cause the level of service at the Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive intersection to degrade to an unacceptable level. (S)

TR-9.1 *Contribute Fair Share to Improvements to Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive Intersection.* Due to the projected volumes under future scenarios, it is anticipated that additional right-of-way would be required to provide the capacity to obtain LOS D operations during the AM and PM peak hours at the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive intersection. However, to mitigate the impact to less than significant, the phasing and lane configuration could be modified. The lane configuration would need to provide one separate left-turn lane, one through lane, and one separate right-turn lane on the Whispering Pines Drive leg. The phasing would need to be changed to provide separate left-turn phases on all four legs of the intersection. This mitigation would still result in an unacceptable level of service (LOS F

LTS

LEGEND LTS Less Than Significant PS Potentially Significant S Significant SU Significant/Unavoidable

Table S-1 (Continued)
Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Level of Significance
after Mitigation

Impacts and Level of Significance

Mitigation Measures

during the AM peak hour and LOS E during the PM peak hour), but would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level since the change in volume to capacity ratio would be less than one percent. Based on preliminary field measurements, the proposed mitigation measures would fit within the existing right of way.

For informational purposes, the ratio of project traffic to the total volume under Cumulative plus Project Conditions at the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive intersection during the AM and PM peak hours is 1.4 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively.

TR-9.2 Contribute Fair Share to Improvements to Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound Off-Ramp Intersection. The Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp intersection cumulative impact could be mitigated with the addition of a second left-turn lane and a separate phase for the right-turning vehicles on the west leg of the intersection (see Figure 3.1-2). Based on preliminary field measurements, an additional lane could be accommodated in the existing right-of-way and provide LOS D operations during the AM and PM peak hours. The cycle lengths were optimized for this mitigation measure.

At the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp intersection the percent of project traffic during the AM and PM peak hours is 6.2 percent and 6.1 percent, respectively. The project sponsor shall contribute a fair share percentage of the mitigation measure described above.

TR-9.3 Contribute Fair Share to Improvements to Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive. The addition of a separate westbound right-turn lane on Mt. Hermon Road (see Figure 3.1-2) would mitigate the impact and provide LOS C during the PM peak hour. Based on preliminary field measurements this improvement could be accommodated in the existing right-of-way.

LEGEND LTS Less Than Significant PS Potentially Significant S Significant SU Significant/Unavoidable

Table S-1 (Continued)
Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impacts and Level of Significance	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
<p>VISUAL QUALITY</p> <p>VIS-4. Because specific designs for the proposed fire station are unknown, potential design conflicts between this development and adjacent development could occur without adequate planning and design review. While the Fire District intends to design a fire station that is compatible with the surrounding setting, it may not provide for "Landmark Architecture" at this critical gateway location to Scotts Valley as called for in the Specific Plan. This is considered a potentially significant adverse visual impact. (PS)</p>	<p>At the Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive intersection the percent of project traffic during the PM peak hour is two percent. The project sponsor shall contribute a fair share percentage of the mitigation measure described above.</p>	<p>LTS</p>
<p>VIS-4.1 Apply <i>Scotts Valley Design Guidelines</i>. The Scotts Valley Planning Commission, in its design review capacity, shall apply the standards contained in the Scotts Valley Design Guidelines to ensure that design qualities meet standards for landmark architecture in this location. For example, the fire station should seek to achieve high visual and aesthetic standards, should be complementary with adjacent development, and should blend in with adjacent development. Specific standards applicable to the development shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant a vegetative buffer along the east side of La Madrona Drive to screen the roadway from SR-17; • Include in all exterior wall elevations visible from and/or facing streets shall have architectural treatments including exterior finishes, siding, stucco patterns, paint patterns, and façade modulation and articulation; • Include architectural elements such as posts, beams, arches, columns, colonnades, window treatments, canopies, and/or balconies; • Screen roof-mounted mechanical equipment and outdoor storage and refuse areas; and • Incorporate landmark architecture that reflects the importance of the area as an entrance to the City. 	<p><i>Scotts Valley Design Guidelines</i>. The Scotts Valley Planning Commission, in its design review capacity, shall apply the standards contained in the Scotts Valley Design Guidelines to ensure that design qualities meet standards for landmark architecture in this location. For example, the fire station should seek to achieve high visual and aesthetic standards, should be complementary with adjacent development, and should blend in with adjacent development. Specific standards applicable to the development shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant a vegetative buffer along the east side of La Madrona Drive to screen the roadway from SR-17; • Include in all exterior wall elevations visible from and/or facing streets shall have architectural treatments including exterior finishes, siding, stucco patterns, paint patterns, and façade modulation and articulation; • Include architectural elements such as posts, beams, arches, columns, colonnades, window treatments, canopies, and/or balconies; • Screen roof-mounted mechanical equipment and outdoor storage and refuse areas; and • Incorporate landmark architecture that reflects the importance of the area as an entrance to the City. 	<p>LTS</p>
<p>LEGEND</p>	<p>LTS Less Than Significant</p> <p>PS Potentially Significant</p> <p>S Significant</p> <p>SU Significant/Unavoidable</p>	<p>SU Significant/Unavoidable</p>

Table S-1 (Continued)
Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Level of Significance
after Mitigation

Mitigation Measures

VIS-5. The proposed project has the potential to create significant light and glare from on-site lighting which could spill onto adjacent properties and/or affect motorists traveling on SR-17. This is considered a potentially significant impact. (PS)

VIS 5-1 Prepare and Implement Lighting Plans. The sponsor of the proposed office building, as well as the Scotts Valley Fire District, shall prepare lighting plans for their respective projects that, when implemented, will not spill onto adjacent properties and will not produce unreasonable glare for travelers on SR-17. The lighting plans shall be subject to review and approval by the Public Works Director, prior to issuance of building permits. The lighting plans should strive to emulate the low-impact lighting of the Hilton Hotel, and should specify the same type and intensity of lighting fixtures, lighting shields, etc. The amber warning lights to be posted on La Madrona Drive described in Mitigation Measure TR-5.1 should be visible only from La Madrona Drive and should not spill on to adjacent properties. Shielding for these light fixtures may also be appropriate as necessary.

LTS

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

BIO-1. Construction of the proposed office building would destroy approximately 0.10 acre of freshwater seeps which meet the federal criteria for wetland habitats. (PS)

BIO-1.1 Replace Filled Wetlands. The project sponsor shall submit a Section 404 wetland delineation to the Corps for verification. Following verification, a wetland mitigation plan shall be developed by the project sponsor to replace any affected wetlands at a one to one ratio. The sponsor shall create a wetland mitigation area on the upper slopes of the Gateway South Office Building Site, which would lend itself to the creation of "in kind, no net loss" mitigation.

LTS

BIO-2. Project construction may disturb nesting birds on the project site. (PS)

BIO-2.1 Avoid Vegetation Removal or Undertake Pre-Construction Survey. Construction activities shall be timed to avoid vegetation removal during nesting season (February 1 to August 31). If this cannot be accomplished, then a qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction nesting surveys no more than two weeks prior to construction to determine if nesting birds are present. If nesting birds are present, a minimum 150-foot buffer zone around the nesting site(s) shall be observed, and construction activities shall be suspended in this zone until future surveys indicate that the chicks have fully fledged.

LTS

LEGEND

LTS Less Than Significant PS Potentially Significant S Significant SU Significant/Unavoidable

Table S-1 (Continued)
Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Level of Significance
after Mitigation

Impacts and Level of Significance

Mitigation Measures

BIO-4. Construction of the proposed office building would remove trees that are protected under the City's tree preservation ordinance. (PS)

BIO-4.1 Avoid or Employ Special Precautions Around Protected Trees. The project sponsor shall avoid protected trees where possible. Construction activities shall not encroach into a 50-foot buffer surrounding the dripline of any protected tree. Protective fencing shall be installed prior to construction to protect trees that are to be retained.

BIO-4.2 Replace Removed Trees. If removal of, or impact to, protected trees is unavoidable, the project sponsor shall apply for a removal permit, accompanied by an arborist's report, under the City's tree protection ordinance, which may require on-site replacement of protected trees with the same number and species. Additionally, on-site monitoring by the City arborist shall be conducted as required by SVMC Section 17.44.080.E.4.f.

LTS

HYDROLOGY

HY-1. Construction activities for the proposed project could result in short-term increases in erosion and downstream sedimentation. (PS)

HY-1.1 Schedule Ground Disturbance for the Dry Season. To the extent practicable, project excavation and construction shall be scheduled for the dry season (April 15 through October 15).

LTS

HY-1.2 Comply with NPDES and SWPPP Requirements. The permit requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) shall be satisfied prior to issuing a building permit by the City of Scotts Valley. The project is subject to the conditions of the General Construction Activity National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit from the RWQCB. This permit requires that the project sponsor develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP is required to identify the sources of sediment and other pollutants onsite, and to ensure the reduction of sediment and other pollutants in the stormwater discharged from the site. A monitoring program is required to aid the implementation of, and assure compliance with, the SWPPP.

HY-1.3 Prepare and Adhere to an Erosion/Sedimentation Plan. An Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan shall be submitted to the City of Scotts Valley by the project sponsor for the project prior to grading (this

LEGEND LTS Less Than Significant

PS Potentially Significant

S Significant

SU Significant/Unavoidable

Table S-1 (Continued)
Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**Level of Significance
after Mitigation**

Impacts and Level of Significance

Mitigation Measures

may be a portion of the SWPPP). An erosion control professional, landscape architect, or civil engineer specializing in erosion control shall design the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan. This plan would include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following provisions:

- a. The Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan shall be submitted, reviewed, implemented and inspected as part of the approval process for the grading plan for the project.
- b. The Plan shall be designed by the developer's erosion control consultant, using concepts similar to those formulated by the Scotts Valley Public Works Department, as appropriate, based on the specific erosion and sediment transport control needs of each area in which grading, excavation, and construction is to occur. The possible methods are not necessarily limited to the following items:
 - Locate staging areas outside major streams and drainage ways.
 - Keep the lengths and gradients of constructed slopes (cut or fill) as low as possible.
 - Discharge grading and construction runoff into small drainages at frequent intervals to avoid buildup of large potentially erosive flows.
 - Prevent runoff from flowing over unprotected slopes.
 - Keep disturbed areas (areas of grading and related activities) to the minimum necessary for construction of the project.
 - Keep runoff away from disturbed areas during grading and related activities.
 - Stabilize disturbed areas as quickly as possible, either by vegetative or mechanical methods.
 - Direct runoff over vegetated areas prior to discharge into public storm drainage systems, whenever possible.

LEGEND LTS Less Than Significant PS Potentially Significant S Significant SU Significant/Unavoidable

Table S-1 (Continued)
Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Level of Significance
after Mitigation

Impacts and Level of Significance

Mitigation Measures

- Trap sediment before it leaves the site with such techniques as sediment ponds or siltation fences.
- 1. Interceptor ditches, drainage swales, or detention basins shall be used to prevent storm runoff from transporting sediment into local storm drains and drainage ways and to prevent sediment-laden runoff from leaving the disturbed area.
- 2. Replace existing silt fences to prevent sedimentation in adjacent and down gradient drainage ways. Additional silt fences shall be constructed by the contractor as needed prior to mass grading and other soil-disturbing construction activities onsite.
- Control landscaping activities with regard to the application of fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides or other hazardous substances. Provide proper instruction regarding use of these substances to all landscaping personnel on the construction team.
- c. During the installation of the erosion and sediment transport control structures, the erosion control professional shall be on the site to supervise the implementation of the designs, and the maintenance of the facilities throughout the grading and construction period.

HY-2. Construction of the proposed project would result in an increase in impervious areas and higher levels of surface runoff, potentially increasing erosion and flood hazard in downstream drainage ways. (PS)

HY-2.1 *Design and Construct Adequately Sized Detention Facilities.* Prior to issuance of building permits for both proposed developments, the project sponsors shall submit designs for the detention facilities for approval by the City of Scotts Valley Public Works Department. Existing runoff from both project sites shall be routed through on-site storm drain detention facilities so that the runoff can be metered prior to discharge into the existing storm drain system. The design shall provide sufficient information to enable the Public Works Department to determine that peak flows for the 10-year storm event can be contained.

HY-2.2 *Incorporate Infiltration and Pollution Control Measures into Drainage System.* The project sponsor shall incorporate measures into

LTS

LEGEND LTS Less Than Significant PS Potentially Significant S Significant SU Significant/Unavoidable

Table S-1 (Continued)
Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impacts and Level of Significance	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
<p>HY-3. Increased runoff from additional impermeable surfaces could lower the quality of stormwater runoff. (PS)</p>	<p>drainage projects for both proposed developments (storm drains, conduits, and channel improvements) that maximize infiltration/permeability and trap pollutants and sediment from stormwater runoff.</p> <p><i>HY-3.1 Install Pollutant Control Devices into the Storm Drainage System.</i> The office building developer and the Scotts Valley Fire District shall install easily cleanable sediment catch basins, debris screens, and grease separators or similar water quality protection devices in the drainage facilities serving both project sites (i.e., vegetated swales, buffer strips, detention pond areas).</p> <p><i>HY-3.2 Ensure Maintenance of Pollutant Control Devices.</i> The office building developer and the Scotts Valley Fire District shall ensure maintenance of the stormwater pollution control facilities by means identified by the Public Works Department and the Scotts Valley Water District.</p> <p><i>HY-3.3 Label Storm Drain Inlets.</i> All storm drain inlets shall be labeled to educate the public about the adverse impacts associated with dumping into receiving waters.</p> <p><i>HY-3.4 Clean Parking Areas.</i> The project sponsor shall clean or sweep parking areas on a monthly basis.</p>	LTS
NOISE		
<p>NO-1. There would be a temporary increase in noise levels during construction of the proposed project. (PS)</p>	<p><i>NO-1.1 Implement Best Management Practices to Reduce Construction Noise.</i> The project sponsor shall incorporate the following practices into the construction documents to be implemented by the project contractor and these shall be provided to the Community Development Director for approval prior to the issuance of building permits:</p> <p>a. Maximize the physical separation between noise generators and noise receptors. Such separation includes, but is not limited to, the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide enclosures such as heavy-duty mufflers for stationary 	LTS
LEGEND	LTS Less Than Significant	PS Potentially Significant
	S Significant	SU Significant/Unavoidable

Table S-1 (Continued)
Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**Level of Significance
after Mitigation**

Impacts and Level of Significance

Mitigation Measures

equipment and barriers around particularly noisy areas on the site or around the entire site;

- Use shields, impervious fences, or other physical sound barriers, to inhibit transmission of noise to sensitive receptors;
- Locate stationary equipment to minimize noise impacts on the community; and
- Minimize backing movements of equipment.

b. Use quiet construction equipment whenever possible, particularly air compressors.

c. Prohibit unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines.

d. Schedule construction activity that produces higher noise levels during less noise-sensitive hours (normally 8 am to 5 pm on weekdays and 9 am to 4 pm on Saturdays). Minimize noise intrusive impacts during the above most noise-sensitive hours by planning noisier operations during times of highest ambient noise levels.

e. Select routes for movement of construction-related vehicles and equipment in conjunction with the City of Scotts Valley Planning Department so that noise-sensitive areas, including residences, hotels, and outdoor recreation areas, are avoided as much as possible. Include these routes in materials submitted to the Community Development Director for approval prior to the issuance of building permits.

f. Designate a noise disturbance coordinator who will be responsible for responding to complaints about noise during construction. The telephone number of the noise disturbance coordinator shall be conspicuously posted at the construction site and shall be provided to the Community Development Director. Copies of the construction schedule shall also be posted at nearby noise-sensitive areas.

LEGEND

LTS Less Than Significant

PS Potentially Significant

S Significant

SU Significant/Unavoidable

**Table S-1 (Continued)
Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Level of Significance
after Mitigation

Impacts and Level of Significance

Mitigation Measures

AIR QUALITY

AQ-1. Construction activities for the proposed project could result in short-term increases in PM₁₀ emissions. (PS)

Recommended mitigation measure in the Specific Plan EIR to reduce air quality impacts require project proponents of future development projects to prepare a construction air pollution control plan to include, but not limited to, the following techniques:

- Sprinkle unpaved construction sites with non-potable water at least twice per day;
- Cover trucks hauling excavated materials with tarpaulins or other effective covers;
- Cease grading activities when winds are greater than 30 mph;
- Cover soils storage piles not to be used within one business week;
- Install wheel washers for all exiting trucks;
- Limit the area under construction;
- Sweep streets serving the construction sites at least once per day;
- Pave and plant as soon as possible;
- Reduce unnecessary idling; and
- Use adhesives, clean-up solvents, paint, and asphalt paving materials with a low ROG content.

LTS

LEGEND LTS Less Than Significant PS Potentially Significant S Significant SU Significant/Unavoidable

Section 1

Introduction

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE SEIR

The City of Scotts Valley proposes to amend the *Gateway South Specific Plan* (City of Scotts Valley, 1995) to allow the construction of the Gateway South Office Building and a fire station for the Scotts Valley Fire District, located on two parcels along La Madrona Drive in Scotts Valley, California. Both proposed developments and the Specific Plan Amendment are considered the “project,” although they are referred to separately for purposes of clarification. “Office building project” or “fire station project” is used to make distinctions between the two interdependent project components.

This Supplemental EIR (SEIR) evaluates potential effects of the proposed Specific Plan Amendment, and is intended to “supplement” the environmental analysis completed previously for the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* (City of Scotts Valley, 1995). This SEIR determines the extent to which additional development in the Specific Plan Area would create significant new environmental effects not previously evaluated in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*.

1.2 ORGANIZATION OF THE SEIR

Chapter II of this SEIR provides a description of the project, including location and setting, project objectives, project details, project schedule, and approvals. Chapter III of this SEIR, Environmental Analysis, addresses the project’s potential environmental effects on transportation, visual quality, land use, biology, hydrology, noise, and air quality. As part of Chapter III, significance criteria are identified for each environmental topic, the thresholds beyond which the effect would be considered significant, or a substantial, adverse change in the physical environment, as defined in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15002(g) and 15382. Under Impacts and Mitigation, the text describes individual effects, highlighted by an italicized impact summary statement that indicates whether the effect would be “No Impact,” “Less Than Significant,” “Potentially Significant,” or “Significant/Unavoidable” in relation to the criteria. “No Impact” includes project effects that would have no discernible effect. “Less Than Significant” includes project effects that would not exceed significance criteria defined for each topic. “Potentially Significant” effects are those that could occur if identified mitigation measures discussed were not included as part of the project. “Significant/Unavoidable” effects are those that would occur even if mitigation measures were adopted and implemented. Under Impacts and Mitigation, the SEIR also identifies measures for each impact, keyed to the same numbering as for impacts. For example, Mitigation Measure 1.1 would reduce or eliminate adverse effects of Impact 1.

Chapter III also provides a summary of impacts and mitigation measures identified in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*, and provides a comparison between the impacts and mitigation measures of this SEIR and the previous EIR.

Chapter IV of this SEIR describes potential alternatives to the project for purposes of reducing or eliminating significant project impacts, including a No Project Alternative. Chapter V of this SEIR identifies CEQA-mandated topics, including significant unavoidable impacts, growth inducement, as well as cumulative impacts.

This SEIR cites information from a number of sources, such as the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*, as well as a number of technical reports prepared for this SEIR, including a transportation study (Fehr & Peers, 2003), a biological study, a wetland delineation report, a hydrological study, a tree survey (EIP, 2002), a paleontological study (Petra Paleontology, 2002), and an entomological report (Dr. Richard Arnold, 2002). Those documents are available for public review at City Hall, One Civic Center Drive, Scotts Valley, as well as at the Scotts Valley Public Library. These technical reports, including the Initial Study, are available under a separate cover, entitled *Gateway South Office Building and Fire Station SEIR, Volume II Technical Appendices*.

1.3 OVERVIEW TO ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

This document is a Draft SEIR and is being distributed for public review and comment. In accordance with CEQA, the document is a public disclosure report, the intent of which is to inform the public and Scotts Valley decision makers about the environmental consequences of approving the proposed project. The public review and comment period is 45 days, during which time interested agencies, organizations, and individuals are invited to submit comments on the adequacy of the environmental documentation. Public input on the document's factual content, assumptions, classification of impacts, effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures, and project alternatives are all welcome and should be submitted to:

Jackie Young, AICP, Senior Principal Planner
City of Scotts Valley
One Civic Center Drive
Scotts Valley, CA 95066

A public hearing will also be held within the 45-day review period to accept public testimony.

Following receipt of the comments, the City will prepare responses and produce a Responses to Comments document. The responses will correct factual errors, clarify assumptions and analyses, and may propose revisions to the text of the Draft SEIR. The Draft SEIR and the Responses to Comments document are collectively referred to as the Final SEIR. The City Council must review the Final SEIR and certify the adequacy of the document in terms of conformance with CEQA, before the Council can take action on the proposed office building and fire station. A more detailed description of this process is presented in Section 2.5, Project Approvals.

Section 2

Project Description

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The City of Scotts Valley is located within Santa Cruz County, in the south-central Santa Cruz Mountains. It is located off State Route (SR)-17, six miles north of the City of Santa Cruz and 25 miles south of the City of San Jose (see Figure 2-1, Vicinity Map). The project site is located on the west side of SR-17 in Scotts Valley on La Madrona Drive, generally southwest of the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive exit. La Madrona Drive is the frontage road to the west of SR-17.

The proposed office building/open space site is bound by the Hilton Hotel to the north, Silverwood Drive and open space to the south, residential uses of the Monte Fiore community to the west, and La Madrona Drive to the east. The proposed fire station site is just east of the office building/open space site, on the eastern side of La Madrona Drive. This parcel is bound by an approved but unbuilt retail center to the north, the SR-17 southbound on-ramp to the east, and La Madrona Drive to the west. On the southern tip of this teardrop-shaped parcel is La Madrona Drive/SR-17.

2.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

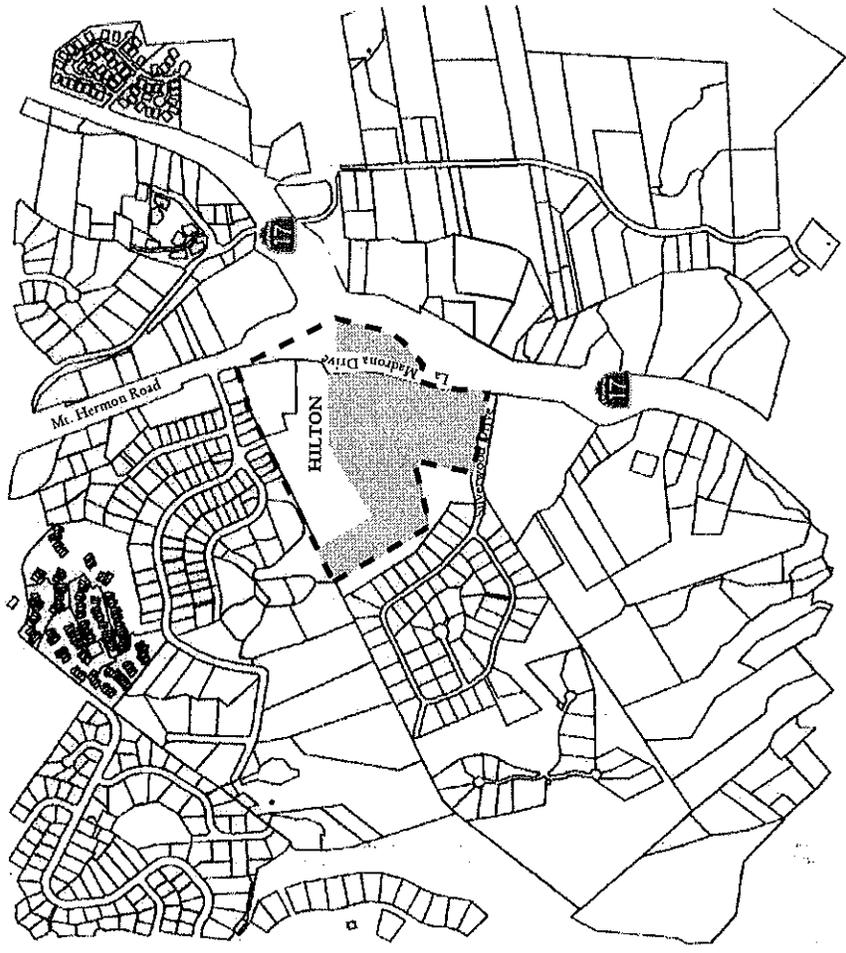
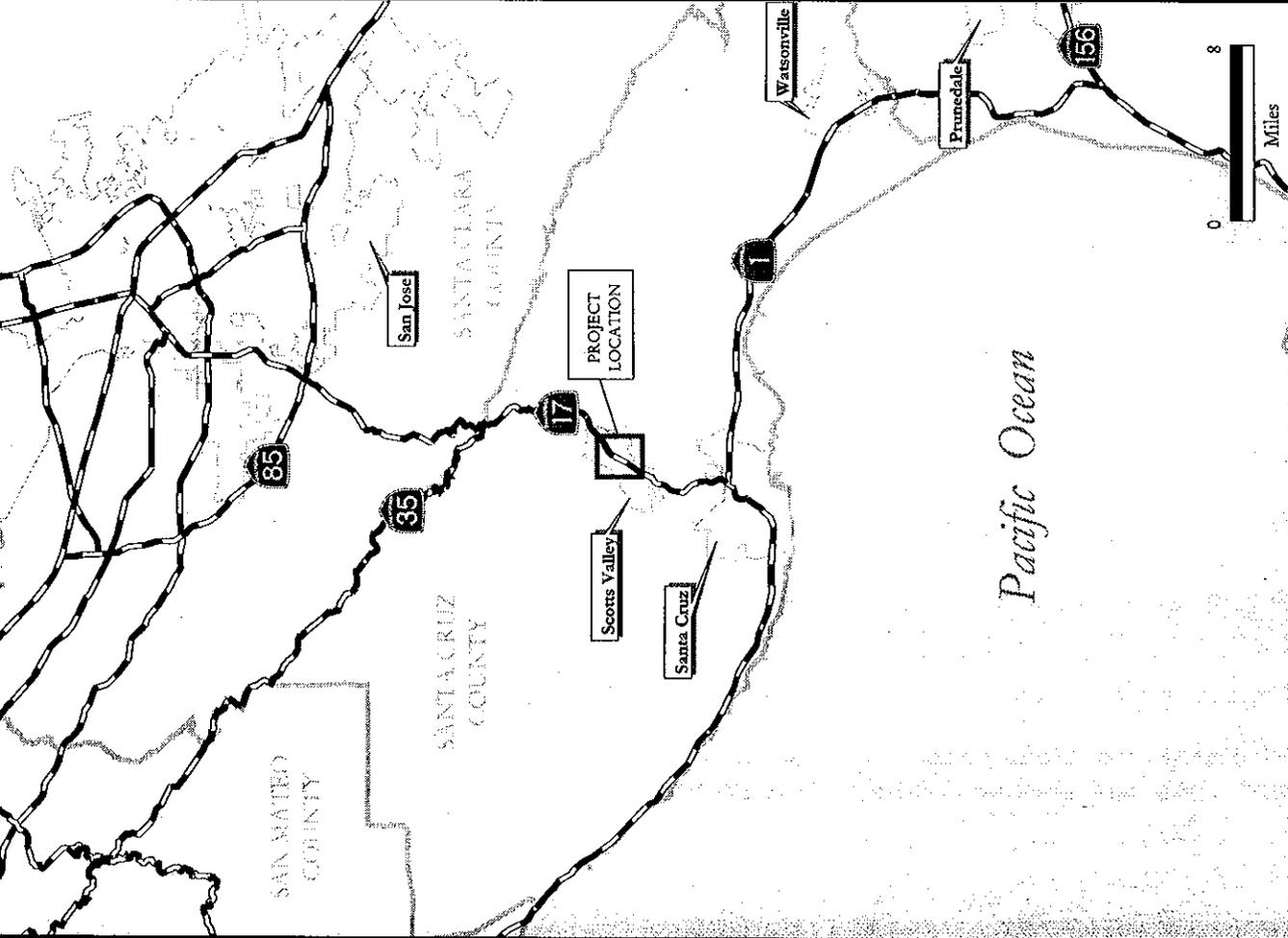
The City of Scotts Valley has developed a set of objectives for each of the project components, discussed below.

Office Building

1. Strengthens Scotts Valley's commercial areas;
2. Provides high-quality commercial developments with a strong sense of entry into the gateway of Scotts Valley;
3. Meets the design criteria for "Landmark Architecture";
4. Is compatible with adjacent development;
5. Meets the goals and objectives contained in the *Gateway South Specific Plan*; and
6. Preserves open space and maintains the city's visual and aesthetic qualities.

Fire Station

1. Provides additional fire-fighting capabilities and reduces response times;
2. Provides the community with a fire station that meets high-quality design standards; and
3. Meets objectives 3 – 6 listed above for the proposed office building project.



NOT TO SCALE

FIGURE 2-1: VICINITY MAP
 Gateway South Office Building
 and Fire Station
 Scotts Valley, CA

Project Site
 Planning Area

Source: DES Architects/Engineers, Parcels, September 2001; US Census Bureau, City Boundaries, December 2000; ESRI, Major Roads, September 1999; and EIP Associates, GIS Program, December 2, 2003.



2.3 PROJECT DETAILS

Gateway South Office Building

The Gateway South office building would be built on a 17.6-acre parcel (APN # 21-141-05) west of La Madrona Drive and southwest of the Mt. Hermon Road/SR-17 interchange. Approximately 6.6 acres or 38% of the site would be developed, while approximately 11.0 acres or 62% of the site would remain as natural or landscaped open space, including the heavily wooded slope on the western side of the property. Table 2-1 provides a summary of the office building site data.

Table 2-1
Gateway South Office Building Site Data

	Area (sf)	Area (acres)	% of Gross Site Area
Gross Site Area	767,478	17.6	100%
Building Footprint	67,870	1.5	8.8%
Parking Stalls/driveways	193,716	4.4	25.2%
Landscape Hardscape	28,665	0.65	3.7%
Landscape Planting	181,892	4.2	23.7%
Open Space	295,335	6.8	38.5%
Gross Building Area	136,000	N/A	N/A

Source: DES Architects, 2001.

Site Plan

The office building would be set back approximately 100 feet from La Madrona Drive, approximately 240 feet from Silverwood Drive and approximately 330 feet from the adjacent Hilton Hotel to the north. Pedestrian linkages from the site to adjacent areas would be provided along the sidewalk located on the west side of La Madrona Drive. An additional pedestrian linkage would be constructed between the office building and the adjacent Hilton Hotel to the north, through the parking lot (see Figure 2-2, Site Plan).

The front, or east-facing façade, would include a semi-octagon entry feature connecting two larger wings set back from the entrance (see Figure 2-2). The entrance would contain a semi-circular trellis feature surrounding a circular forecourt. Exterior stair towers would be located on the northern and southern wings. Two public plazas would be located toward the rear of the building: one located to the northwest would be approximately 4,000 square feet (sf), and the other located to the southwest would be approximately 3,700 sf.

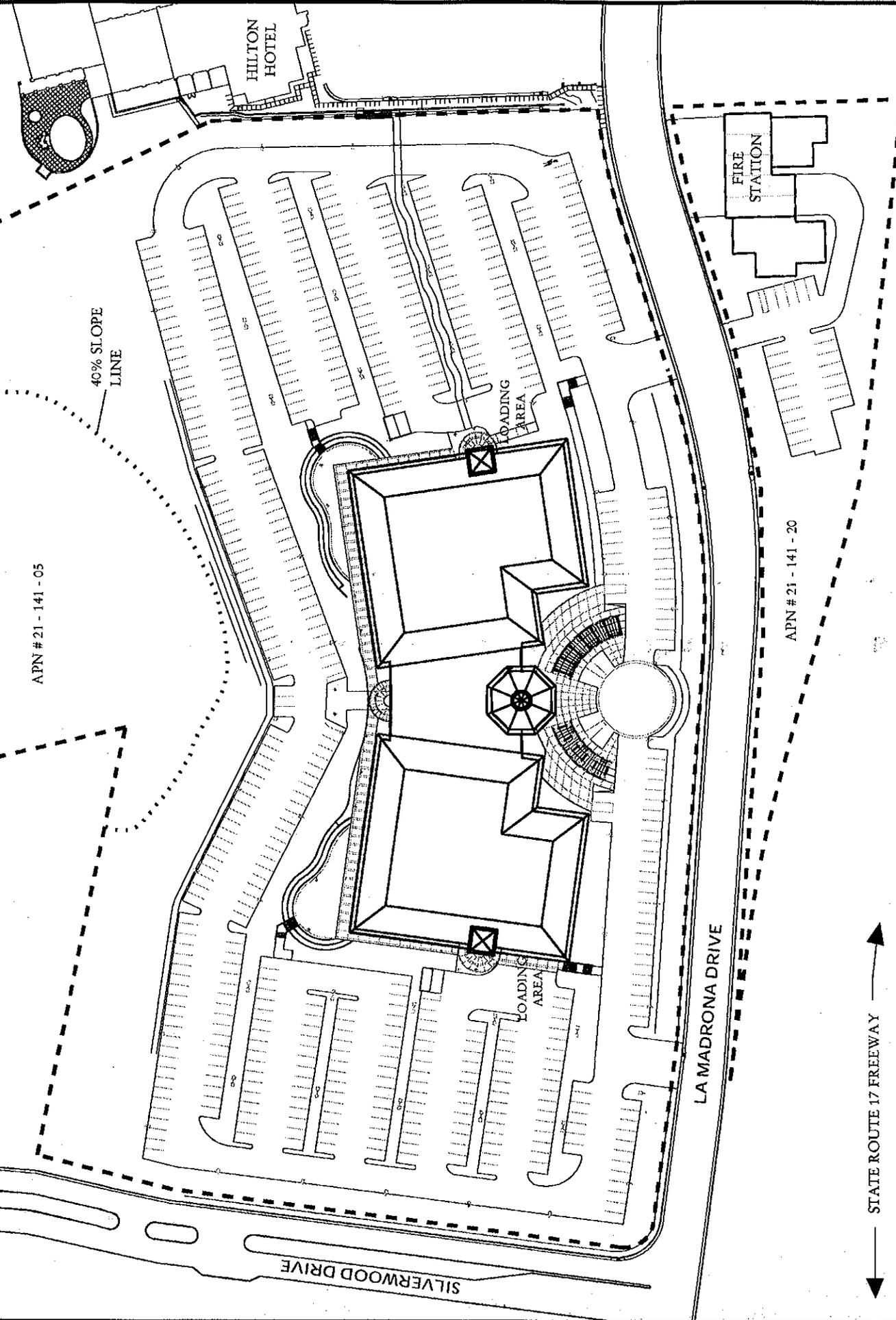
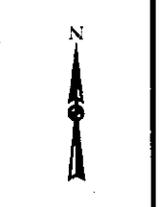
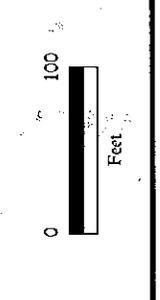


FIGURE 2-2: SITE PLAN
 Gateway South Office Building
 and Fire Station
 Scotts Valley, CA

--- Project Line



Source: DES Architects/Engineers,
 Site Plan, September 2001; and
 EIP Associates, GIS Program,
 June 5, 2002



← STATE ROUTE 17 FREEWAY →

APN # 21 - 141 - 05

40% SLOPE
 LINE

HILTON
 HOTEL

LOADING
 AREA

FIRE
 STATION

APN # 21 - 141 - 20

LA MADRONA DRIVE

SILVERWOOD DRIVE

Parking and Circulation

Parking areas would surround the building on all sides, providing parking for approximately 550 automobiles, including 11 handicap spaces (see Figure 2-2). Two access driveways leading to the parking areas would be located on La Madrona Drive. Parking areas would be a series of interconnected lots linked by a loop road on the periphery. A pedestrian bridge would connect the upper parking lot on the west side of the building to the second floor of the west-facing façade, through a rear entrance doorway. A pedestrian walkway through the parking lot would connect the office building property with the adjacent Hilton Hotel property, located immediately to the north of the site. Loading areas, as well as trash enclosures, would be located on the north and south sides of the building, and would be accessed through the parking lots. Both project driveways would allow for ingress and egress (two-way operations).

Grading Plan

The site would be graded to accommodate the building pad and parking areas (see Figure 2-3, Grading Plan, Figure 2-4, Grading Plan Section Index, and Figure 2-5, Grading Sections). Building and parking area pads would be terraced into the slope. Slopes on the developable portion of the site, which include the flatter areas of the site closest to La Madrona Drive, range from 0% to 39%, sloping generally from west to east. Development would be concentrated on the lower, flatter portions of the site. Estimated earthwork quantities include approximately 50,000 cubic yards (cy) of excavated soils, approximately 60,500 cy of fill, of which approximately 10,500 cy would be imported soils. Concrete retaining walls would be utilized in various locations around the property, including the front (east) elevation along La Madrona Drive between the road and the first parking area, between the first and second parking areas to the north and south of the building, behind the building between the employee plazas and the upper parking lot, along portions of the northern and southern borders, and above portions of the upper parking lot along the toe of the slope. As seen in Figure 2-5, the heights of the retaining walls above the finished grade would vary depending on the section. The wall heights between La Madrona Drive and the first parking area, for example, would be between about 10 and 25 feet. The retaining wall heights at the upper parking lot along the toe of the slope would vary between 15 and 25 feet. None of the grading work would breach the 40% slope line located on the western side of the property (see Figure 2-3). This portion of the property contains steep slopes and is heavily vegetated. It would remain undeveloped and would be designated as permanent open space.

Architectural Features and Concepts

Although designs are preliminary, project plans call for a two-story building approximately 136,000 sf constructed with a steel structure on a poured concrete slab. Exterior details would include pilasters clad in stone, stained horizontal wood spandrels, tinted glazing in anodized aluminum window frames, and wooden eave brackets (see Figure 2-6, Elevations). The hipped parapet roof would be clad in composite slate roofing. The building would be approximately 460 feet long, 190 feet wide, approximately 38 feet tall to the top of the roof (main portion), and approximately 46 feet tall to the peak of the entrance portion of the roof.

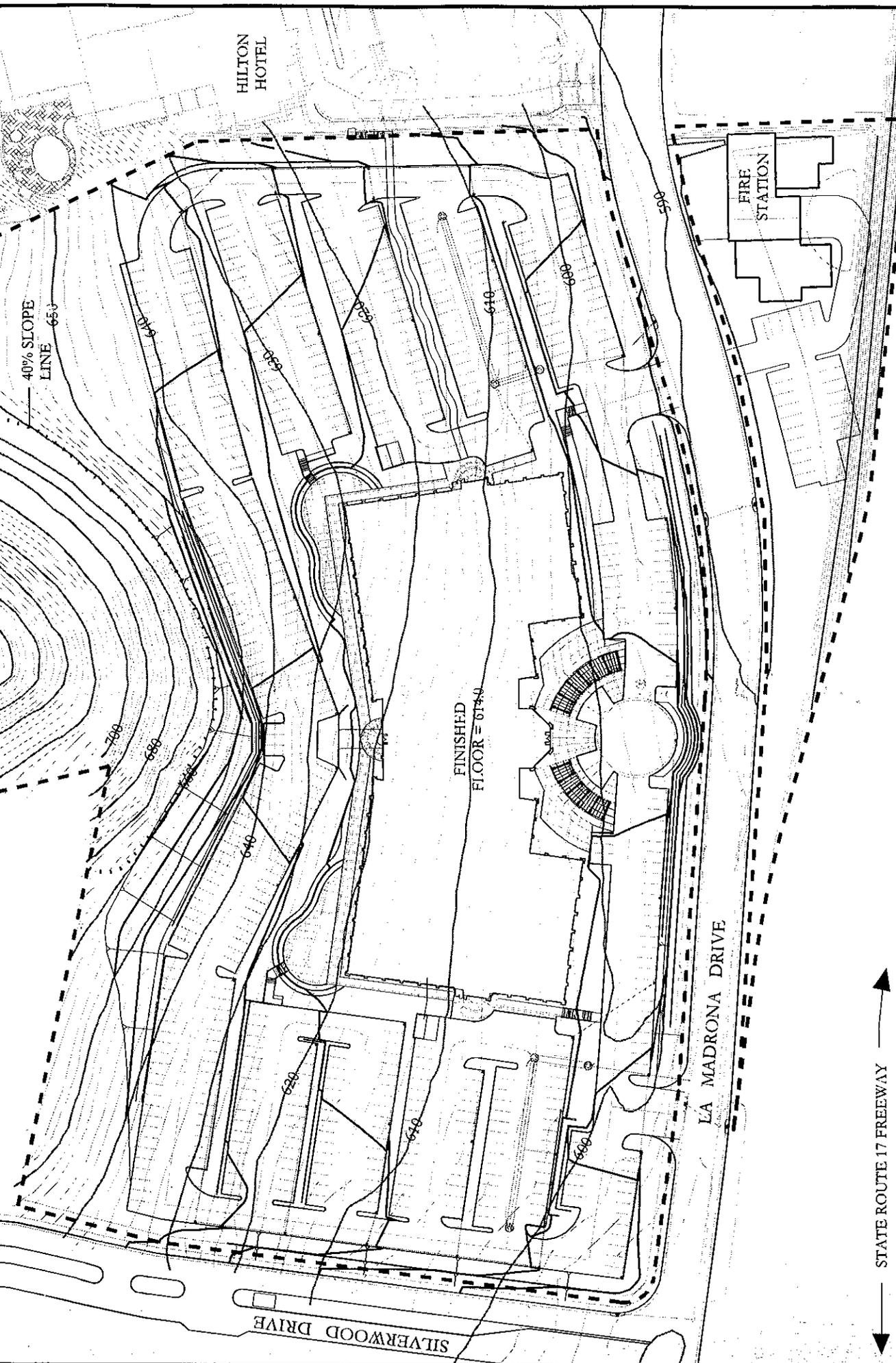
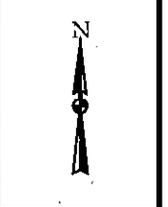
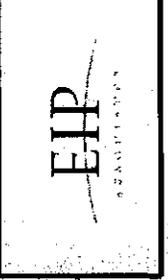


FIGURE 2-3: GRADING PLAN
 Gateway South Office Building
 and Fire Station
 Scotts Valley, CA

--- Property Line



Source: DES Architects/Engineers,
 Grading Plan, September 2001; and
 EIP Associates, GIS Program,
 June 5, 2002.



STATE ROUTE 17 FREEWAY

LA MADRONA DRIVE

HILTON HOTEL

SILVERWOOD DRIVE

FINISHED FLOOR = 614.0

FIRE STATION

40% SLOPE LINE = 65.0

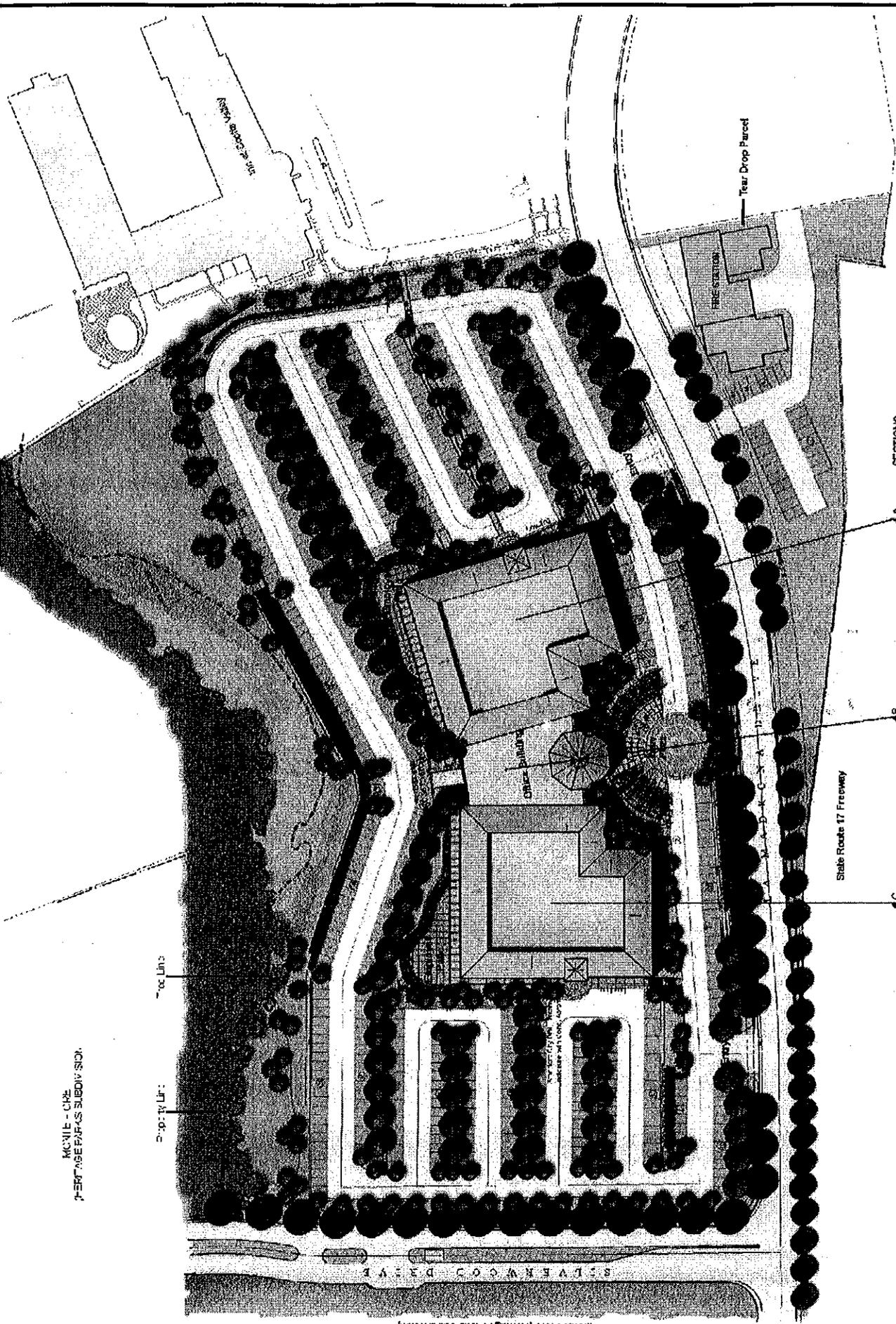
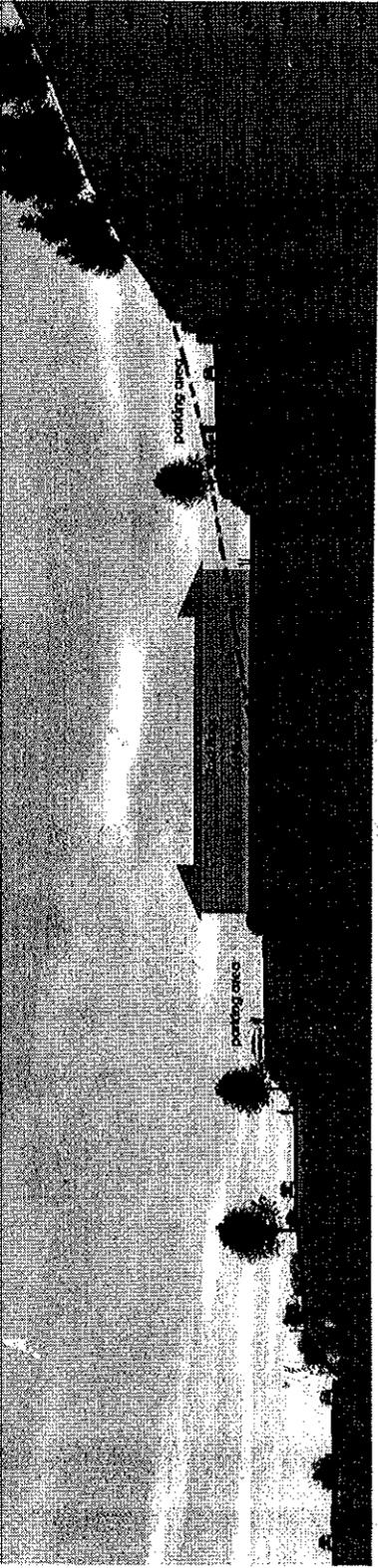


FIGURE 2-4: GRADING PLAN SECTION INDEX
 Gateway South Office Building and Fire Station
 Scotts Valley, CA

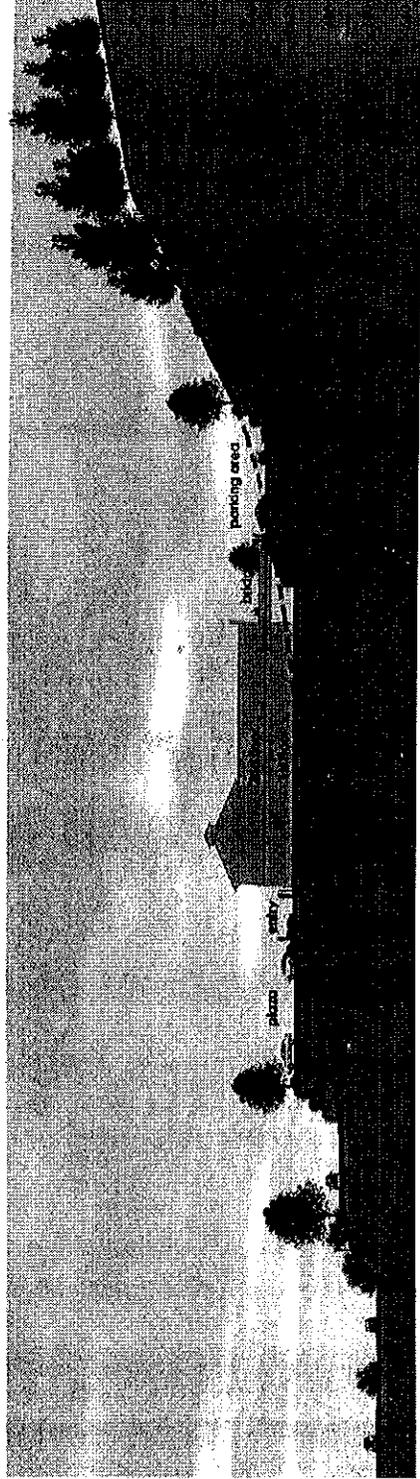


Source: DES Architects/Engineers, Site Plan, December 17, 2002; and EIP Associates, GIS Program, December 23, 2002.

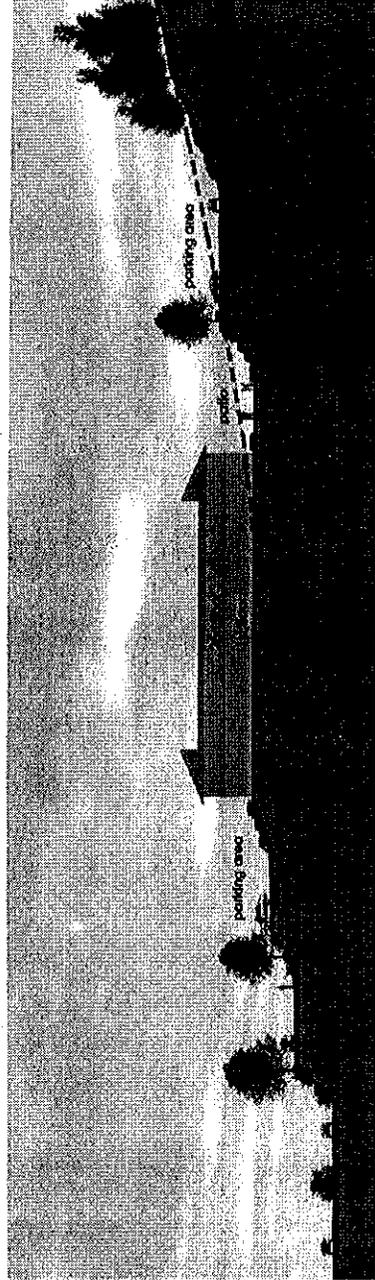




SITE SECTION A



SITE SECTION B



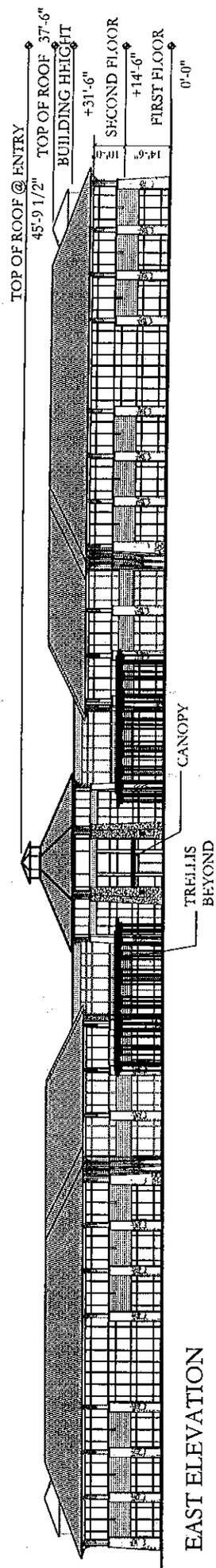
SITE SECTION C

Source: DES Architects/Engineers,
Sections, December 17, 2002,
and EIP Associates, GIS Program,
December 23, 2002.

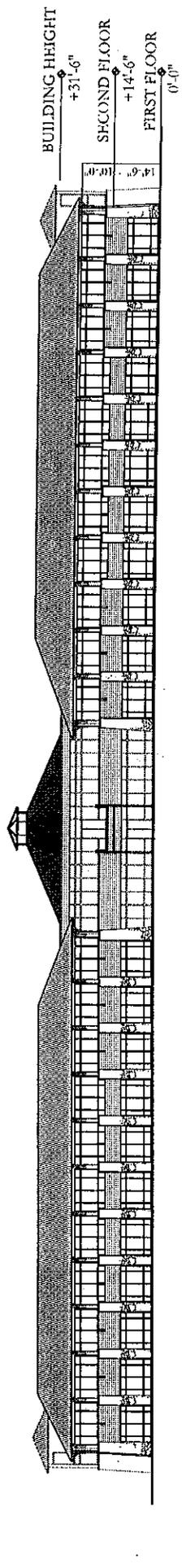


**FIGURE 2-5:
GRADING SECTIONS**
Gateway South Office Building
and Fire Station
Scotts Valley, CA

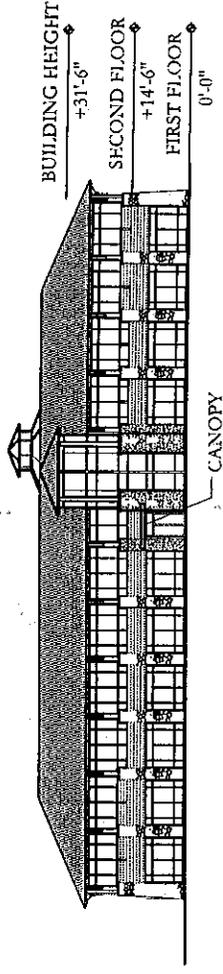
EIP
ASSOCIATES



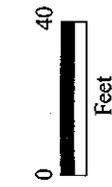
EAST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



NORTH/SOUTH ELEVATION



Source: DES Architects/Engineers, Exterior Elevation, September 2001; and EIP Associates, GIS Program, June 6, 2002.



FIGURE 2-6: ELEVATIONS
 Gateway South Office Building
 and Fire Station
 Scotts Valley, CA

Landscape Plan

Although the landscape plan is conceptual in nature, the property would be heavily landscaped with London Plane trees and shrubs along La Madrona Drive, and a mixture of maples, fruit trees, oaks, and redwoods throughout the development (see Figure 2-7, Landscape Plan). A landscaped buffer would be located between the project and the adjacent properties to the north and south. Redwoods and ornamental trees would be concentrated at the entrance and front façade of the building. Other landscaping would include groundcovers, shrubs, and vines (primarily along the retaining walls). All areas between and around the parking lots would be landscaped. Native restoration planting located along the upper, graded slopes of the project would include redwoods, oaks, manzanita, and native hydroseed plantings. Other landscape features include paved walkways and plazas, lighting (pedestrian-scale poles and bollard lights), and a timber trellis with masonry columns and benches at the entrance.

Fire Station

Site Plan

The proposed fire station would be located to the east of the office development on a 1.5-acre site known as the "teardrop" parcel (APN # 21-141-20), between La Madrona Drive and the SR-17 southbound on-ramp (see Figure 2-8, Fire Station Site Plan). This parcel has been sold by the developer of the office building project to the Scotts Valley Fire District who would eventually develop a fire station on the site. Although site plans for the fire station are preliminary, the project would include a single-story administration and training building, a two-story living quarters and operations building, five fire truck bays, and 23 parking spaces, including two handicap spaces. The building footprint would be approximately 9,500 sf, with a total gross building area of approximately 12,000 sf. Table 2-2 provides a summary of the fire station site development program. No conceptual designs have been completed for this portion of the project.

Table 2-2
Fire Station Site Data

	Area (sf)	Area (acres)	% of Gross Site Area
Net Site Area	64,838	1.5	100%
Building Footprint	9,500	0.2	14.7%
Parking Stalls/Driveways	18,042	0.41	27.8%
Landscape Hardscape/Plantings	37,296	0.86	57.5%
Gross Fire Station Area	12,000	N/A	N/A

Source: DES Architects

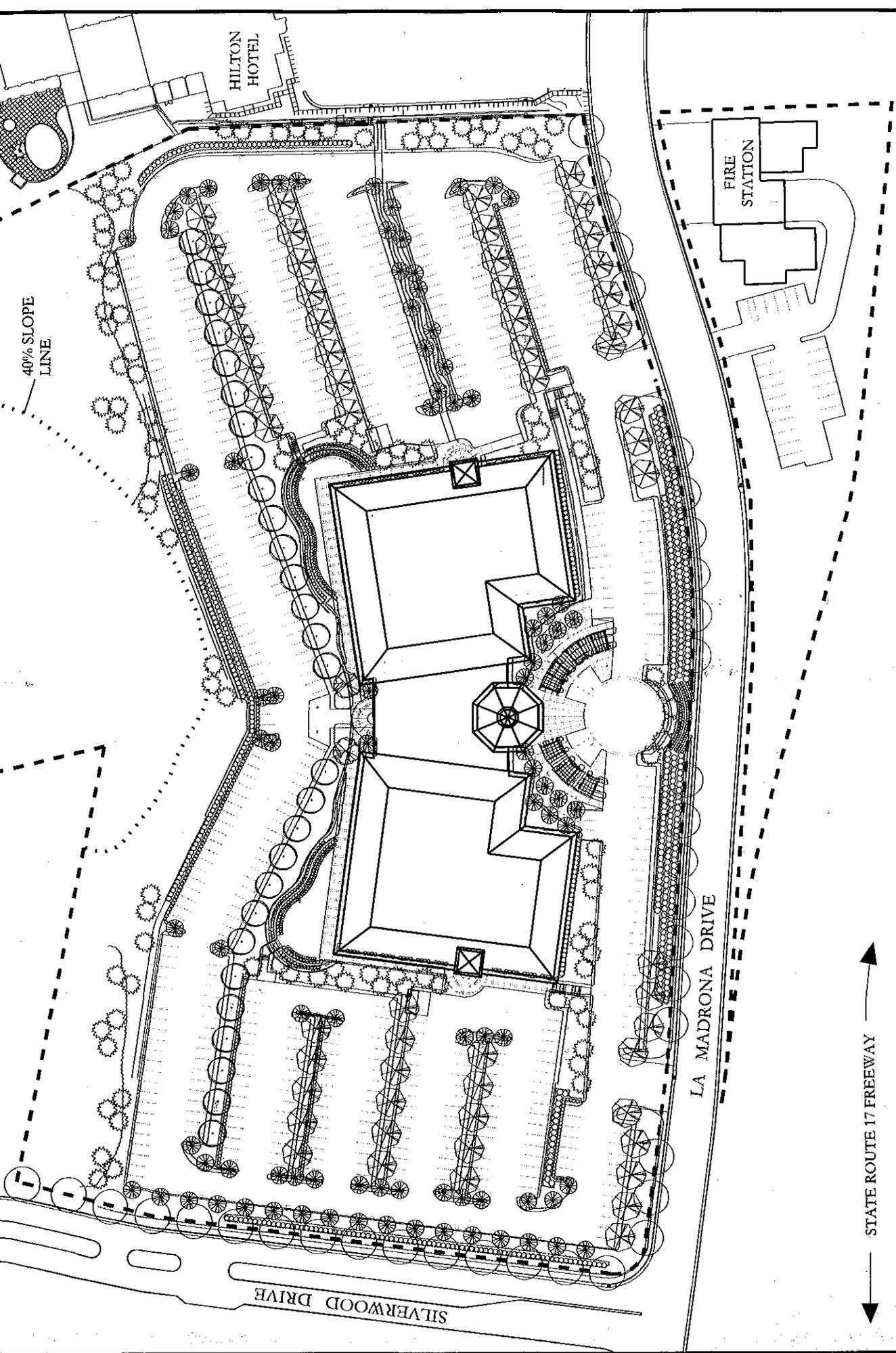
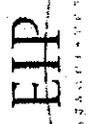


FIGURE 2-7: LANDSCAPE PLAN
 Gateway South Office Building
 and Fire Station
 Scotts Valley, CA

--- Property Line



Source: DES Architects/Engineers, Site Plan, September 2001; The Guzzardo Partnership, Landscape Plan, September 2001; and EIP Associates, GIS Program, June 5, 2002.



STATE ROUTE 17 FREEWAY

LA MADRONA DRIVE

SILVERWOOD DRIVE

HILTON HOTEL

FIRE STATION

40% SLOPE LINE

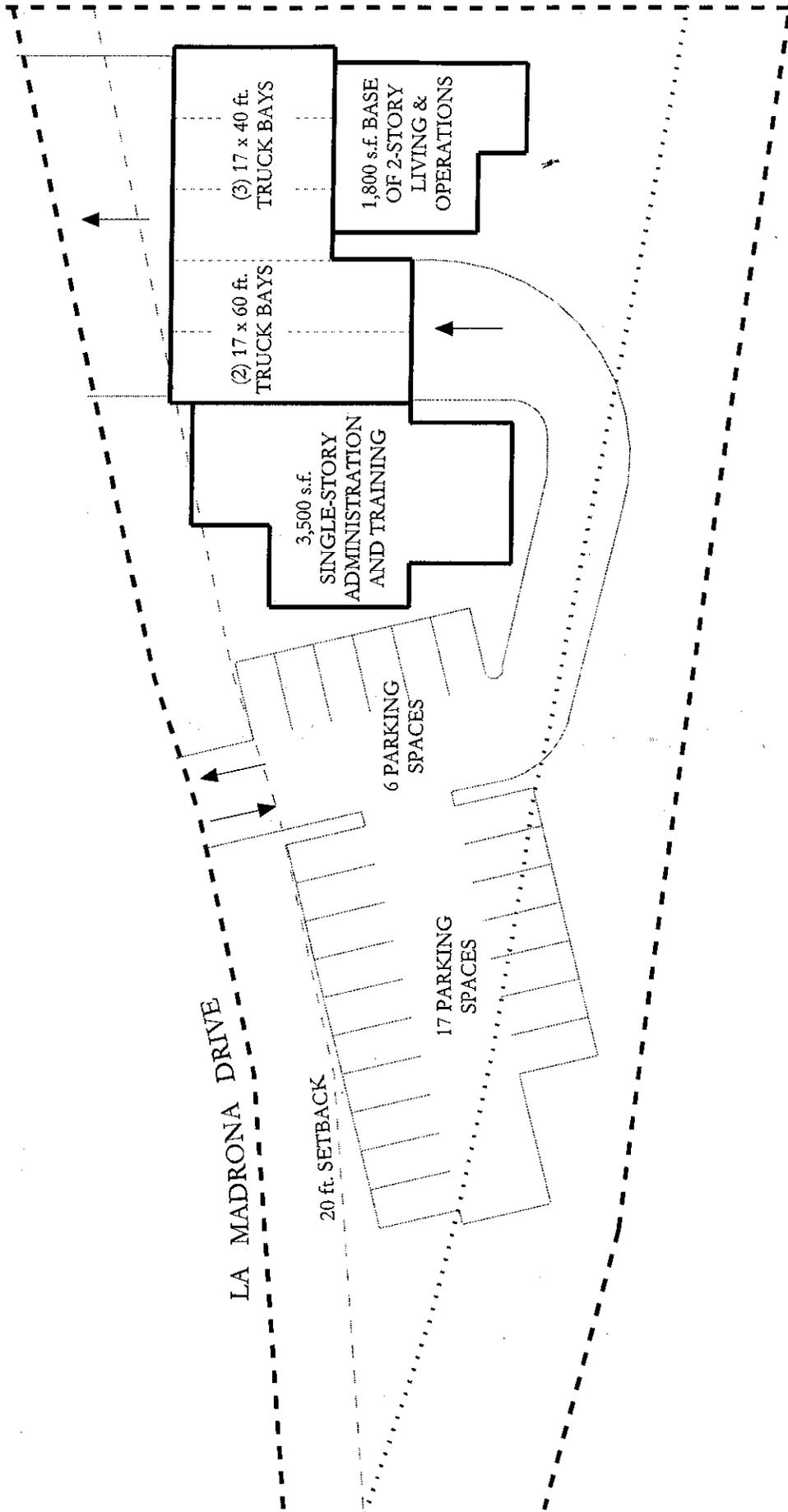
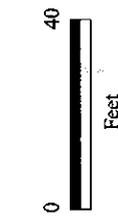


FIGURE 2-8: FIRE STATION

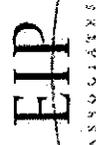
SITE PLAN

Gateway South Office Building
and Fire Station
Scotts Valley, CA

Property Line
Fiber Optic Line
(approximate location)



Source: C3 Design Alliance,
Concept Site and Building Layout,
October 4, 2001; and EIP
Associates, GIS Program, July 31,
2002.



Parking and Circulation

The building would be located on the northern end of the parcel with parking on the southern end. Access to the site for both fire trucks and automobile parking would be from La Madrona Drive, with a loop driveway for returning fire trucks at the rear of the building to avoid the longer fire trucks from having to back into the truck bays from La Madrona Drive (see Figure 2-8). An existing easement for a fiber optic line is located along the eastern boundary within this parcel. The easement would traverse portions of the fire station's proposed parking and circulation areas, but would not be located within the building footprint.

Specific Plan Amendment

Both development projects would be built within Planning Area B of the *Gateway South Specific Plan* (Scotts Valley, 1995). Planning Area B is identified in Figure 2-9. The proposed developments would require a Specific Plan Amendment because they would be more intensive than the land uses proposed in the Specific Plan and evaluated in the *Gateway South Specific Plan Final EIR* (Scotts Valley, 1995) (see Table 2-3 Existing, Approved, and Proposed Development Within Planning Area B). Policy 6.3 of the Specific Plan states that the maximum total building area in Planning Area B shall be 151,000 sf, and that any proposal to exceed this limitation shall require a Specific Plan amendment. Total existing and approved building area in Planning Area B is 136,000 sf, including the newly constructed Hilton Hotel, located to the north of the office building site (124,000 sf), and an approved retail project just north of the fire station site (12,000 sf), leaving 15,000 sf of developable space in Planning Area B. The proposed office building and fire station would total 148,000 sf of development, or 133,000 sf above the maximum development envisioned for Planning Area B of the *Gateway South Specific Plan*. As a result, a Specific Plan Amendment would be required to allow an additional 133,000 sf of construction associated with the proposed office building and fire station project in the Specific Plan area. For purposes of this environmental review, the Specific Plan Amendment is considered part of the project.

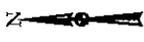
Table 2-3
Existing, Approved, and Proposed Development Within Planning Area B

Land Use	Existing	Approved	Remaining	Proposed
Hotel	124,000	--	--	--
Retail	--	12,000	--	--
Office	--	--	15,000	136,000
Fire Station	--	--	--	12,000
TOTAL	124,000	12,000	15,000	148,000

Source: City of Scotts Valley



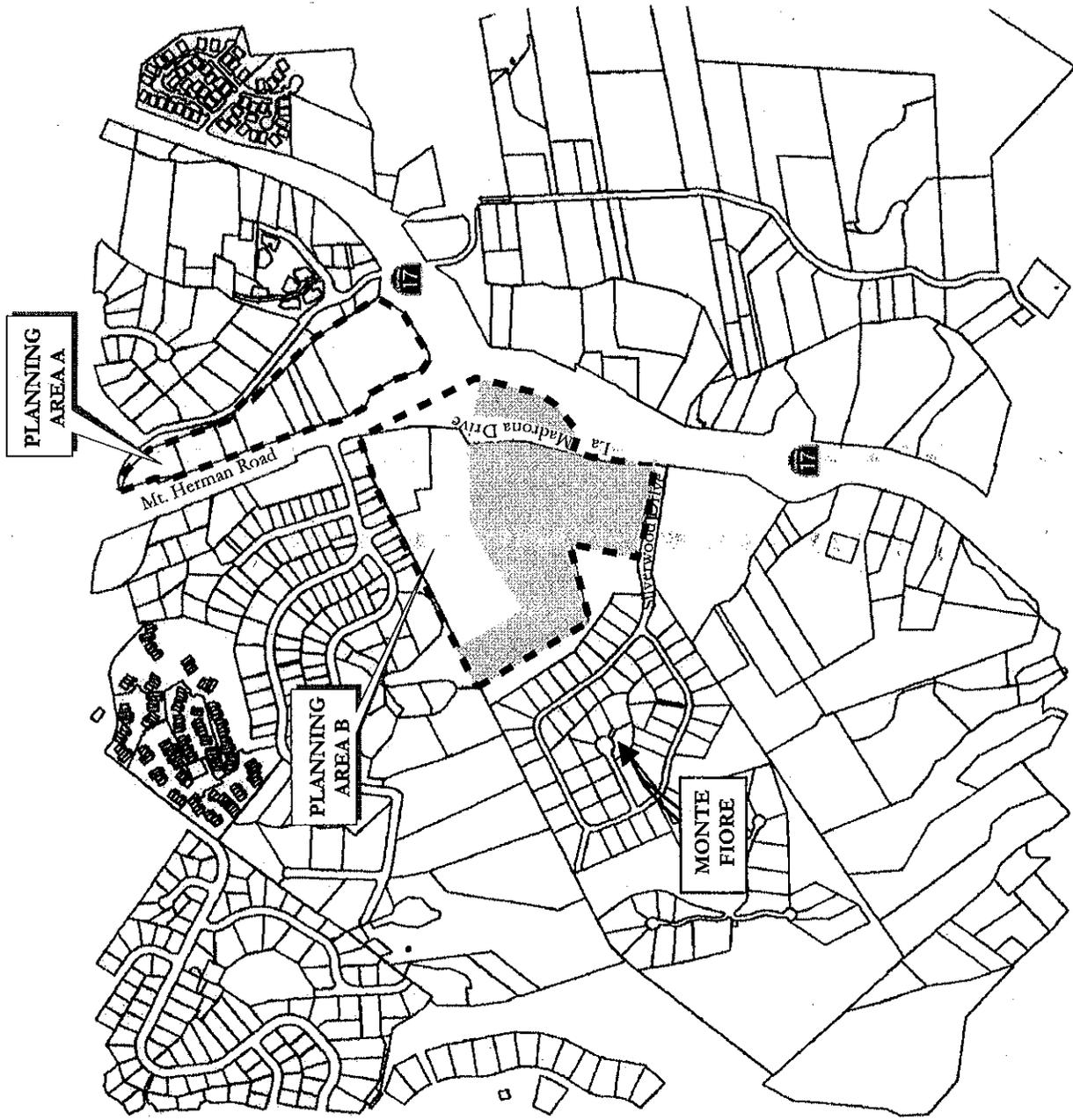
Source: DES Architects/Engineers, Parcels, September 2001; US Census Bureau, City Boundaries, December 2000; ESRI, Major Roads, September 1999; and EIP Associates, GIS Program, June 6, 2002.



Project Site
Planning Area

FIGURE 2-9: GATEWAY SOUTH SPECIFIC PLAN-PLANNING AREAS A AND B
Gateway South Office Building and Fire Station
Scotts Valley, CA

NOT TO SCALE



2.4 PROJECT SCHEDULE

Office Building

Construction of the proposed office building is anticipated to begin in Fall 2004 and be completed in Winter 2005, although the applicant may request an extension of the standard two-year life of the required project entitlements. If this were to occur, construction would not begin until 2005. The construction period would last approximately 18 months, and construction staging would occur on the project site.

Fire Station

Construction of the proposed fire station is unknown and would be dependent upon funding availability. The construction period would last approximately 12 months, and construction staging would occur on the project site.

2.5 PROJECT APPROVALS

The first step in processing the proposed project is a public review period for the Draft SEIR. During the 45-day review period, the City of Scotts Valley Planning Commission and the City Council will hold public hearings to receive public input on the Draft SEIR. The City of Scotts Valley will then prepare the Final SEIR consisting of the Draft SEIR or revisions of the Draft SEIR based on substantive environmental comments received through the public review process; a list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft SEIR; and responses to those comments. The Final SEIR will then be distributed to interested parties and other organizations and entities as required by law. The Scotts Valley Planning Commission will hold another public hearing, no less than 21 days after the release of the Final SEIR, to consider a recommendation to amend, certify or deny the Final SEIR and to concurrently consider a recommendation to amend, approve or deny the proposed project entitlements. The Scotts Valley City Council will then hold another public hearing to consider the recommendations of the Planning Commission and public testimony and to amend, certify or deny the Final SEIR and to concurrently consider, amend, approve or deny the proposed project entitlements.

Required project entitlements from the City of Scotts Valley include an amendment to the *Gateway South Specific Plan*, a Planned Development Permit, and Design Review. The applicant has also expressed an interest in the future consideration of a Development Agreement.

- The *Gateway South Specific Plan* is a separately adopted document that is used to implement the *City of Scotts Valley General Plan* in the Gateway South area. The Plan must be consistent with the General Plan, and all projects approved in the Plan Area must be consistent with the goals and policies of the Specific Plan.

Policy 6.3 of the Specific Plan states that the maximum total building area in Planning Area B shall be 151,000 sf, and that any proposal to exceed this limitation shall require a Specific Plan amendment. Total existing and approved building area in Planning Area B is 136,000 sf, including the newly constructed Hilton Hotel, located to the north of the office building site (124,000 sf), and an approved retail project just north of the fire station site (12,000 sf), leaving 15,000 sf of developable space in Planning Area B. The proposed office building and fire station would total 148,000 sf of development, or 133,000 sf above the maximum development envisioned for Planning Area B of the *Gateway South Specific Plan*. As a result, a Specific Plan Amendment would be required to allow an additional 133,000 sf of construction associated with the proposed office building and fire station project in the Specific Plan area.

The Scotts Valley Planning Commission will hold at least one public hearing on the revised *Gateway South Specific Plan*, and make recommendations to the City Council regarding its approval. The Council will hold at least one public hearing before deciding whether to adopt the proposed amendments to the Specific Plan. These public meetings may be held in conjunction with, or in addition to, certification of this SEIR.

- Scotts Valley Municipal Code (SVMC) Chapter 17.38, *Planned Development District Regulations*, outlines the requirements for zoning a planned development (PD), including the requirements to apply for a PD zoning classification. In general, PDs are to be individually designed to meet the needs of the zoned property, and the needs of a PD property should be detailed in the general development plan adopted as part of the zoning ordinance. The development plan should include detailed information on the project, including:
 - detailed maps indicating public, private, residential, commercial, and industrial uses;
 - tables identifying each permitted use and corresponding areas;
 - details on development standards, including all setbacks, building heights, parking plans, lot sizes, etc.;
 - a description of the proposed landscaping;
 - information on any required off-site work;
 - graphics of nearby buildings (both existing and approved), existing structures, significant natural features (including protected trees, creeks and waterways, or rock outcroppings);
 - topography;
 - any proposed grading exceeding 18 inches;
 - illustrations of elevations;
 - intended architectural style;

- specifications of proposed materials; and
- general building details.

Property located in a PD is strictly limited to the uses consistent with its base district. PD permits are subject to recommendations for approval by the planning commission and final approval by city council.

- Related to SVMC Chapter 17.38 is SVMC Chapter 17.50.030, *Design and Review Procedures*, which sets forth the design review process established to carry out the objectives of the City's General Plan and related zoning ordinances as well as to ensure that the project design is compatible with the surrounding development and the overall planning goals of the City. Permits are not issued without the approval of the design review process.

An application for design review approval is required to be accompanied by information such as architectural plans, including site plans and elevations; materials and color specifications; information on location and design of any proposed signs; landscape plans; etc. Plans should also include details such as the location of entrances and exits, and the existing and projected direction of traffic flow. Design review applications are subject to approval by the Planning Commission, while appeals to a Commission decision will be heard by City Council.

- The applicant may propose a future development agreement to extend the life of the entitlements. A development agreement "freezes" the rules, regulations, and policies applicable to the development for a specified period of time (typically they do not exceed 10 years), during which the developer can proceed with project implementation. Under State law, a development agreement must specify the duration of the agreement, the permitted uses of the property, the density or intensity of the use, the maximum height and size of the proposed buildings, and the dedication or reservation of land for public purposes. The Scotts Valley Planning Commission and City Council have the authority to approve the Development Agreement, and would hold a public meeting on the document prior to taking action. Consideration of any future Development Agreement shall require further review under CEQA.

The following approvals may be required from state and federal agencies:

- Regional Water Quality Control Board, because runoff generated from the proposed project could affect water quality within the project area watershed.
- Caltrans District 5, because additional traffic generated from the proposed project could affect operations of SR-17, a state highway.
- California Department of Fish and Game, because the proposed project could affect sensitive wildlife habitats or species, including wetland seeps and nesting birds.
- US Fish and Wildlife Service, because the project could affect federally-protected habitats or species.
- US Army Corps of Engineers, because the project could affect jurisdictional wetlands.

Section 3

Environmental Analysis

Organization of this Section

This section of the SEIR presents an analysis of environmental factors that may be affected by the proposed Gateway South office building and fire station project. The environmental analysis has been prepared consistent with the CEQA Guidelines. For each issue, the following information is presented:

- **Setting**—describes existing baseline conditions, including the environmental context and regulatory background.
- **Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures in the Previous EIR**—identifies the impacts and mitigations measures identified in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*.
- **Impacts and Mitigation Measures of the Proposed Project**—identifies standards of significance, evaluates how the proposed project would affect the baseline conditions, and recommends ways to reduce, eliminate, or avoid impacts that are considered significant and adverse.
- **Comparison of Impacts and Mitigation Measures between EIR and SEIR**—highlights differences and similarities between the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* and the analysis performed for the proposed project in this SEIR.

Classification of Impacts

The impact and mitigation portion for each environmental discussion includes impact statements that highlight the environmental consequences of the proposed action with regard to that environmental topic. An explanation of each impact and an analysis of its significance follow the impact statement.

For each impact, a level of significance is determined and is reported in the impact statement. Conclusions of significance are defined as follows:

1. **Significant (S)** impacts include effects that exceed established or defined thresholds. For example, traffic volumes that exceed local intersection level-of-service standards would be considered a significant adverse impact.
2. **Potentially significant (PS)** impacts include those cases where it is not precisely clear whether a significant effect would occur; the analysis in these instances conservatively assesses the credible worst-case conditions, but the discussion acknowledges that there is uncertainty regarding the credible extent of the impact.
3. **Less-than-significant (LTS)** impacts include effects that are noticeable, but do not exceed established or defined thresholds. For example, air pollution caused by an increase in the development and density of population in the project area may be perceptible, but need not

exceed acceptable thresholds or standards. Therefore, the effect would not be considered significant.

4. No Impact (NI) includes situations where there is no adverse effect.

Thresholds or significance criteria are used to classify an impact into one of the above categories. These significance criteria are defined for each environmental topic, based on existing standards of Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. These significance criteria explain to the reader the basis for determining the significance of an impact.

For each impact identified as being significant (S) or potentially significant (PS), the SEIR provides mitigation measures to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant (LTS) level, to eliminate, or to avoid the negative effect.

Enumeration of Impacts and Mitigation

Each impact topic is numbered using an alpha-numerical system that identifies the environmental issue. For example, *NO-1* denotes the first impact discussion in the Noise subsection. The letter codes used to identify the environmental issues discussed in this section are:

- TR – Transportation
- VIS – Visual Quality
- LU – Land Use, Plans, and Zoning
- BIO – Biological Resources
- HY – Hydrology
- NO – Noise
- AQ – Air Quality

Mitigation measures are numbered to correspond to the impacts they address; e.g., Mitigation Measure TR-3.1 refers to the first mitigation for Impact 3 in the Transportation subsection. A brief mitigation measure title (in the form of an action statement) is included to easily identify the mitigation measure.

3.1 TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

This section of the SEIR discusses the existing transportation conditions in the project vicinity and assesses the transportation-related impacts of the proposed Gateway South office building and fire station. Potential impacts to the roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, and parking systems are identified.

Where necessary, mitigation measures are described which would reduce or eliminate potentially significant transportation impacts of the project.

Setting

The proposed project would be located on the west side of State Route (SR)-17, southwest of the SR-17/Mt. Hermon Road Interchange, along La Madrona Drive in Scotts Valley, California. The office building would be located on the west side of La Madrona Drive and would be bounded on the north by the Hilton Hotel and on the south by Silverwood Drive. The fire station would be located on the east side of La Madrona Drive directly across from the office building.

Existing Roadway Network

SR-17 and SR-9 provide regional access to the project site. Local access to the site is provided by Mt. Hermon Road, Scotts Valley Drive, Glen Canyon Road, and La Madrona Drive. Detailed descriptions of the key roadway facilities are presented below. The site location and surrounding roadway network are shown on Figure 3.1-1.

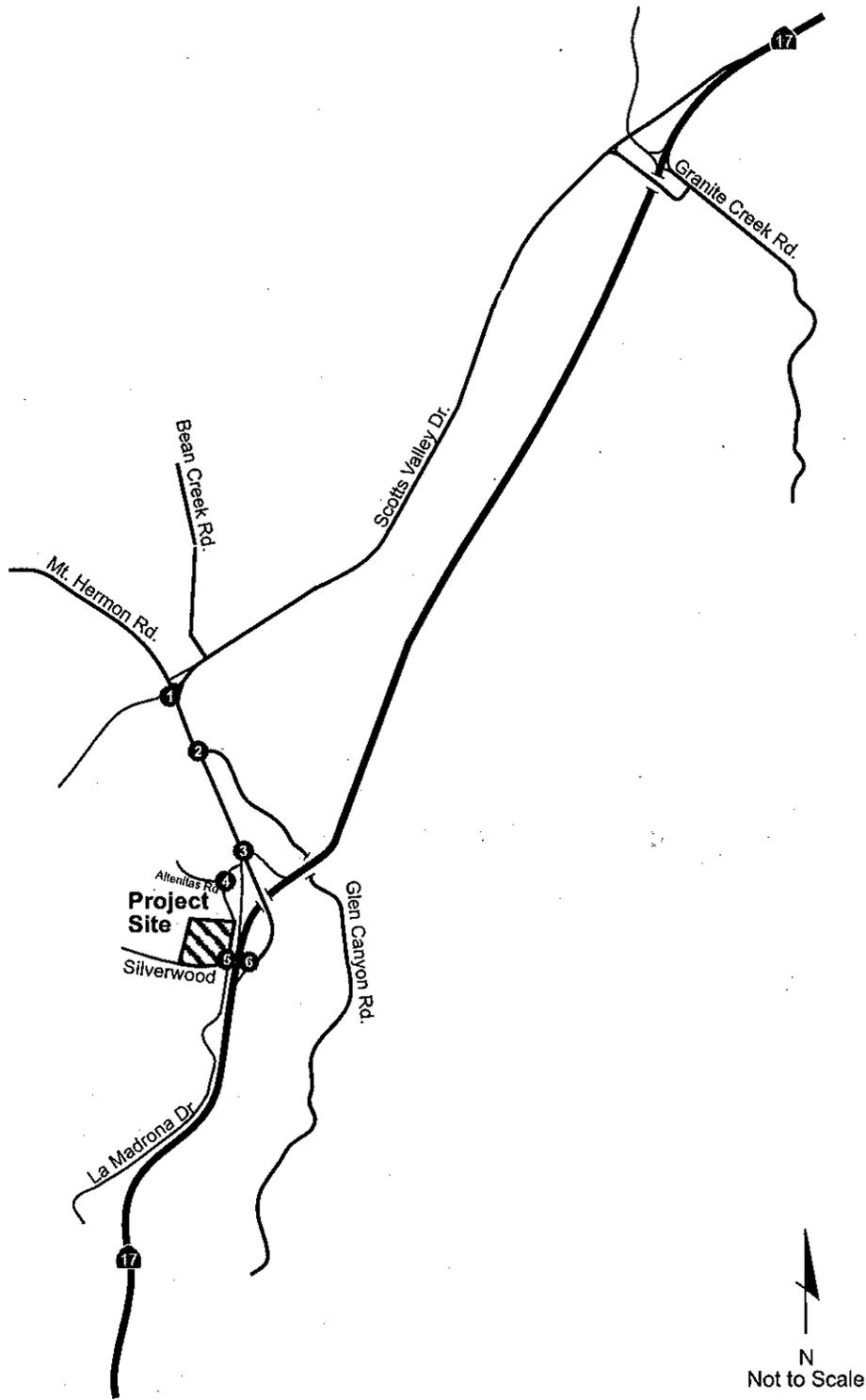
SR-17 is a four- to eight-lane, north-south facility that extends between the cities of Santa Cruz and San Jose. In the vicinity of the project site, SR-17 is a four-lane freeway with full-access interchanges at Mt. Hermon Road and Granite Creek Road.

SR-9 is a two-lane, generally north-south roadway between SR-17 in the Town of Los Gatos and SR 1 (Mission Street) in the City of Santa Cruz. SR-9 is located west of the project site and serves the communities of Boulder Creek, Ben Lomond, and Felton. SR-9 can be accessed from the site via Mt. Hermon Road and Graham Hill Road.

Mt. Hermon Road is an arterial roadway extending between Graham Hill Road to the west and El Rancho Drive just east of SR-17. In the vicinity of the project site, this street is oriented in a northwest to southeast direction and provides four travel lanes except for the two-lane overcrossing at SR-17. Between La Madrona Drive and Lockwood Lane, Mt. Hermon Road generally serves retail and commercial land uses.

Scotts Valley Drive is a four-lane arterial roadway extending between Mt. Hermon Road and Glenwood Drive. West of Mt. Hermon Road, Scotts Valley Drive becomes Whispering Pines Drive. Scotts Valley Drive is a collector north of Glenwood Drive and includes a cul-de-sac just east of Sawyer Circle.

Glen Canyon Road is a two-lane, north-south roadway that extends from Mt. Hermon Road to Branciforte Drive in Santa Cruz. Glen Canyon Road parallels SR-17 and serves as an alternate route between Scotts Valley and Santa Cruz for vehicles to bypass congestion on SR-17.



Source: Fehr and Peers Associates, Inc.

FIGURE 3.1-1: ROADWAY NETWORK AND STUDY INTERSECTIONS

Gateway South Office Building
and Fire Station
Scotts Valley, CA

La Madrona Drive is generally a two-lane, north-south collector roadway extending between Mt. Hermon Road and El Rancho Drive to the south. *La Madrona Drive* also parallels SR-17 and provides access to Santa Cruz from Scotts Valley via Sims Road and Graham Hill Road. *La Madrona Drive* provides direct access to the project site.

Silverwood Drive is a two-lane, east-west local roadway that provides access from the Monte Fiore residential development (located west of the project site) to *La Madrona Drive*. *Silverwood Drive* is the only access to this residential area.

Study Intersections

Six key intersections in the project vicinity were selected as those most likely to be affected by the project and were thus included in the transportation analysis. These intersections are listed below and are illustrated on Figure 3.1-1.

1. Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive
2. Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Road
3. Mt. Hermon Road/*La Madrona Drive*-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp
4. *La Madrona Drive*/Altenitas Road
5. *La Madrona Drive*/*Silverwood Road*
6. Mt. Hermon Road/El Rancho Drive-SR-17 Northbound ramps

Operation of these six intersections, the SR-17/Mt. Hermon Road Interchange ramps, and SR-17 were analyzed during the weekday morning (AM) and weekday evening (PM) peak hours. Peak conditions on weekdays usually occur during the morning and evening commute hours from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm, respectively.

Intersection Level of Service Methodology. The operations of the study intersections were evaluated using Level of Service (LOS) calculations. *Level of Service* is a qualitative description of a roadway's operation, ranging from LOS A, or free-flow conditions, to LOS F, or over-saturated conditions. LOS E represents conditions that are at capacity. Two methodologies were used to evaluate the study intersections: one method for the signalized intersections and another method for the unsignalized intersections. For signalized intersections, the LOS methodology described in Chapter 9 of the 2000 *Highway Capacity Manual* (HCM) published by the Transportation Research Board was applied. This methodology evaluates operations of signalized intersections based on the average control delay. Use of this methodology was approved by both the City of Scotts Valley and Caltrans staff. The average control delay was calculated using the SYNCHRO analysis software and was correlated to a level of service as shown in Table 3.1-1.

Table 3.1-1
Signalized Intersection Level of Service Definitions
Using Average Control Delay

Level of Service	Description	Average Control Delay Per Vehicle (Seconds)
A	Operations with very low delay occurring with favorable progression and/or short cycle length.	≤ 10
B	Operations with low delay occurring with good progression and/or short cycle lengths.	> 10 and ≤ 20
C	Operations with average delays resulting from fair progression and/or longer cycle lengths. Individual cycle failures begin to appear.	> 20 and ≤ 35
D	Operations with longer delays due to a combination of unfavorable progression, long cycle lengths, and high V/C ratios. Many vehicles stop and individual cycle failures are noticeable.	> 35 and ≤ 55
E	Operations with high delay values indicating poor progression, long cycle lengths, and high V/C ratios. Individual cycle failures are frequent occurrences.	> 55 and ≤ 80
F	Operations with delays unacceptable to most drivers occurring due to over-saturation, poor progression, or very long cycle lengths.	> 80

Source: *Highway Capacity Manual* (Transportation Research Board, 2000).

Unsignalized intersections with stop signs on the minor street approaches only were evaluated using the methodology presented in Chapter 10 of the 2000 update to the *HCM*. Level of service is defined for the controlled movements at a two-way stop controlled intersection, not for the intersection as a whole. For stop sign-controlled approaches composed of a single lane, the control delay is computed as the average of all movements in that lane. To be consistent with Caltrans' method of reporting level of service, the approach delay was used to determine the level of service of the unsignalized intersections. Table 3.1-2 presents the range of stopped delay that corresponds to each LOS designation.

Table 3.1-2
Unsignalized Intersection Level of Service Definitions
Using Average Control Delay

Level of Service	Description	Average Control Delay Per Vehicle (Seconds)
A	Little or no delays.	≤ 10
B	Short traffic delays.	> 10 and ≤ 15
C	Average traffic delays.	> 15 and ≤ 25
D	Long traffic delays.	> 25 and ≤ 35
E	Very long traffic delays.	> 35 and ≤ 50
F	Extreme traffic delays with intersection capacity exceeded.	> 50

Source: *Highway Capacity Manual* (Special Report 209, Transportation Research Board, 1997).

Freeway Level of Service Methodology. Freeway ramp operations were also analyzed using LOS. Traffic operations on SR-17 include merge/diverge areas in the vicinity of the on- and off-ramps. Merge/diverge areas were analyzed using the methodology described in the 2000 HCM, which calculates the density in passenger cars per lane mile per hour (pc/mi/hr). Operations were analyzed using the Highway Capacity Software (HCS-3) package. The range of density for each level of service is presented in Table 3.1-3.

Table 3.1-3
Density Level of Service Definitions for Merge/Diverge Areas

Level of Service	Maximum Density (passenger cars/mile/hour)
A	10
B	20
C	28
D	35
E	> 35
F	^a

Source: Highway Capacity Manual (Special Report 209, Transportation Research Board, 1997).

Note:

a. Demand flow exceeds theoretical limits.

Existing Levels of Service

Intersections. Peak period traffic counts were conducted on June 4 and 5, 2002 at the study intersections during the weekday peak periods, while public schools were still in session. As shown in Table 3.1-4, all of the signalized intersections and the Mt. Hermon Road/Altenitas Road and La Madrona Drive/Silverwood Road unsignalized intersections are operating at acceptable levels during both peak hours.

The unsignalized intersection of Mt. Hermon Road/El Rancho Drive-SR-17 northbound ramps is currently operating at an unacceptable level of service during the AM and PM peak hours. Peak hour volume signal warrants were analyzed for this intersection under Existing Conditions. A review of the peak hour traffic volumes at this intersection shows that the minimum volume threshold for the Caltrans peak hour volume signal warrant (Warrant #11) is not exceeded during the AM or PM peak hours. However, according to the Caltrans *Traffic Manual*, installation of a traffic signal should not necessarily be based solely on the satisfaction of warrant criteria. Signal installations should also be based on other factors such as delay, congestion, driver confusion, safety problems, etc. A final determination for the installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would have to be made by Caltrans.

**Table 3.1-4
Existing Intersection Levels of Service**

Intersection	Type of Control	Peak Hour	Delay ¹	LOS ²
Mt. Hermon Rd./Scotts Valley Dr.	Signal	AM	43.3	D
		PM	41.6	D
Mt. Hermon Rd./Glen Canyon Rd.	Signal	AM	12.0	B
		PM	13.2	B
Mt. Hermon Rd./La Madrona Dr. - SR-17 SB off-ramp	Signal	AM	26.4	C
		PM	20.3	C
La Madrona Dr./Altenitas Rd.	Two-way stop	AM	11.8	B
		PM	10.2	B
La Madrona Dr./Silverwood Rd.	Two-way stop	AM	10.1	B
		PM	9.5	A
Mt. Hermon Rd./El Rancho Dr. - SR-17 NB ramps	Two-way stop	AM	25.5	D
		PM	25.6	D

Source: Fehr & Peers Associates, 2003.

Notes:

1. Average control delay per vehicle in seconds. Delay and LOS at unsignalized intersections are for the worst-case approach.
2. LOS = Level of service.

Freeway Ramp Junctions. Freeway ramp merge or diverge operations on SR-17 were evaluated at the Mt. Hermon Road interchange since this would be a primary access point for project-generated traffic. The analysis evaluates ramp operations where the ramps connect with the mainline freeway, either as a merge or a diverge section. SR-17 has two travel lanes in each direction in the vicinity of the project. Table 3.1-5 presents the existing freeway merge/diverge levels of service. All four ramps are operating at an acceptable level of service during the peak periods under Existing Conditions.

**Table 3.1-5
Existing State Route 17 Merge and Diverge Levels of Service
(Mt. Hermon Road Interchange)**

Location and Direction		Density ¹	LOS ²
Northbound Loop On-ramp	AM	26.8	C
	PM	22.5	C
Northbound Slip Off-ramp	AM	26.6	C
	PM	24.2	C
Southbound Slip On-ramp	AM	26.2	C
	PM	27.4	C
Southbound Slip Off-ramp	AM	17.6	B
	PM	22.6	C

Source: Fehr & Peers Associates, 2003.

Notes:

1. Density = passenger cars per lane mile per hour (pc/mi/hr).
2. LOS = Level of service.

Field Observations

In addition to calculating intersection LOS based on traffic volumes, field observations were conducted at all of the study intersections and on the freeway segments during the AM and PM peak hours. These observations were used to verify the calculated levels of service and to note unusual operating conditions.

Observations showed that most of the study intersections operate at an overall acceptable level during both peak hours. Queues were observed for the through movements on Mt. Hermon Road during both peak hours. However, the queues typically cleared in one signal cycle. Although Mt. Hermon Road serves a significant volume of traffic, no substantial delays were observed during either peak hour; traffic moved steadily between the freeway and Scotts Valley Drive.

Operations at the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive intersection were acceptable during both of the study peak hours. During the PM peak hour, northbound vehicles occasionally queued back to Glen Canyon Road. However, these occurrences were sporadic and did not occur during multiple observations at this location.

The Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp intersection operates at a good level of service. During the PM peak hour, right-turns from the off-ramp onto Mt. Hermon Road were observed to queue around the corner of the off-ramp from the intersection. However, the existing phasing of the intersection provides an overlap phase that minimized delay for the queued vehicles. Additionally, the gaps provided by the through northbound vehicles on Mt. Hermon Road were long enough to allow some right turns on red. The signal cycle lengths during the AM and PM peak hours were observed to vary between approximately 65 and 140 seconds. For the purposes of calculating the levels of service, a cycle length of 100 seconds was used as an average.

During the peak periods, traffic on SR-17 at the Mt. Hermon Road interchange typically moves in a uniform progression and experiences minor congestion. The primary travel directions of the freeway are northbound in AM peak period and southbound in the PM peak period as Santa Cruz County residents commute to jobs in San Jose and other cities in the south Bay Area via SR-17.

Existing Transit Service

The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District operates fixed route, commuter, and paratransit bus service in the City and County of Santa Cruz, as well as in the City of Scotts Valley. Three fixed routes operate in the vicinity of the project site: Routes 31/32, 35, and 36. The Highway 17 Express Route also operates in the vicinity of the project site. Currently, no bus stops are located within walking distance (1000 feet or less) of the project site. Descriptions of existing transit service within the study area are presented below.

Route 31/32 operates between the Transit Centers in the cities of Santa Cruz and Scotts Valley. The Scotts Valley Transit Center is located off Mt. Hermon Road, north of Scotts Valley Drive on Kings Village Road. This route operates on weekdays between 7:00 am and 6:30 pm and on weekends

between 7:30 am and 9:30 am and 2:00 pm and 6:30 pm. Route 31/32 operates on 60-minute headways during both the weekday and weekend. Route 31/32 does not provide direct access to Mt. Hermon Road near the La Madrona Drive intersection.

Route 35 serves as a connection between Santa Cruz and Boulder Creek through the City of Scotts Valley. Weekday operation is provided from 6:00 am to 12:00 am with 15- to 60-minute headways. Weekend service is provided from 6:30 am to 12:00 am on 30- to 60-minute headways. Route 35 operates on Mt. Hermon Road north of the project site.

Route 36 is an express bus route that provides two trips in the morning and two in the afternoon between the Santa Cruz Transit Center and the Boulder Creek area. In the morning hours, service is provided from Boulder Creek to Santa Cruz at 7:00 am and 8:00 am. Two routes are provided from the Santa Cruz Transit Center to the Boulder Creek area at 5:45 pm and 6:45 pm. Route 36 operates on Mt. Hermon Road north of the project site.

Highway 17 Express serves as a connection between Santa Cruz County and Santa Clara County with a stop at the Scotts Valley Transit Center. Highway 17 Express operates on weekdays between 4:30 am and 11:30 pm with headways of 15 to 60 minutes. No weekend service is provided.

Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Pedestrian facilities include sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals. Near the project site, sidewalks are located on the west side of La Madrona Drive in front of the Hilton Hotel and extend north to Mt. Hermon Road. Crosswalks and pedestrian signals are provided at all of the signalized intersections in the study area.

Bicycle facilities include bike paths, lanes and routes. Bike paths are paved trails that are separated from roadways and are categorized as Class 1 bicycle facilities. Bike lanes are lanes on roadways designated for bicycle use by striping, pavement legends, and signs, and are categorized as Class 2 bicycle facilities. Bike routes are roadways that are designated for bicycle use by signs and are categorized as Class 3 bicycle facilities. In the vicinity of the site, a bike route is designated and bike lanes are striped on La Madrona Drive along the entire project frontage. Bike lanes are also provided on Mt. Hermon Road.

Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures in the Previous EIR

The *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* included an analysis of potential transportation impacts associated with implementation of the plan. This analysis determined that the project would not have a significant impact on traffic and circulation. Levels of service at area intersections were projected to be the same with and without the project. Therefore, no mitigation measures were proposed.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures of the Proposed Project

Significance Criteria

Based on operating standards for the City of Scotts Valley and Caltrans, a transportation impact from the proposed project or from cumulative development is considered to be a significant impact if the following conditions result:

Signalized Intersections

- Intersection operations degrade from acceptable conditions (LOS D or better for the Scotts Valley Drive/Mt. Hermon Road intersection, LOS C or better for all other locations) under the existing scenario to unacceptable conditions (LOS E or F for the Scotts Valley Drive/Mt. Hermon Road intersection, LOS D, E, or F for all other locations) with the proposed project; or
- An increase greater than or equal to one percent in the critical volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio between existing and project conditions for intersections already operating at unacceptable conditions (LOS D, E, or F) under existing conditions.

Unsignalized Intersections

- The addition of project traffic causes intersection operation to degrade from acceptable conditions (LOS C) under the existing scenario to unacceptable conditions (LOS D, E, or F) with the proposed project; or
- Project traffic is added to an intersection already operating at unacceptable conditions (LOS D, E, or F) under the existing scenario *and* the Caltrans Peak Hour Volume Warrant for signalization of intersections is satisfied.

Freeway Ramps

- The addition of project traffic causes intersection operation to degrade from acceptable conditions (LOS D or better for urbanized areas) under the existing scenario to unacceptable conditions (LOS E or F) with the proposed project.

Bicycle System

- A significant bicycle system impact would occur when implementation of the project would disrupt or interfere with existing or planned bicycle facilities.

Pedestrian Safety

- A significant pedestrian safety impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would result in potentially hazardous conditions for pedestrians in terms of conflicts with motor vehicles.

Traffic Hazard

- A significant traffic hazard would occur if adequate fire/emergency warning devices were not posted in the vicinity of a proposed fire station.

Parking Supply

- A significant parking supply impact would occur if the proposed project would result in a deficiency in parking in the vicinity of the project (i.e., projected parking demand would exceed the proposed parking supply).

Methodology

The proposed project has been evaluated for two planning horizons: a near-term analysis and a long-term (2025) analysis. Background Conditions, which include the addition of traffic from approved (but not yet constructed) developments and planned changes to the study roadway system, were evaluated to form the basis against which impacts of the proposed project are identified. Next, the amount of traffic generated by the proposed project was estimated and distributed to the surrounding roadway system. The operations of the study intersections and freeway ramps were analyzed under Project Conditions (Background volumes plus project-generated traffic) with level of service (LOS) calculations. Project-related impacts were identified by comparing the LOS results under Project Conditions to those under Background Conditions. Finally, Cumulative Conditions (2025) with and without the proposed project were analyzed.

Background Traffic Volumes and Roadway Improvements. Approved developments in Scotts Valley include Scotts Valley High School expansion (300 students), Schilling office (15,000 sf) and restaurant (7,000 sf), Oak Creek Business Park (48,310 sf), Enterprise Technology Center (192,550 sf), Glenwood (53 residential units and park), and various other residential units throughout the City. Approved development was included within the background scenario, as it would be completed and operational around the same time as the proposed project, and would therefore be considered part of the 'existing setting' for traffic analysis purposes. Pending developments were evaluated as part of the cumulative scenario. Trips from each of the approved projects were assigned to the roadway network and were summarized at the study intersections. Approved project trips were added to existing traffic volumes to arrive at the background traffic volumes.

No planned or funded roadway improvements were identified for the Background scenario. It was assumed that the driveway to the approved projects located within the "Teardrop" area north of the fire station site would serve as a fourth leg of the Altenitas Road/La Madrona Drive intersection.

Background Intersection Levels of Service. Levels of service were calculated for all of the study intersections using the Background traffic volumes and the existing intersection lane configurations and traffic control devices. Table 3.1-6 presents the LOS results under Background Conditions. As shown, all of the study intersections are projected to operate at acceptable levels of service with the addition of traffic from approved projects, as under the Existing Conditions. The unsignalized study intersection of Mt. Hermon Road/El Rancho Dr-SR-17 northbound ramps is projected to degrade from LOS E to LOS F during the AM peak hour under Background Conditions. Even though this

**Table 3.1-6
Background Intersection Levels of Service**

Intersection	Type of Control	Peak Hour	Delay ¹	LOS ²
Mt. Hermon Rd./Scotts Valley Dr.	Signal	AM	50.2	D
		PM	43.4	D
Mt. Hermon Rd./Glen Canyon Rd.	Signal	AM	15.0	B
		PM	16.2	B
Mt. Hermon Rd./La Madrona Dr. - SR-17 SB Off-ramp	Signal	AM	31.8	C
		PM	21.6	C
La Madrona Dr./Altenitas Rd.	Two-way stop	AM	15.7	C
		PM	11.5	B
La Madrona Dr./Silverwood Rd.	Two-way stop	AM	10.3	B
		PM	9.6	A
Mt. Hermon Rd./El Rancho Dr.-SR-17 NB ramps	Two-way stop	AM	28.7	D
		PM	29.6	D

Source: Fehr & Peers Associates, 2003.

Notes:

Average control delay per vehicle in seconds. Delay and LOS at unsignalized intersections are for the worst-case movement.

LOS = Level of service.

intersection degrades to LOS F, a review of the peak hour traffic volumes at this intersection under Background Conditions shows that the minimum volume threshold for the Caltrans peak hour volume signal warrant (Warrant #11) is not exceeded during either peak hour under Background Conditions.

Freeway Ramp Junction. Freeway ramp merge or diverge operations on SR-17 were evaluated at the Mt. Hermon Road interchange using the existing volumes plus traffic generated by the approved projects. Table 3.1-7 presents the Background freeway merge/diverge levels of service. The southbound slip on-ramp is projected to degrade from LOS C to LOS D during the PM peak hour with the addition of traffic from approved projects. The remaining ramps are projected to operate at the same LOS with the addition of traffic from approved projects as under Existing Conditions.

**Table 3.1-7
Background State Route 17 Merge and Diverge Levels of Service
(Mt. Hermon Road Interchange)**

SR-17 Ramp	Peak Hour	Density ¹	LOS ²
Northbound Loop On-ramp	AM	27.7	C
	PM	23.2	C
Northbound Slip Off-ramp	AM	27.8	C
	PM	24.9	C
Southbound Slip On-ramp	AM	26.7	C
	PM	28.6	D
Southbound Slip Off-ramp	AM	18.2	B
	PM	23.7	C

Source: Fehr & Peers Associates, 2003

Notes:

1. Density = passenger cars per lane mile per hour (pc/mi/hr).

2. LOS = Level of service.

Environmental Analysis

TR-1. The Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp is projected to degrade to an unacceptable level of service under Project Conditions. (S)

The addition of project-generated traffic is projected to degrade the level of service from LOS C under Background Conditions to LOS D under Project Conditions during the AM peak hour.

The amount of traffic associated with the proposed project was estimated using a three-step process: (1) trip generation, (2) trip distribution, and (3) trip assignment. In the first step, the amounts of traffic are estimated on a daily basis and for each peak hour. In the second step, the directions the trips use to approach and depart the site are projected. The trips are assigned to specific street segments and intersection turning movements in the third step. The results of this process, which result in the significant impact to the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp, are described below.

Trip Generation. The project includes the development of 136,000 sf of office space plus a fire station of approximately 12,000 sf. The amount of traffic generated by the proposed project was estimated based on trip generation data published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and information provided by the Scotts Valley Fire District. Standard ITE rates were applied to the square footage of the office building to estimate trips. The number of trips generated by the fire station was estimated based on a total crew of four fire fighters and an administration staff of six people, and include both employee trips and emergency response trips. Emergency response trips were estimated to be about 7 per day, based on a Fire District average of 3.5 calls per day. The four crewmembers would work a 24-hour shift and have a shift change at 8:00 am. The administrative staff would work during the typical weekday work hours (approximately 8:00 am to 5:00 pm). The trip generation estimates are presented in Table 3.1-8. The project as analyzed is estimated to generate approximately 1,781 net new weekday daily trips, 252 weekday AM peak-hour trips (219 inbound/33 outbound), and 242 PM peak-hour trips (41 inbound/201 outbound).

Trip Distribution. The trip distribution pattern for the proposed land uses was estimated based on the location of complementary land uses, 1990 Census journey-to-work data,¹ and input from City of Scotts Valley Engineering staff. Although some Fire District personnel will live within Scotts Valley, the same trip distribution was used for the fire station to provide a more conservative analysis. This trip distribution, therefore, assumes that the fire station would generate regional trips.

Trip Assignment. Trips generated by the proposed project were assigned to the roadway system based on existing directions of approach and departure. Project trips were added to Background traffic volumes to estimate total volumes under Project Conditions.

¹ Journey-to-work information from the 2000 Census will not be available until Spring 2004.

**Table 3.1-8
Proposed Project Trip Generation Estimates**

Project Component	Weekday	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
	Daily	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Office Building Trips ¹	1,681	210	28	238	39	193	232
Fire Station Trips	100	9	5	14	2	8	10
Net New Project Trips	1,781	219	33	252	41	201	242

Source: Fehr & Peers Associates, 2003.

Note:

- Office building trips were based on rates published in Sixth Edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers' Trip Generation.

Intersection Levels of Service. Intersection level of service calculations were conducted to evaluate intersection operations under Project Conditions. The results of the LOS analysis for both Background and Project Conditions are summarized in Table 3.1-9. As shown, the signalized intersection of Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp is projected to degrade from acceptable (LOS C) to unacceptable (LOS D) in the AM peak hour with the addition of project traffic. Therefore, the proposed project would have a significant impact to this intersection. The other signalized intersections are projected to continue to operate at the same level of service as under Background Conditions. The unsignalized La Madrona Drive/Altenitas Road intersection is projected to degrade from LOS B to LOS C in the PM peak hour. Although delay at these intersections would increase with implementation of the proposed project, the resultant LOS would remain at acceptable levels. Therefore, project impacts at these intersections would be considered less than significant.

**Table 3.1-9
Background and Project Intersection Levels of Service**

LOS	Peak Hour	Background Conditions		Project Conditions	
		Intersection Delay (sec.) ¹	LOS	Intersection Delay (sec.)	LOS
Mt. Hermon Rd./Scotts Valley Dr.	AM	50.2	D	52.8	D
	PM	43.4	D	44.0	D
Mt. Hermon Rd./Glen Canyon Rd.	AM	15.0	B	15.1	B
	PM	16.2	B	16.6	B
Mt. Hermon Rd./La Madrona Dr.-SR-17 SB Off-ramp	AM	31.8	C	49.1	D
	PM	21.6	C	29.9	C
La Madrona Dr./Altenitas Rd.	AM	15.7	C	25.0	C
	PM	11.5	B	15.5	C
La Madrona Dr./Silverwood Rd.	AM	10.3	B	10.4	B
	PM	9.6	A	9.7	A
Mt. Hermon Rd./El Rancho Dr.-SR-17 NB ramps	AM	28.7	D	32.8	D
	PM	29.6	D	28.6	D

Source: Fehr & Peers Associates, 2003.

Note:

- Average control delay per vehicle in seconds. Delay and LOS at unsignalized intersections are for the worst-case movement.

MITIGATION MEASURE. The following measure would reduce the significant project-related intersection level of service impact to less than significant. (LTS)

TR-1.1 Improve the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound Off-Ramp. The project sponsor shall be responsible for providing the La Madrona Drive leg of the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp intersection with one separate left-turn lane, one shared left-through lane, and one right-turn lane with an overlap phase. This mitigation would result in a delay of 39.1 seconds (LOS D). However, when the cycle length is optimized at 130 seconds, the intersection would operate at LOS C with the control delay of 32.6 seconds during the AM peak hour.

TR-2. Although the unsignalized intersection of Mt. Herman Road/El Rancho Drive - SR-17 would operate at LOS D, during the AM and PM peak hours, it would not meet the signal warrant criteria. This is considered a less-than-significant impact. (LTS)

The unsignalized Mt. Hermon Road/El Rancho Drive-SR-17 northbound ramps intersection is projected to operate at LOS D during the AM and PM peak hours under Project Conditions. Peak hour volume warrants were analyzed for the unsignalized Mt. Hermon Road/El Rancho Drive-SR-17 northbound ramps intersection under Project Conditions. A review of the peak hour traffic volumes at this intersection shows that the minimum volume threshold for the Caltrans peak hour volume signal warrant (Warrant #11) is not exceeded during the AM or PM peak hours. Therefore, project-related impacts to the Mt. Hermon Road/El Rancho Drive-SR-17 Northbound ramps intersection would not be considered significant.

As discussed above, according to the Caltrans *Traffic Manual*, installation of a traffic signal should not necessarily be based solely on the satisfaction of warrant criteria. Signal installations should also be based on other factors such as delay, congestion, driver confusion, safety problems, etc. Caltrans will make the final determination on the need for a signal at this location.

TR-3. None of the freeway ramp sections are expected to degrade to unacceptable levels under Project Conditions. (LTS)

Table 3.1-10 presents the freeway ramp section levels of service for Background and Project Conditions. The northbound slip off-ramp is projected to degrade from LOS C to LOS D under Project Conditions during the AM peak hour. This would be considered a less-than-significant impact, according to the significance criterion for freeway ramp operations. All other ramps are projected to continue operating at the same level of service as under Background Conditions.

Table 3.1-10
Background and Project State Route 17 Merge and Diverge Levels of Service
(Mt. Hermon Interchange)

Location and Direction	Peak Hour	Background Conditions		Project Conditions	
		Density ¹	LOS ²	Density	LOS
Northbound Loop On-ramp	AM	27.7	C	27.7	C
	PM	23.2	C	23.6	C
Northbound Slip Off-ramp	AM	27.8	C	28.6	D
	PM	24.9	C	25.0	C
Southbound Slip On-ramp	AM	26.7	C	26.8	C
	PM	28.6	D	29.3	D
Southbound Slip Off-ramp	AM	18.2	B	18.7	B
	PM	23.7	C	23.8	C

Source: Fehr & Peers Associates, 2003.

Notes:

1. Density = passenger cars per lane mile per hour (pc/mi/hr).
2. LOS = Level of service.

TR-4. The proposed project driveways would adequately serve ingress and egress to the development sites without adversely affecting local traffic along La Madrona Drive. (LTS)

Two driveways would enter the office site from the west side of La Madrona Drive. Queuing on La Madrona Drive was assessed to identify any potential conflicts. Both driveways provide full access to La Madrona Drive and would adequately serve the projected peak hour traffic volumes. The driveway proposed to serve the fire station parking area on the east side of La Madrona Drive would be directly opposite the proposed northern office development driveway. The main exit driveway that would serve the emergency vehicles is approximately 100 feet north of the parking area driveway. Both of these driveways are full access and would adequately serve the fire station traffic.

Per the City of Scotts Valley request, the vehicle queues on La Madrona Drive were evaluated to determine the need for a two-way left-turn lane on La Madrona Drive to access both project sites. Based on the output from the SYNCHRO file at the study intersections and the through volumes on La Madrona Drive, it is anticipated that sufficient gaps would be available to allow left-turns into the project site and a two-way left-turn lane would not be needed.

TR-5. A lack of adequate warning devices in the vicinity of the fire station could pose a potentially significant traffic hazard to other motorists on La Madrona Drive in the event of an emergency. (PS)

In the event of an emergency, fire vehicles would exit quickly from the fire station driveway and may conflict with other drivers on La Madrona Drive, including drivers exiting or entering the office building driveway directly across the street. These traffic movements could pose a hazard if amber warning lights and signs were not posted on the La Madrona Drive. Such devices are typically required for all fire stations. As project plans for the fire station are

preliminary, it is unknown if they would include such warning devices. The lack of adequate warning devices in the vicinity of the fire station could pose a significant traffic hazard in the event of an emergency.

MITIGATION MEASURE. The following measure would reduce the potentially significant traffic hazard related to the fire station to less than significant. (LTS)

TR-5.1 Install Warning Devices on La Madrona Drive. Signs and amber warning lights shall be posted in both directions on La Madrona Drive to indicate to drivers when fire vehicles are exiting under Code 3 or emergency status. The lights shall be activated by loop detectors or remotely from within the station. In addition, sight distance of 250 feet to the north shall be maintained at the fire station driveway.

TR-6. The proposed plans for onsite circulation and the parking layout would not result in potentially significant hazards for motorists. (LTS)

The proposed site plan shows surface parking on all four sides of the office building with a main circulation aisle that extends around the perimeter of the parking area. All circulation aisles would provide 90-degree single- or double-loaded spaces, except the main circulation aisles on the north and south ends of the property. A dead end aisle would be located in the northwest corner of the parking area. Dead end aisles prevent drivers from circulating through to look for empty spaces when parking. This sometimes leads to conflicts among vehicles in the parking lot. While this could create delay and frustration for drivers looking for parking, it would not pose a significant traffic hazard as this dead end aisle only serves a small number of spaces and the total parking supply would be adequate (see Impact TR-7, below).

TR-7. The proposed number of parking spaces would satisfy the projected demand, according to City zoning regulations. (LTS)

The site plan proposes a supply of 550 parking spaces. This supply translates to more than one space per 250 sf of office space. The City of Scotts Valley requires one space for every 250 gross square feet of floor area, or 544 spaces. Therefore, the proposed parking supply is considered adequate, because it exceeds the zoning requirements by six spaces. Accordingly, the proposed project would have not result in a shortage of parking spaces.

TR-8. The proposed project would not have an adverse effect on transit services or pedestrian and bicyclist circulation. (LTS)

The number of pedestrians accessing the proposed project site is anticipated to be low because of limited transit services in the immediate area of the project site and the limited number of pedestrian-generating land uses such as homes or retail facilities. The existing transit system does not service La Madrona Drive and only provides a limited number of bus routes on Mt. Hermon Road. In addition, no bus stops are evident in the vicinity of the project site on Mt. Hermon Road. Therefore, it is assumed that an insignificant number of new riders would use

the transit system. Existing sidewalks and bike lanes are located on La Madrona Drive and Mt. Hermon Road, which would serve both project sites and would encourage the use of an alternative mode of transportation. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on existing pedestrian, bicycle, or transit facilities.

Cumulative Conditions

Cumulative Conditions with and without the proposed project are presented below. Cumulative Conditions are defined as existing volumes factored to estimate future regional traffic growth plus volumes from pending local developments.

Future increases in regional traffic were estimated using forecasts from the travel demand model maintained by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). This model includes land use and the planned roadway network for Year 2000 and Year 2025 conditions. An annual growth factor based on the projected increase in traffic on the links of the study roadway segments was applied to existing traffic volumes.

In addition, traffic from the following pending developments was added under the Cumulative Condition scenario: Bethany College Expansion (400 students); Skypark Town Center (160,000 sf retail, 40,000 sf office, and 120 dwelling units); Polo Ranch (46 dwelling units and two parks); *Gateway South Specific Plan* (62 remaining dwelling units, 12,230 sf commercial space); and various small residential developments (25 total dwelling units). The traffic volumes associated with these developments were obtained from traffic reports prepared for the developments or estimated for this analysis using standard traffic engineering practice. Because some of these developments may be included in the model forecasts, this approach is considered conservative and appropriate for environmental analysis purposes.

The traffic associated with the pending developments was added to existing volumes to represent Cumulative No Project Conditions. Traffic volumes from the proposed project were added to Cumulative No Project Conditions to arrive at the Cumulative Plus Project Conditions.

TR-9. Under Cumulative Plus Project Conditions, unacceptable operations at the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive and the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp intersections would be exacerbated. Also, the addition of project-generated traffic would cause the level of service at the Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive intersection to degrade to an unacceptable level. (S)

As shown on Table 3.1-11, many of the study intersections would operate at unacceptable levels under Cumulative No Project Conditions during one or both peak hours. Under Cumulative Plus Project Conditions, currently unacceptable operations would be exacerbated by the project or cause an intersection to operate at an unacceptable level of service.

**Table 3.1-11
Cumulative Intersection Levels of Service**

Intersection	Peak Hour	Cumulative No Project Conditions		Cumulative Plus Project Conditions	
		Intersection Delay (sec.) ¹	LOS ²	Intersection Delay (sec.)	LOS
Mt. Hermon Rd./Scotts Valley Dr.	AM	96.3	F	> 100	F
	PM	72.2	E	74.6	E
Mt. Hermon Rd./Glen Canyon Dr.	AM	21.5	C	21.6	C
	PM	32.4	C	36.9	D
Mt. Hermon Rd./La Madrona Dr.-SR-17 SB Off-ramp	AM	77.4	E	89.6	F
	PM	49.4	D	65.9	E
La Madrona Dr./Altenitas Rd.	AM	54.0	F	> 100	F
	PM	14.3	B	21.5	C
La Madrona Dr./Silverwood Rd.	AM	14.4	B	14.5	B
	PM	10.5	B	10.6	B
Mt. Hermon Rd./El Rancho Dr.- SR-17 NB ramps	AM	36.9	E	43.2	E
	PM	32.9	D	34.2	D

Source: Fehr & Peers Associates, 2003.

Notes:

1. Average control delay per vehicle in seconds. Delay and LOS at unsignalized intersections are for the worst-case approach.
2. LOS = Level of service.

The project-generated traffic added to the intersections of Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive (during the PM peak hour) and Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp (during both peak hours) under Cumulative Plus Project Conditions would exacerbate unacceptable operations and increase the V/C ratio greater than or equal to one percent, the established standard of significance. The V/C ratio at the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive intersection would increase by one percent during the AM peak hour and one percent during the PM peak hour. The V/C ratio at the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive/SR-17 off-ramp intersection would increase by 5.2 percent during the AM peak hour and 3.8 percent during the PM peak hour. The addition of project-generated traffic would degrade the level of service to an unacceptable level (LOS D) during the PM peak hour at the Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive intersection.

The existing unacceptable LOS at the La Madrona Drive/Altenitas Road intersection would be exacerbated with the addition of project-related traffic during the AM peak hour. During the AM peak hour, the Mt. Hermon Road/El Rancho Dr-SR-17 Northbound ramps intersection is projected to be exacerbated with the addition of project traffic. Volume warrants were analyzed to determine if signalization is warranted at these intersections under Cumulative Conditions. Based on the projected intersection volumes, signal warrants are not met at either of these intersections under either Cumulative No Project or Plus Project Conditions for either of the peak hours. Therefore, project-related cumulative impacts at these intersections are considered less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES. The following measures could reduce the significant cumulative intersection level of service impacts. The proposed improvements to Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive SR-17 Southbound off-ramp and to Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive would effectively reduce significant cumulative effects. The identified improvements to the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive would reduce the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative impact below the significance threshold. Thus, the intersection would still operate an unacceptable LOS F but the project's contribution would be less than cumulatively considerable. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(3), "An EIR may determine that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable and thus is not significant." (LTS)

TR-9.1 Contribute Fair Share to Improvements to Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive Intersection. Due to the projected volumes under future scenarios, it is anticipated that additional right-of-way would be required to provide the capacity to obtain LOS D operations during the AM and PM peak hours at the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive intersection. However, to mitigate the impact to less than significant, the phasing and lane configuration could be modified. The lane configuration would need to provide one separate left-turn lane, one through lane, and one separate right-turn lane on the Whispering Pines Drive leg. The phasing would need to be changed to provide separate left-turn phases on all four legs of the intersection. This mitigation would still result in an unacceptable level of service (LOS F during the AM peak hour and LOS E during the PM peak hour), but would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level since the change in volume to capacity ratio would be less than one percent. Based on preliminary field measurements, the proposed mitigation measures would fit within the existing right of way.

For informational purposes, the ratio of project traffic to the total volume under Cumulative plus Project Conditions at the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive intersection during the AM and PM peak hours is 1.4 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively.

TR-9.2 Contribute Fair Share to Improvements to Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound Off-Ramp Intersection. The Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp intersection cumulative impact could be mitigated with the addition of a second left-turn lane and a separate phase for the right-turning vehicles on the west leg of the intersection (see Figure 3.1-2). Based on preliminary field measurements, an additional lane could be accommodated in the existing right-of-way and provide LOS D operations during the AM and PM peak hours. The cycle lengths were optimized for this mitigation measure.

At the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp intersection the percent of project traffic during the AM and PM peak hours is 6.2

percent and 6.1 percent, respectively. The project sponsor shall contribute a fair share percentage of the mitigation measure described above.

TR-9.3 Contribute Fair Share to Improvements to Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive. The addition of a separate westbound right-turn lane on Mt. Hermon Road (see Figure 3.1-2) would mitigate the impact and provide LOS C during the PM peak hour. Based on preliminary field measurements this improvement could be accommodated in the existing right-of-way.

At the Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive intersection the percent of project traffic during the PM peak hour is two percent. The project sponsor shall contribute a fair share percentage of the mitigation measure described above.

TR-10. Under Cumulative Conditions Plus Project Conditions, the freeway ramps would operate at an acceptable level of service. (LTS)

Similar to the intersection volumes, SR-17 freeway volumes were assigned a growth factor between 0.57 and 0.87 percent per year based on AMBAG model forecasts. Using these volumes, cumulative freeway operations were analyzed. Table 3.1-12 presents the associated freeway ramp levels of service under this scenario without and with the proposed project. As shown in Table 3.1-12, all of the ramp junctions are projected to operate at LOS D or above under Cumulative Conditions. Therefore, the proposed project and other growth would have a less-than-significant cumulative impact on freeway ramps.

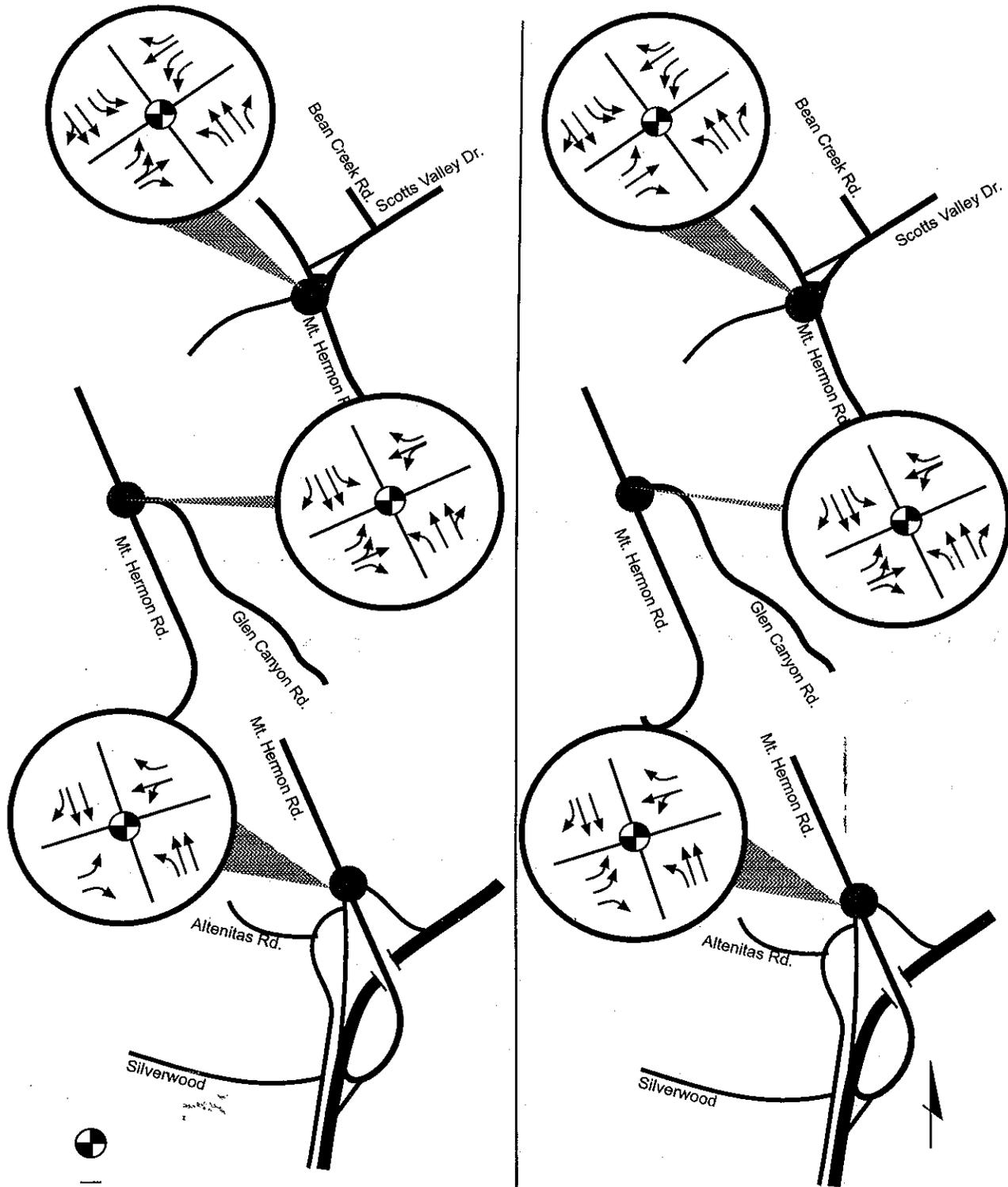
**Table 3.1-12
Cumulative State Route 17 Merge and Diverge Levels of Service
(Mt. Hermon Interchange)**

Location and Direction	Hours	Cumulative No Project Conditions		Cumulative Plus Project Conditions	
		Density ¹	LOS ²	Density	LOS
Northbound Loop On-ramp	AM	30.2	D	30.2	D
	PM	26.9	C	27.4	C
Northbound Slip Off-ramp	AM	30.7	D	31.5	D
	PM	28.7	D	28.9	D
Southbound Slip On-ramp	AM	29.5	D	29.6	D
	PM	29.9	D	30.6	D
Southbound Slip Off-ramp	AM	21.6	C	22.2	C
	PM	26.7	C	26.8	C

Source: Fehr & Peers Associates, 2003.

Notes:

1. Density = passenger cars per lane mile per hour (pc/mi/hr).
2. LOS = Level of service.



Source: Fehr and Peers Associates, Inc.

FIGURE 3.1-2: LANE CONFIGURATIONS WITH EXISTING AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES
 Gateway South Office Building
 and Fire Station
 Scotts Valley, CA

Comparison of Impacts and Mitigation Measures Between EIR and SEIR

This SEIR has identified potentially significant traffic impacts associated with the proposed project (Impacts TR-1 and TR-5) and three significant cumulative intersection impacts (Impact TR-9) that were not identified in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*. Mitigation measures to reduce these potentially significant impacts are described above.

3.2 VISUAL QUALITY

Introduction

Visual quality is shaped by natural features as well as man-made elements that exist within an environment. Visual resources can include natural features such as landforms, street trees, rock outcrops, vegetation, and water bodies. Man-made elements can include buildings, structures, parking areas, roads, roadway interchanges and overpasses, above-ground utilities, signs, and lighting fixtures. These resources together define the scale relationships, and the line, form, color, and texture of an area's setting. A development project may enhance or adversely affect the visual quality of an area through its effect on the natural and man-made features that define the setting. This section discusses visual quality in and around the project area, and assesses the changes resulting from implementation of the proposed project. Sources utilized in this section include the *Gateway South Specific Plan*, the *Scotts Valley General Plan*, site visits, and computerized visual simulations provided by DES Architects.

Setting

Visual Character

The proposed office building/open space site exists as an undeveloped meadow of native and non-native grasses that gently slopes upward to the west. Steeper slopes are vegetated with a mature, mixed coniferous forest (see Figure 3.2-1). The proposed fire station site is across La Madrona Drive from the office building site, and consists of a flat, undeveloped lot with some weedy growth.



Figure 3.2-1 Proposed Office Building/Open Space Site

Visually prominent natural features in the project area include the forested upper slopes of the proposed office building site, as well as the undeveloped and forested hillsides surrounding this portion of Scotts Valley. The most visually prominent man-made feature in the project area is the 3-story, 124,000-square-foot Hilton Hotel located immediately to the north of the project site, containing a terraced parking lot for approximately 100 vehicles. Also visually prominent is SR-17 to the east of the project site, which is a four-lane, limited access scenic highway depressed approximately 20-30 feet below the project site. Overall, man-made elements appear visually subordinate to the larger, natural landscape of forested hillsides in the project area.

The project site and its immediate area is considered the “gateway” to Scotts Valley due to its proximity to SR-17 and the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive exit from the highway. As such, the project site is highly visible from a number of roadways in the immediate area. The site is surrounded by development on all sides, with the Hilton Hotel development to the north, La Madrona Drive and SR-17 to the east, Silverwood Drive to the south, and the Monte Fiore residential subdivision to the west. Beyond this immediate area are limited residential and commercial uses, as well as the undeveloped forested slopes that characterize much of Scotts Valley (see Section 3.3, Land Use, Plans, and Zoning, for a complete description of land uses surrounding the project site).

Scenic Vistas

Views of the Project Site. The site is visible from a number of public roadways, including La Madrona Drive, Mt. Hermon Road, and SR-17. These public viewsheds are described below, in terms of foreground views (0 – 50 feet from viewer), middleground views (50 – 200 feet from viewer), and background views (200 ft. and beyond).

The project site is most visible when approaching from either the north or south on La Madrona Drive, which passes immediately in front of both project parcels. Foreground views of the proposed office building/open space site from this roadway looking south include the gentle slopes of the grassy hillside, with views of the steeper slopes and mixed coniferous forest in the middle and background (see Figure 3.2-2). Views of the fire station parcel from La Madrona Drive looking south include the flat, undeveloped but disturbed nature of the site in the foreground, with views of SR-17, the Mt. Hermon Road overpass, and limited residential development in the background.

The project site is also visible when traveling southbound on Mt. Hermon Road near the SR-17 off-ramp and overpass. The viewer is at a somewhat lower elevation than the project site, with La Madrona Drive visible in the foreground, the grassy slope of the office building site visible in the middleground, and the vegetated upper slopes of the site in the background. From the off-ramp/overpass, views of the project site are to the left, approximately 200-300 feet away. The office building and fire station sites are only briefly visible in the distance when traveling southbound on Mt. Hermon Road approaching the southbound on-ramp to SR-17 because the project sites are perpendicular to the direction of travel, over 300 feet away, and somewhat blocked by intervening development, such as the Hilton Hotel.



Figure 3.2-2 – View of the Office Building/Open Space Site from La Madrona Drive

The project site is also visible from SR-17 when traveling southbound for a brief period just beyond the Mt. Hermon Road overpass. At this location, the highway curves to the southeast, providing a direct frontal view of the site for 1-2 seconds (see Figure 3.2-3). This vantage point provides a view of the southbound on-ramp in the foreground, mature evergreen trees planted adjacent to the on-ramp in the middleground, and the mixed coniferous forest on the upper slopes in the background. Because the highway is lower in elevation than the project site, only the upper portions of the site are visible for a brief period when traveling southbound on SR-17. The project site is almost invisible from northbound SR-17 because the project site is significantly higher in elevation than the highway, and vegetation in the highway center divider blocks views of the site. In this location, the freeway is within a depressed “trench,” such that views of adjacent development are blocked by the steep earth berms to either side of the highway.

Views from the Project Site. Views from the office building site looking north include the 3-story Hilton Hotel development and parking lot in the foreground. The Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive intersection, residential development associated with the Baytree Apartments, and vegetated hillsides are visible in the middleground, and the forested ridge of the Santa Cruz Mountains is visible in the background (see Figure 3.2-4). Middleground and background views from the fire station site are similar to the office building site, although foreground views from this location include the vacant lots directly adjacent to (to the north) the fire station site.



Figure 3.2-3 – View of the Project Site from Southbound SR-17



Figure 3.2-4 – Views from the Office Building/Open Space Site Looking North

Views from the office building/open space site to the east include La Madrona Drive in the foreground (see Figure 3.2-5). Middleground views include the undeveloped fire station site and adjacent vacant lots, the northbound on-ramp from SR-17, and the Mt. Hermon Road overpass. Background views include those areas on the opposite side of SR-17 including the northbound on- and off-ramps, the single-story Scotts Valley Medical Clinic, and the forested hillsides above this development. SR-17 is not visible from the lower, flatter portions of the office building site, because the highway is at a lower elevation than the site. Views from the fire station site to the east include the northbound on-ramp from SR-17 and SR-17 itself. The Mt. Hermon Road overpass is visible in the middleground, with background views from this parcel similar to the office building site, described previously.

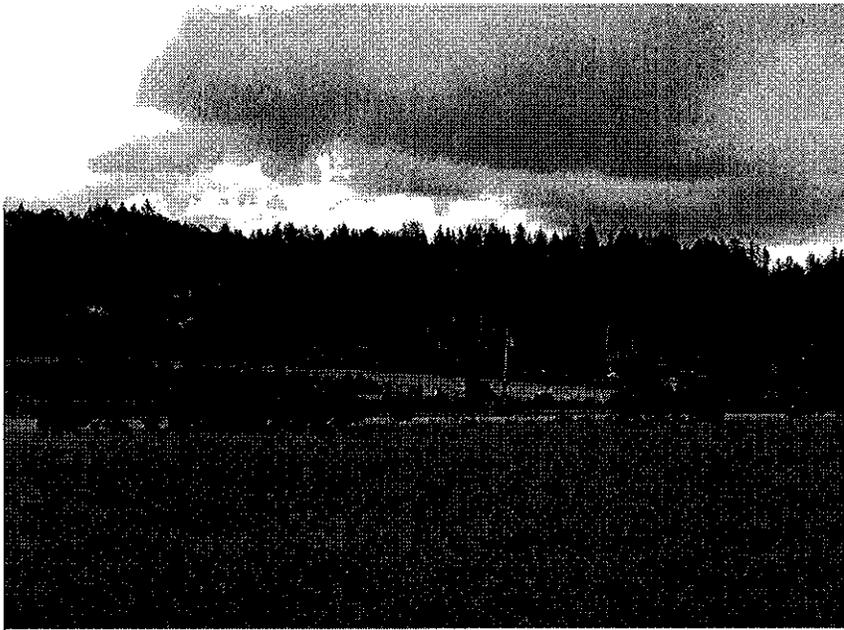


Figure 3.2-5 – Views from the Office Building/Open Space Site Looking East

Views from the site to the south include Silverwood Drive and the unoccupied guardhouse for the Monte Fiore development and portions of La Madrona Drive in the foreground, vegetated open space to the south of Silverwood Drive in the middleground, and forested hillsides of Scotts Valley in the background. Views from the fire station site to the south include La Madrona Drive as it curves to the east and then south. Portions of southbound SR-17 can be seen from this location in the middleground, with forested hillsides in the background.

Views from the lower, grassy portions of the office building site looking west include only the forested upper slopes of this parcel that obstruct more distant views to the west. The Monte Fiore residential subdivision located to the west is not visible from this location due to the intervening hills and vegetation. West-facing views from the fire station site include the Hilton Hotel and the undeveloped office building site, as well as the forested upper slopes above these areas.

Scenic Resources

Scenic resources on the proposed office building/open space site are limited to the mixed coniferous forest on the upper slopes of the site, as well as a grouping of California live oaks and stand of mature redwoods at the approximate toe of the slope, in the northwest corner of the site. While no heritage trees have been identified on the site, nearly all mature trees on the site would qualify as protected trees according to the criteria in the City's tree preservation ordinance (see discussion of protected trees in Section 3.4, Biological Resources). The fire station site is a flat, undeveloped, but disturbed site containing no scenic resources, such as trees, buildings, or rock outcroppings.

SR-17 is identified as a scenic road corridor in the *Scotts Valley General Plan* (see discussion below of plans and policies). Both project sites are briefly visible from this scenic corridor when traveling southbound, just beyond the Mt. Hermon Road overpass. Due to the topography and the curve in the roadway, the sites are visible from a distance (approximately 1,000 feet away) rather than from locations physically closer to the sites. As discussed previously, the project sites are nearly invisible when traveling northbound on SR-17 due to topography and landscaping in the roadway median.

Light and Glare

Lighted areas in the project vicinity include interior and exterior lighting at the Hilton Hotel and associated lighted parking areas, an overhead streetlight which illuminates the Mt. Hermon Road/ La Madrona Drive intersection, and lighting from the Baytree Apartments to the north of the project site. Headlights from automobiles are visible on SR-17, La Madrona Drive, and Mt. Hermon Road. Lighted highway signs on the Mt. Hermon Road overpass are also visible from the site. The project site itself appears dark, as do the undeveloped areas to the south. Overall, lighting levels are typical for the level of commercial and residential development in the immediate vicinity.

Applicable Plans and Policies

Applicable policies and regulations regarding visual quality and scenic resources are in the *City of Scotts Valley General Plan* and the *City of Scotts Valley Gateway South Specific Plan*.

The Open Space and Conservation Element of the General Plan calls for the preservation and protection of existing viewsheds and scenic open spaces and corridors. Implementing policy OSP-374 states, "Predominant ridgelines shall be protected to allow clear views from streets and roads." The General Plan also identifies SR-17 as a "Scenic Road Corridor" (Figure OS-1). Finally, the General Plan identifies northerly views of prominent ridgelines as important vistas in the project vicinity.

The *Gateway South Specific Plan* contains objectives calling for the preservation and enhancement of important scenic areas and corridors that are of scenic value to the community. Policy 3.1 states, "Maintain and enhance the visual quality of roadway corridors that are of scenic value to the community." In addition, Policy 3.2 states, "Provide Landmark Architecture at the entrance to the City. Structures considered for approval [in this area] shall maintain high visual and aesthetic

standards. The architectural design of the structures should complement each other and blend with the surrounding environment.”

The *Gateway South Specific Plan* objectives call for the development and maintenance of a high standard of building and landscape design. Policy 8.1 states that, “Materials, textures, colors, and details of all new construction should be an appropriate expression of the development’s design concept and function, and should be compatible with adjacent structures and functions.” Policy 8.3 states, “Landscaping should be compatible with and complement site and building design.”

The Specific Plan also contains a number of architectural standards that apply to all land uses in the Gateway South area. Standards applicable to the proposed project include: 1) all exterior wall elevations visible from and/or facing streets are to have architectural treatments including exterior finishes, siding, stucco patterns, paint patterns, and façade modulation and articulation; 2) architectural themes shall include such features as posts, beams, arches, columns, colonnades, window treatments, canopies, and balconies; 3) visually screening roof-mounted mechanical equipment and outdoor storage and refuse areas; and 4) provision of landmark architecture that reflects the importance of the area as an entrance to the City.

Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures in the Previous EIR

The *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* identified the following two impacts related to consistency with aesthetic policies for future development within Planning Area B.

Adverse Impacts to Views

“Future development in Planning Area B has the potential to result in a significant adverse impact to the views of this planning area without carefully planned design.” P. 115.

Mitigation measures identified in the EIR to reduce potentially significant effects on views include: 1) plant a vegetative buffer along the east side of La Madrona Drive and Altenitas Road to screen the roadways from Highway 17, the design of which shall be approved by the community development director; 2) ensure that future development in Planning Area B is evaluated for visual impacts to motorists on Highway 17 within future environmental impact reports; and 3) ensure that future development conforms to either the Mt. Hermon Road Design Guidelines or the Scotts Valley Design Guidelines, whichever is in effect at the time development is proposed. The first two measures were incorporated into the Specific Plan EIR from the *Gateway South Assessment District Final EIR*. The third measure was included in the Specific Plan EIR.

Potential for Light and Glare

“Future development in Planning Area B has the potential to cause significant light and glare from on-site lighting affecting the drivers of vehicles traveling southbound on State Highway 17.” P. 116.

The mitigation measure identified in the EIR to reduce potentially significant effects related to light and glare includes preparation of a lighting plan that, when implemented, will not produce glare for travelers on SR-17, and is subject to review and approval by the Public Works Director.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures of the Proposed Project

Significance Criteria

Visual quality is the perceived aesthetic value of an area based on a combination of inherent natural features and physical modification over time. In general, visual quality assessment is somewhat subjective in nature. In addition, viewpoint distance and altitude (viewpoint direction), with respect to a project site would also influence visual impact perception. It is expected that the elements of building configuration, building size, architectural style, open space and landscaping details would have the greatest influence from close-in views. As one moves away from a site, specific development details become less important in defining visual impact while building bulk, roof lines, and the overall extent of development would remain significant features within the field of view. The CEQA Guidelines provides specific criteria by which to assess a project's potential impact on visual resources. The CEQA criteria utilized in this section are presented below.

- Adversely affect a scenic vista
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

Methodology

In the following analysis, impacts to visual quality were evaluated by site visits to the project area, photographs of foreground, middleground, and background views both from and of the project site, and computerized visual simulations of the proposed office building project provided by DES Architects from vantage points directed by the City of Scotts Valley planning staff. A review of project plans was also performed during the environmental analysis.

Environmental Analysis

VIS-1. The proposed project would have no effect on scenic vistas. (NI)

Scenic vistas in the project area include views of the prominent ridgelines to the north of the project parcels, as identified in the General Plan. General Plan Policy OSP-374 states that "Predominant ridgelines shall be protected to allow clear views from streets and roads." The office building and fire station developments would be constructed to either side of La Madrona Road, allowing a clear view of nearby ridgelines when traveling north or south along this

roadway. The office building would be setback by approximately 100 from La Madrona Drive; the fire station, approximately 20 feet. As a result, the project would comply with General Plan Policy OSP-374. In addition, neither development would project above the forested upper slopes of the office building/open space site. This ridgeline would continue to be visible from La Madrona Drive and other publicly-accessible roadways and viewpoints. As a result, the proposed project would have no effect on scenic vistas.

VIS-2. The proposed project would not adversely affect scenic resources as viewed from SR-17. (LTS).

Office Building/Open Space Site. Scenic resources on the proposed office building parcel include mature trees on the upper portions of the site that are visible from SR-17, a locally-important scenic corridor. The proposed development would be visible from southbound SR-17 for approximately 1-2 seconds about 1,000 feet from the project site. While all of the trees on the upper portions of the site would be retained, some of them would be obscured from view by the roof of the office development. The project would eliminate two groupings of mature trees (two California live oaks and a grouping of approximately one dozen Redwood trees) in the northwest corner of the property, replacing them with paved parking areas and landscaping. The project would add about 215 new trees to the site, off-setting the loss of existing trees. As a result, about 15 new trees would be planted for each existing tree lost to development. Portions of the development would be visible from southbound SR-17, and would obscure some views of the trees, but would maintain views of the vegetated ridgeline above the development. Given the limited amount of time that views of the project site would be available from SR-17, and the relatively small number of trees that would be removed from the project site, visual effects of the proposed office building on scenic resources would be considered less than significant. As a result, the proposed office building would generally maintain the visual quality of roadway corridors that are of scenic value to the community and would therefore be consistent with Specific Plan Policy 3.1.

Fire Station Site. Portions of the rear or west-facing elevations of the proposed 2-story fire station would be visible from SR-17. A photosimulation of the general massing of the building is provided on Figure 3.2-7. As the site contains no scenic resources (such as trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings) that could be damaged as a result of development, there would be no substantial adverse effect to scenic resources.

VIS-3. The office building would alter the visual character of the undeveloped project site but would not adversely affect the visual character of the area. (LTS)

The proposed office building would replace the grasslands found on the lower, flatter portions of the project site with a two-story commercial development approximately 136,000 sf in size surrounded by parking areas for approximately 550 automobiles. Figures 3.2-6 through 3.2-8 show computerized simulations of the proposed office building from various publicly accessible viewpoint locations. As shown in the photosimulations, the upper forested slopes of the site

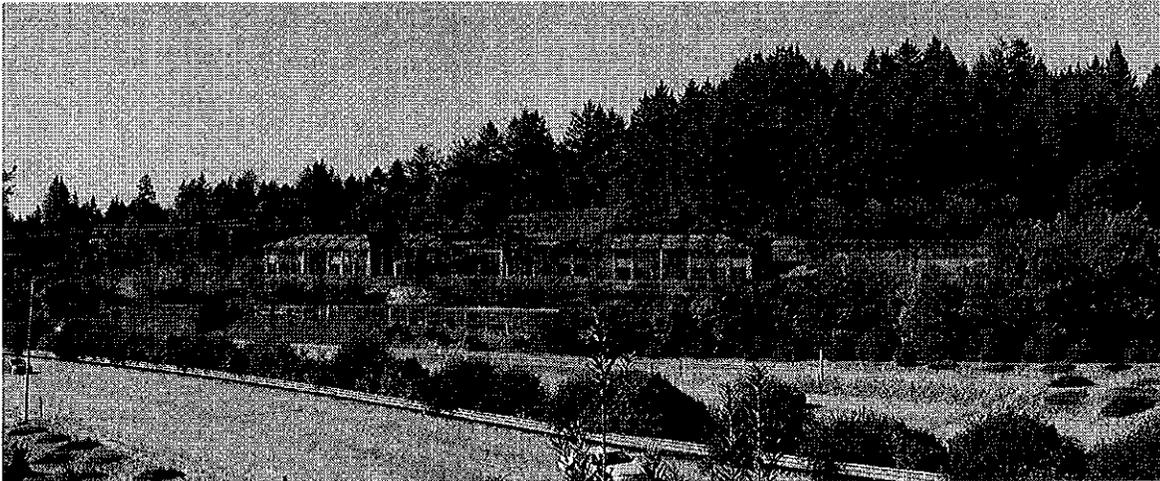


Figure 3.2-6 – Photosimulation of Proposed Office Building From Mt. Hermon Rd. Overpass

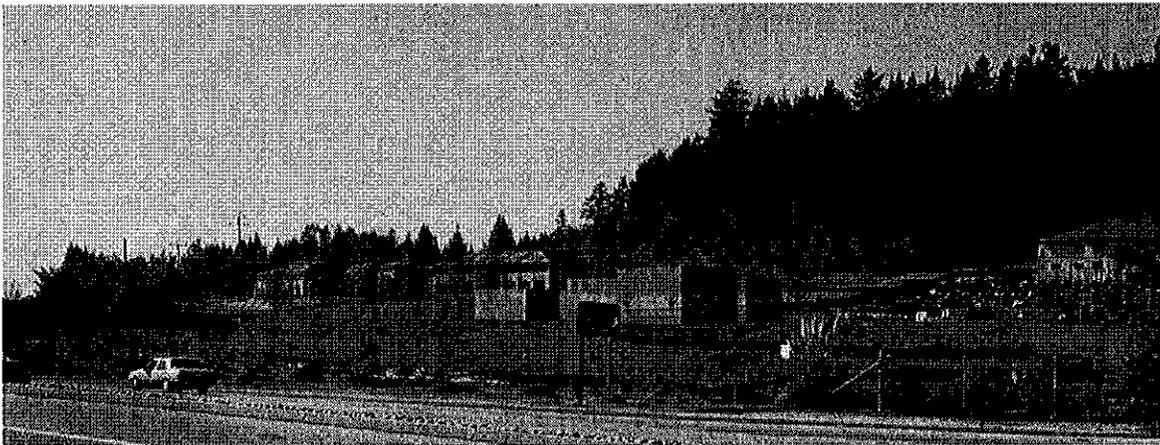


Figure 3.2-7 - Photosimulation of Proposed Office Building and Fire Station Massing From SR- 17



Figure 3.2-8 - Photosimulation of Proposed Office Building From SR-17 Northbound On-Ramp

would remain as undeveloped open space, and the proposed building would generally blend in with the natural colors of the surrounding area.

The visual character would change from undeveloped open space near La Madrona Drive to commercial development similar to that found on adjacent parcels, such as the Hilton Hotel development to the north of the site. The office development would contain architectural elements and overall massing that is compatible with the adjacent hotel development, including stone façade treatments, composite slate roofing, and wood trim/accent pieces.

The development would be set back approximately 100 feet from La Madrona Drive. As a result, the proposed office development would be consistent with Specific Plan Policy 8.1, calling for the use of appropriate materials, textures, and colors, and details, and compatibility with adjacent structures and functions.

Proposed color treatments and materials would help the development blend in with the natural surroundings, while the articulated massing of the building would break up the overall scale of the development. Architectural features such as the stone columns, brackets, roof overhangs, wood siding, and the trellised entrance would all be consistent with the architectural standards contained in the *Gateway South Specific Plan*. Proposed landscape treatments in and around the parking areas, along La Madrona Drive, and adjacent to properties to the north and south would soften the edges of the development, and would help it blend in with the existing trees on the upper slopes. The architectural materials proposed appear to be of high quality, and no faux finishes are proposed. As a result, the proposed office development would be consistent with Specific Plan Policy 8.3, calling for landscaping which complements site and building design.

Overall, the office building development would provide “Landmark Architecture,” as called for in Policy 3.2, while maintaining compatibility with adjacent development in the gateway to Scotts Valley. As a result, the proposed office building development would have a less-than-significant impact on visual character.

VIS-4. Because specific designs for the proposed fire station are unknown, potential design conflicts between this development and adjacent development could occur without adequate planning and design review. While the Fire District intends to design a fire station that is compatible with the surrounding setting, it may not provide for “Landmark Architecture” at this critical gateway location to Scotts Valley as called for in the Specific Plan. This is considered a potentially significant adverse visual impact. (PS)

The visual character of the proposed fire station site would change from an undeveloped weedy lot to a 12,000-square-foot development in a one and two-story configuration, with parking for approximately 23 cars. Although the height and bulk of the building would be generally compatible with the surrounding 2- and 3-story commercial development, the building design is conceptual, and it is unknown whether the building’s materials, architectural character, landscaping or overall design would be considered “Landmark Architecture,” as called for in

Policy 3.2 of the Specific Plan. It is also unknown whether the development would meet the Specific Plan's architectural standards. Given the prominent location of this site at the gateway to Scotts Valley, architectural quality should be given utmost priority.

MITIGATION MEASURE. The following mitigation measure would reduce the potentially significant effect of the fire station on visual character in the area to a less-than-significant impact. (LTS)

VIS-4.1 Apply Scotts Valley Design Guidelines. The Scotts Valley Planning Commission, in its design review capacity, shall apply the standards contained in the Scotts Valley Design Guidelines to ensure that design qualities meet standards for landmark architecture in this location. For example, the fire station should seek to achieve high visual and aesthetic standards, should be complementary with adjacent development, and should blend in with adjacent development. Specific standards applicable to the development shall include:

- Plant a vegetative buffer along the east side of La Madrona Drive to screen the roadway from SR-17;
- Include in all exterior wall elevations visible from and/or facing streets architectural treatments such as exterior finishes, siding, stucco patterns, paint patterns, and façade modulation and articulation;
- Include architectural elements such as posts, beams, arches, columns, colonnades, window treatments, canopies, and/or balconies;
- Screen roof-mounted mechanical equipment and outdoor storage and refuse areas; and
- Incorporate landmark architecture that reflects the importance of the area as an entrance to the City.

VIS-5. The proposed project has the potential to create significant light and glare from on-site lighting which could spill onto adjacent properties and/or affect motorists traveling on SR-17. This is considered a potentially significant impact. (PS)

Both the proposed office building and fire station would create new sources of light and glare in the area. Such lighting would likely include architectural lighting, landscape lighting, and lighting in the parking lot for safety and security purposes. The location, number, design, and intensity of the lights on the either site have not yet been determined. Lighting would be buffered by landscaping throughout the sites; however, if not properly designed and installed, light and glare from the proposed project could spill onto adjacent properties, and could affect motorists traveling on SR-17.

MITIGATION MEASURE. The following mitigation measures would reduce the potentially significant effect of light and glare in the area to a less-than-significant impact. (LTS)

VIS-5.1 Prepare and Implement Lighting Plans. The sponsor of the proposed office building, as well as the Scotts Valley Fire District, shall prepare lighting plans for their respective projects that, when implemented, will not spill onto adjacent properties and will not produce unreasonable glare for travelers on SR-17. The lighting plans shall be subject to review and approval by the Public Works Director, prior to issuance of building permits. The lighting plans should strive to emulate the low-impact lighting of the Hilton Hotel, and should specify the same type and intensity of lighting fixtures, lighting shields, etc. The amber warning lights to be posted on La Madrona Drive described in Mitigation Measure TR-5.1 should be visible only from La Madrona Drive and should not spill on to adjacent properties. Shielding for these light fixtures may also be appropriate as necessary.

Comparison of Impacts and Mitigation Measures Between EIR and SEIR

Impacts related to light and glare due to implementation of the *Gateway South Specific Plan* would be similar to those identified for the proposed project, as discussed under Impact VIS-5. The mitigation measure identified in the Specific Plan EIR to reduce light and glare impacts to less-than-significant levels is similar to that identified for the proposed project. However, the mitigation measure identified in this SEIR would be more specifically tailored to the proposed project and may achieve a greater level of impact reduction, and would therefore supersede the measures identified in the previous EIR.

The mitigation measures identified in the Specific Plan EIR to reduce adverse impacts to views in Planning Area B would be implemented partially by the design of the proposed project. For example, the office building project would include landscaping on the west side of La Madrona Drive which would help screen the development from SR-17. As such, the proposed project would, in effect, mitigate some of the visual impacts identified in the *Gateway South Assessment District Final EIR*.¹ This SEIR evaluates the proposed project's visual impacts to motorists on SR-17, as called for in the mitigation measures of the Specific Plan EIR. Finally, Mitigation Measure VIS-4.1 requires the proposed fire station to conform with the Scotts Valley Design Guidelines, which is similar to the measure in the Specific Plan EIR calling for new development in Planning Area B to conform with the Scotts Valley Design Guidelines.

¹ No vegetative buffer has been planted on the east side of La Madrona Drive to screen the road from SR-17 as called for in the *Gateway South Assessment District Final EIR*.

3.3 LAND USE, PLANS, AND ZONING

Introduction

This section identifies the land use setting and applicable plans and policies which relate to the proposed Gateway South office building and fire station project. This section also identifies potential impacts to land use, plans, and zoning, and proposed mitigation measures to reduce those conflicts.

The Initial Study concluded that the proposed office building and fire station project would potentially have a significant impact upon land use and planning by conflicting with the *Gateway South Specific Plan* (see Initial Study, Appendix A). This potential effect is therefore evaluated more fully in this section of the SEIR. The Specific Plan sets land use and development standards in the project vicinity. Primary sources for this section include the *City of Scotts Valley General Plan*,¹ the *Gateway South Specific Plan*,² and the *City of Scotts Valley Municipal Code*.³ Site visits were also conducted to confirm existing land use information.

Setting

Land Use

The proposed office building site is located on undeveloped land bound by commercial uses to the north (Hilton Hotel), Silverwood Drive and open space to the south, residential uses associated with the Monte Fiore subdivision to the west, and La Madrona Drive to the east. La Madrona Drive is the frontage road along SR-17. Located further to the east is the southbound on-ramp to SR-17 and SR-17 itself. The fire station site is bound by an approved but unbuilt retail center to the north,⁴ La Madrona Drive/SR 17 at the southern tip, the SR-17 southbound on-ramp to the east, and La Madrona Drive to the west.

Zoning

The proposed office building parcel is zoned C-S (Service Commercial) and OS (Open Space), and the proposed fire station site is zoned entirely C-S. The lower, flatter portions of the site adjacent to La Madrona Drive are zoned C-S, while the forested hills on the upper elevations of the site are zoned OS. It should be noted, however, that the proposed office development is located entirely within the portion of the parcel which is zoned C-S. Allowable uses in the C-S zone include retail establishments, banks, business and personal service establishments, medical, professional, and general business offices. Public utility and service uses are a conditionally permitted use in the C-S zone. The OS zone

¹ City of Scotts Valley, *City of Scotts Valley General Plan*, 1994.

² City of Scotts Valley, *Gateway South Specific Plan*, June 1995.

³ City of Scotts Valley, *City of Scotts Valley Municipal Code*, September 2001.

⁴ Entitlement period extended to January 2005.

permits fish and wildlife management activities or facilities, flood control channels and drainage facilities, public and private recreation areas, parks, playgrounds, wildlife and timber preserves, and watershed management activities or facilities. Accessory uses and structures are permitted as incidental to the permitted use, and include storage facilities and signs. In general, the areas surrounding the project sites are also zoned C-S.

Applicable Plans and Policies

City of Scotts Valley General Plan. Some key land use policies of the *City of Scotts Valley General Plan* as they relate to the proposed project include promotion of commercial development with aesthetic standards; compatibility with surrounding land uses; planning for public service facilities; and conservation of open space.⁵ The *Gateway South Specific Plan* incorporates objectives and policies which are consistent with and more detailed than the General Plan in the project area. These land use policies are described in detail below.

Gateway South Specific Plan. The Specific Plan interprets the broad policies, goals, and objectives included in the General Plan, and provides a detailed guide for development in the Specific Plan Area. The project area is identified in the Specific Plan as Planning Area B. Land use goals identified in the Specific Plan include efficient and harmonious land use within the Gateway South area that incorporate open space, residential, and commercial uses; preservation of open space; a range of housing opportunities; opportunities for commercial development that will enhance the City's tax base and provide employment opportunities; and a high standard of building and landscape design. Objectives and policies contained in the *Gateway South Specific Plan*⁶ that relate to the proposed project include the following:

- All land uses within the project area should be sited and designed to be compatible with each other and with surrounding land uses.
- To insure future development is properly designed and compatible, all development proposals in the Specific Plan area will be processed through the "Planned Development (PD)" regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance which requires the review and approval of the Planning Commission.
- Conserve the area's native vegetation and plant communities where possible for their aesthetic and habitat value.
- Maintain and enhance the visual quality of roadway corridors that are of scenic value to the community.
- Provide "Landmark Architecture" at the entrance to the City. Structures proposed in Planning Area B shall only be considered for approval if they are of exceptional quality and maintain high visual and aesthetic standards. The architectural design of the structures should complement each other and blend with the surrounding environment. The residential and

⁵ City of Scotts Valley, *City of Scotts Valley General Plan*, 1994, p. II.18-24.

⁶ City of Scotts Valley, *Gateway South Specific Plan*, June 1995. p. 11-16.

commercial development should also be complementary and the project as a whole should maintain a landmark design quality.

- Encourage commercial activities that meet the retail and commercial/service needs of residents and visitors are compatible with surrounding land uses.
- New commercial uses shall be located and designed to complement and strengthen the city's commercial area.
- The maximum total building area for retail uses allowed in the Commercial Service area in Planning Area B shall be 151,000 square feet. Any proposal to exceed the 151,000 square foot limitation shall require an amendment to the Specific Plan.
- Provide adequate, attractively designed and functional off-street parking facilities along with suitable facilities for public transit, bicycles, and pedestrians, as an integral part of all proposed commercial land uses.
- Materials, textures, colors and details of all new construction should be an appropriate expression of the development's design concept and function, and should be compatible with adjacent structures and functions.
- Landscaping should be compatible with and compliment (sic) site and building design.
- In order to maintain the highest standards of visual and aesthetic control, all proposals for development in the Specific Plan Area will be processed through the 'Planned Development' regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance with review and approval by the Planning Commission and the City Council.

All land uses in the Specific Plan Area must additionally adhere to a number of architectural design and site planning standards. These are described in detail in Section 3.2, Visual Quality, of this SEIR.

Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures in the Previous EIR

The Land Use Compatibility section of the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* identified two impacts related to consistency with aesthetic policies for future development within Planning Area B. These impacts, and the mitigation measures to reduce them, are discussed in detail in Section 3.2, Visual Quality.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures of the Proposed Project

Significance Criteria

According to Section 15382 of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant effect on the environment is defined as "...a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project..." The proposed Gateway South office building and fire station would have a significant effect on land use if the project would conflict with an applicable land use plan,

policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, the general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Policies are intended to guide decision-making bodies, such as the Scotts Valley Planning Commission and the City Council, in their review of proposed projects. The proposed project's physical environmental effects are discussed in their respective sections of this SEIR.

Environmental Analysis

LU-1. The proposed project would be consistent with applicable land use policies and zoning regulations for the City of Scotts Valley. (NI)

The proposed office building project, as a commercial use, would be consistent with the C-S zoning of the parcel which permits business, professional, medical, and general office uses, as well as personal services. The portion of the project which retains the upper slopes of the parcel as permanent open space would be consistent with the OS zoning in this area. As a commercial use, the proposed office building project would also be compatible with the surrounding commercial uses, such as the adjacent Hilton Hotel. The adjacent residential uses of the Monte Fiore subdivision to the west would be separated from the office development by the forested hillsides that would be maintained on the upper portions of the project sites. Other land uses in the immediate area, such as roadways and SR-17 would not be incompatible with the proposed office building. Although retail uses are permitted in the C-S zone, the proposed office use would be generally less intense in terms of generating fewer PM peak hour vehicular trips for the same size of development, as a general rule of thumb.

The proposed fire station would be a conditionally permitted use in the C-S zoning of the parcel and would be generally compatible with commercial uses and roadways which surround the site.

As a result, the proposed project would be consistent with the land use and zoning for the site.

LU-2. The proposed project would conflict with an applicable land use policy contained in the Gateway South Specific Plan; however, the proposed project includes a Specific Plan Amendment that, if approved, would eliminate the inconsistency. (LTS)

Without an amendment to the Specific Plan, implementation of the project would conflict with Specific Plan Policy 6.3 which states that development in Planning Area B shall not exceed 151,000 sf without an amendment to the plan. As the Hilton Hotel recently added 124,000 sf of commercial development to the Planning Area, and approximately 12,000 sf of retail uses have been approved for the parcel just north of the fire station site (APN # 21-141-17), there is a remaining development potential of about 15,000 sf in Planning Area B. The project would add another 148,000 sf of development, or approximately 133,000 sf over allowable limits. As part of the project, the City of Scotts Valley intends to amend the Specific Plan to allow more development than originally envisioned in the Specific Plan Area. The Specific Plan

Amendment would allow 133,000 sf of additional development in Planning Area B of the Gateway South area to accommodate the proposed project.

The potential physical environmental effects of this amendment and associated increase in development, such as increased traffic, noise, air emissions, environmental degradation, visual resources effects, and hydrologic impacts are discussed in their respective sections in this SEIR. As there are no significant unavoidable impacts associated with the project's physical environmental effects, the project would be consistent with applicable land use plans and policies and there would not be a significant land use impact.

The proposed office building and fire station would be generally consistent with other applicable land use policies in the *Gateway South Specific Plan*. The proposed project would be compatible with surrounding land uses, as discussed above in Impact LU-1. The proposed office building development would conserve native vegetation and plant communities by maintaining the forested upper slopes of the site as permanent open space. The proposed fire station would benefit the immediate area as well as the community at large by providing increased response times in the event of an emergency. The station's proposed location near the entrance to SR-17 would allow faster access to all areas in Scotts Valley served by this highway. Both proposed developments would maintain the visual quality of scenic roadway corridors by providing design qualities that blend with surrounding development, as discussed in Section 3.2, Visual Quality. The proposed office building development would add approximately 136,000 sf of commercial space to an area zoned for commercial uses, thereby strengthening the City's commercial areas. Finally, both developments would provide functional off-street parking while accommodating bicycles and pedestrians.

Comparison of Impacts and Mitigation Measures Between EIR and SEIR

As noted earlier, the land use discussion in the Specific Plan EIR focused primarily on the project's conformance with adopted aesthetic policies. In terms of compatibility with land use and zoning, the proposed project would have no additional effects that were not previously evaluated in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Introduction

The investigation of biological resources in this EIR concentrates on special status or sensitive vegetation and wildlife species and habitats. Special status or sensitivity is based on criteria and listings by the Federal government (as administered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service) or State government (as administered by the California Department of Fish and Game). This section identifies sensitive biological resources in the project area and evaluates the proposed project's potential impacts on such resources. Where applicable, mitigation measures are provided to reduce or avoid potentially significant biological impacts. Sources used to prepare this section include site visits by EIP Associates biologists, biological resources technical report (see Appendix B),¹ a wetland delineation (see Appendix C),² a tree survey (see Appendix D),³ and a habitat assessment of the Mount Hermon June Beetle⁴ (see Appendix E) prepared for this SEIR.

Setting

Vegetation and Wildlife Observed on the Project Site

EIP biologists conducted a reconnaissance level survey of both project parcels in May and June 2002. Vegetation and wildlife observed are discussed below by parcel. A list of plant and wildlife species observed on the site is provided in the *Biological Technical Report* (Appendix B, Table 1).

Office Building/Open Space Parcel. This parcel contains three vegetation communities, annual grasslands, mixed forest, and freshwater seeps. These habitats are described below.

The annual grassland habitat type is found on the lower slopes of the site, including native and non-native species of grasses and annuals. Non-native plant species found in this series includes Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), and French broom (*Genista monspessulana*). Native plant species observed includes California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), purple needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*), and California brome (*Bromus carinatus*).

Within the project area, the mixed forest habitat type is found almost exclusively on slopes greater than 40 percent, with the exception of two large coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia* var. *agrifolia*) and a stand of Coastal redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens pterophyta*). The mixed forest habitat located on the

¹ EIP Associates, *Biological Technical Report, Gateway South Office Building and Fire Station*, 2002.

² EIP Associates, *Draft Section 404 Clean Water Act Jurisdictional Delineation, Gateway South Office Building and Fire Station Project Area, City of Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz County, California*, 2003.

³ EIP Associates, *Tree Survey Technical Report, Gateway South Office Building and Fire Station Project Area*, 2002.

⁴ Entomological Services Limited, Richard A. Arnold, Ph.D., *Habitat Assessment Report on the Mount Hermon June Beetle, Zayante Band Winged Grasshopper, Ohlone Tiger Beetle, and Opler's Longhorn Moth at the Gateway South Project Site on La Madrona Drive in Scotts Valley, California*, 2002.

site consists of dense stands of coast live oak, coastal redwood, ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), and California bay (*Umbellularia californica*). The vegetative ground cover within the areas of mixed forest includes poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*) and fountain miners-lettuce (*Montia Fontana*).

Approximately 0.10 acre of freshwater seep habitat are dispersed within the upper slopes of the office building/open space parcel (see Figure 3.4-1). This habitat area consists of shallow depressions with saturated soils and hydrophytic vegetation. The hydrophytic vegetation present includes dock (*Rumex conglomeratus*), curly dock (*R. crispus*), sheep sorrel (*R. acetosella*), bristly sedge (*Carex comosa*), brown-headed rush (*Juncus Phaeocephalus*), and rattlesnake grass (*Briza maxima*).

Wildlife or evidence of wildlife observed on this parcel includes black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), racer (*Coluber constrictor*), southern alligator lizard (*Gerrhonotus multicarinatus*), brewer's blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), and California quail (*Callipela californica*). Other common species of wildlife that would be expected to occur on the site include raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), gopher snake (*Pituophis catenifer*), red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo platypterus*), and red-tailed hawk (*B. jamaicensis*).

Fire Station Site. The vegetation on this parcel consists almost entirely of annual grasslands dominated by non-native invasive species. Dominant plant species observed in the highly altered area include French broom, Bermuda grass, native coyote bush (*Baccharis pilularis*), and wild radish (*Raphanus sativus*). Wildlife observed on this site was limited to a single mourning dove (*Zenaidura macroura*).

Special Status or Sensitive Species and Habitats

Special-status species include those that are formally listed as threatened, endangered, or rare (in the case of plants) by the Federal government or the State of California, candidates for listing, and species of concern, which could become candidates for listing in the future. Species of local concern, heritage or specimen trees, and migratory birds also may be considered to be special-status species.

Information on special-status species is based on review of the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) RareFind Report for the U.S. Geological Survey Felton 7.5-minute quadrangle. Information on the habitat requirements of native plant species occurring in the Scotts Valley area was obtained from the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (Electronic version 2.1.2, 2002). The CDFG also provided information regarding sensitive species potentially occurring within the proposed project area in response to a solicitation of CDFG concerns. In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) list of endangered and threatened species that may occur in or be affected by projects in Santa Cruz County was reviewed and includes all sensitive species identified by

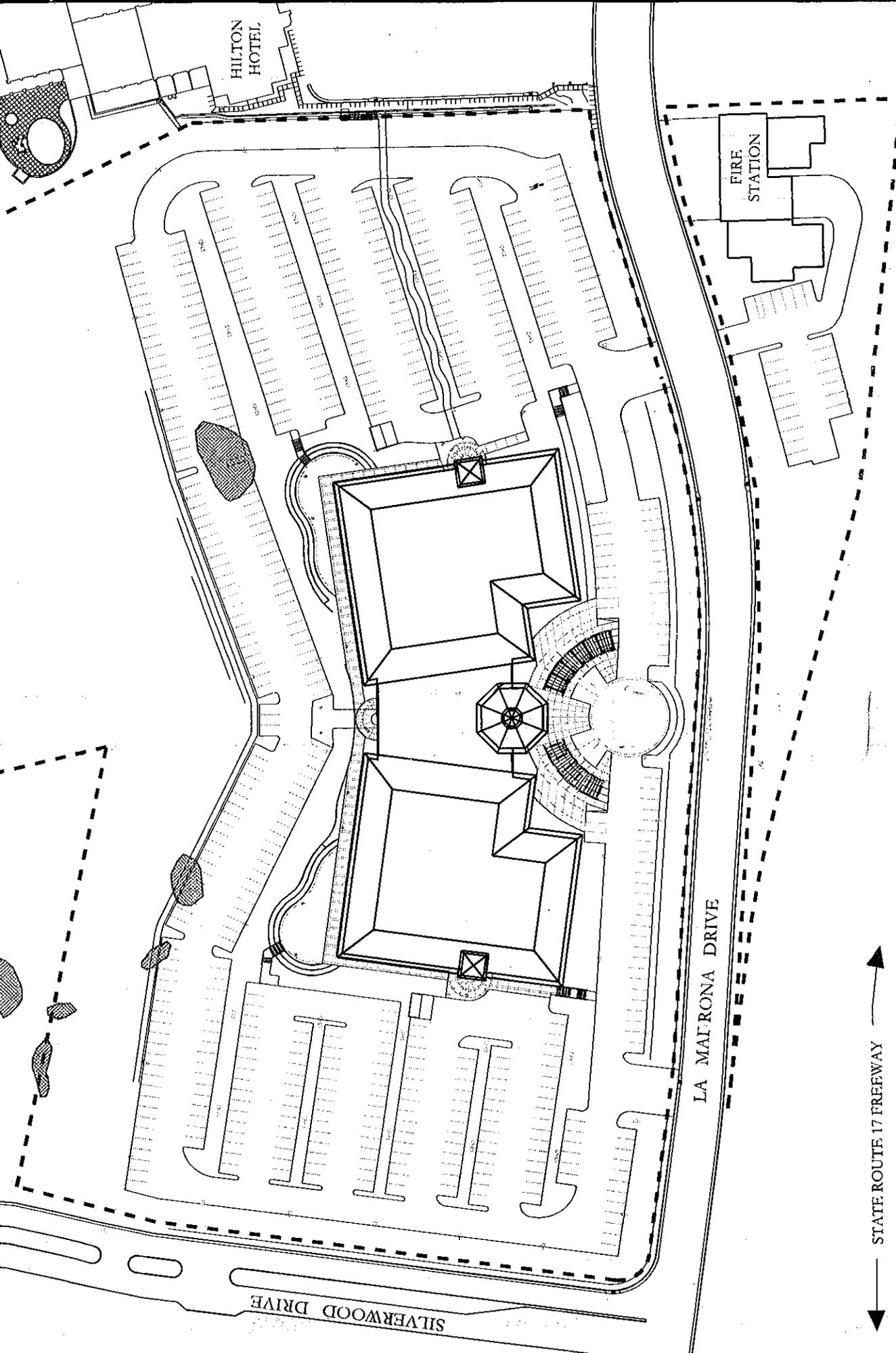
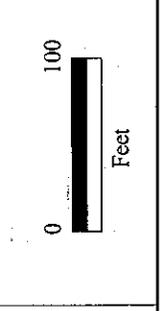


FIGURE 3.4-1: PRELIMINARY WETLAND LOCATIONS
 Gateway/ South Office Building and Fire Station
 Scotts Valley, CA

Property Line
 Preliminary Wetlands



Source: DES Architects/Engineers, Site Plan and Contours, September 2001; and EIP Associates, Preliminary Wetlands, Traceline, and GIS Program, July 8, 2002.



the CDFG.⁵ Common and scientific names, status, habitat requirements, and an evaluation of the potential for the occurrence of each species in and adjacent to the project area have been compiled from all of these sources. The following discussion addresses species that have a potential to occur within the project area. A list of sensitive species is provided in the *Biological Technical Report* (Appendix B, Table 2).

Invertebrates. Special status invertebrate species are discussed in detail in an entomological report prepared for the project (see Appendix E).⁶ The survey did not observe any of the sensitive invertebrate species that may potentially occur within the project sites or their habitats.

Amphibians and Reptiles. The California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*) is a sensitive species of amphibian, which is highly aquatic. The study area contains several small wetland seeps located on the office building/open space site. However, these seeps lack suitable ponded water or aquatic riparian habitat for California red-legged frogs. No California red-legged frogs were observed on the project site

Birds. Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), a CDFG species of special concern, nests in freshwater emergent wetlands, dominated by tules. The EIP survey did not observe tricolored blackbird because the study area does not contain suitable nesting habitat.

Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), a CDFG species of special concern, is a medium-sized hawk that prefers thickly wooded forest and riparian corridors with adjacent open grasslands for foraging. The office building/open space site contains suitable nesting, perching, and foraging habitat in the mixed forest and annual grassland habitats. The CNDDDB does not report the occurrence of Cooper's hawk within the project vicinity (CNDDDB, 2002), and EIP surveys did not result in any observations of Cooper's hawk. However, Cooper's hawk is expected to occur on the site due to the presence of suitable foraging and breeding habitat. According to the Santa Cruz County Breeding Bird List,⁷ the Cooper's hawk is known to commonly occur and nest within the Scotts Valley area.

Mammals. Five sensitive species of bats, pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), Townsend's western big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii townsendii*), western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*), long-eared myotis bat (*Myotis evotis*), and fringed myotis bat (*Myotis thysanodes*), may potentially occur within the proposed project site. Suitable foraging habitat for most of these species exists throughout the project area, most notably in the wetland seeps located on the upper slopes of the Gateway South Office Building Site. No species of bats or evidence of bats was observed during the site survey. The CNDDDB does not report the occurrence of any of the above species within the

⁵ USFWS, Species List for the Proposed Gateway South Office Building and Fire Station, Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz County, California, February 4, 2003. Letter from Amelia Orton-Palmer, USFWS, to Brent Spencer, EIP Associates.

⁶ Habitat Assessment Report on the Mount Hermon June Beetle, Zayante Band Winged Grasshopper, Ohlone Tiger Beetle, and Opler's Longhorn Moth at the Gateway South Project Site on La Madrona Drive in Scotts Valley, California, by Richard A. Arnold, PhD., Entomological Consulting Services, Ltd.

⁷ David L. Suddjian, Santa Cruz Bird Club, Bird Records Keeper, dsuddjian@aol.com, <http://santacruzbirdclub.org/>, Personal Communication, March 21, 2003.

proposed project area (CNDDDB, 2002). These sensitive bat species are expected have a potential to occur on the site due to the presence of foraging habitat.

Plants. The Santa Cruz Tarplant (*Holocarpha macradenia*) is an annual herb that tends to grow in coastal prairies and valley and foothill grasslands in clay and sandy soils. The project site contains grassland habitat with clay and sandy soils. However, the EIP field surveys, during the optimal blooming season, did not observe Santa Cruz Tarplants within the project site. The CNDDDB also does not report the occurrence of Santa Cruz Tarplants within the project area (CNDDDB, 2002).

Maritime coast range ponderosa pine forest is a habitat series dominated by ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) trees. The CDFG lists this habitat series as "S1.1," meaning that maritime coast range ponderosa pine forest is very threatened in California. The mixed forest that is located on the upper slopes of the office building/open space site contains a few specimens of ponderosa pine, which would not constitute maritime coast range ponderosa pine forest. No specimens of ponderosa pine occur within the proposed project footprint on the lower, flatter portions of the site.

Applicable Policies and Regulations

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (FESA) defines an endangered species as any species or subspecies of fish wildlife, or plants "in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range." A threatened species is defined as any species or subspecies "likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range." Designated endangered and threatened species, as listed through publication of a final rule in the Federal Register, are fully protected from a "take" without an incidental take permit administered by the USFWS under Section 10 of the FESA. A take is defined as the killing, capturing, or harassing of a species. Proposed endangered or threatened species are those for which a proposed regulation, but a final rule has not been published in the Federal Register. In the project area, there is potential to encounter sensitive species such as the Cooper's hawk.

If a United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) permit (see United States Army Corps discussion, below) is required to grade wetlands that occur on the project site, the Corps will enact Section 7 of FESA. Section 7 of the FESA requires that federal agencies ensure that their actions are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or destroy or adversely modify its critical habitat. This obligation requires federal agencies to consult with USFWS on any actions (including issuing Section 404 permits or federal funding) that may affect listed species to ensure that reasonable and prudent measures will be undertaken to mitigate impacts on listed species. Consultation with the USFWS can be either formal or informal depending on the likelihood of the action to adversely affect listed species or critical habitat. If a formal consultation is initiated, USFWS will issue a Biological Opinion (either a "no jeopardy" or a "jeopardy" opinion) indicating whether the proposed agency action will jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or result in the destruction or modification of its critical habitat. A permit cannot be issued for a project with a "jeopardy" opinion unless it is redesigned to lessen impacts.

United States Army Corps of Engineers. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) requires that a permit be obtained from the Corps prior to the discharge of dredged or fill materials into any “waters of the United States,” including wetlands. Waters of the United States are broadly defined in Corps regulations (33CFR 328) to include navigable waterways, their tributaries, lakes, ponds, and wetlands. Wetlands are defined as “Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that normally do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.” Wetlands that are not specifically exempt from Section 404 regulations (such as drainage channels excavated on dry land) are considered to be “jurisdictional wetlands.” The Corps is required to consult with USFWS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and CDFG in carrying out its discretionary authority under Section 404. A Section 404 Corps permit would be required for the Gateway South Office Building Site if the Corps takes jurisdiction over the wetlands that occur.

As noted previously, approximately 0.10 acre of freshwater seeps were identified on the office building parcel which meet the criteria for potential jurisdictional wetlands (i.e., hydrophytic vegetation, wetland soils, and hydrologic indicators). A formal wetlands delineation survey was completed by EIP Associates biologists in accordance with Army Corps protocols (see Appendix C). The Corps permit requirements will be incorporated into any formal documents required prior to project approval.

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). CDFG administers a number of laws and programs designed to protect plant, fish, and wildlife resources such as sensitive species of bats and Cooper’s hawk. The most significant of these regulations is the California Endangered Species Act of 1984 (CESA - Fish and Game Code Section 2050), which regulates the listing and take of state-endangered and state-threatened species. CESA declares that deserving species will be given protection by the state because they are of ecological, educational, historical, recreational, aesthetic, economic, and scientific value to the people of the state. CESA has established that it is state policy to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance endangered species and their habitats.

Species listed under CESA cannot be taken without adequate mitigation and compensation. The definition of take under CESA is the same as described above for FESA. However, based on findings of the California Attorney General’s Office, “take” of a species under CESA does not prohibit indirect harm by way of habitat modification. Typically, CDFG implements endangered species protection and take determinations by entering into management agreements (Section 2081 Management Agreements) with project applicants.

CDFG maintains lists for Candidate-Endangered Species and Candidate-Threatened Species. California candidate species are given protection that is equal to that provided to listed species. CDFG also lists Species of Special Concern based on limited distribution, declining populations, diminishing habitat, and/or unusual scientific, recreational, or educational value. These species are not afforded the same legal protection as listed species, but may be added to official lists in the future. The designation of a Species of Special Concern is intended by CDFG as a management tool for consideration in future

land use decisions. As a consequence, CDFG typically requests that CEQA lead agencies give consideration to minimization of impacts to these species when approving projects.

The CDFG also administers Fish and Game Codes Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3800. These sections of the Fish and Game Code prohibit the "take, possession, or destruction of birds, their nests or eggs." Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort (killing or abandonment of eggs or young) is considered a "take." The only species exempt from these take provisions are house sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) and European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*).

Regional Water Quality Control Board. A Section 401 Water Quality Certification, or waiver thereof, is required from the RWQCB before a Corps Section 404 permit becomes valid. The RWQCB will review the project for consistency with Waste Discharge Requirements under the state land disposal regulations. In reviewing the project, the RWQCB will also consider impacts to waters of the United States, in addition to filling of wetlands, in accordance with the state wetland policy. Therefore, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification or waiver from the RWQCB would be required for this project if a Corps Section 404 permit were required.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 makes it unlawful to "take" (kill, harm, harass, etc.) any migratory bird listed in 50 CFR 10, including their nests, eggs, or products. Examples of birds protected by the MBTA include Western kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*), red-winged blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), and the great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*).

Protected/Heritage Trees. The City of Scotts Valley has adopted tree protection regulations which identify heritage trees and protected trees within the city limits.⁸ The City's inventory of heritage trees lists no heritage trees on the project site. However, there are several trees on the office building/open space parcel which meet the following definition of a protected tree:

- Any tree having a main stem or trunk which measures 25 inches or greater in circumferences measured 48 inches above natural grade, located in a hillside residential zone where the slope of the area within 20 feet of where the tree is located exceeds 20 percent;
- Any oak tree having a main stem or trunk which measures 25 inches or greater in circumference measured 48 inches above natural grade. Any multi-trunk oak with an individual trunk of over 12 inches in circumference measured 48 inches above the natural grade; or
- All trees which have a 40-inch or greater circumference of any trunk measured 48 inches above the natural grade, or in the case of multi-trunk trees, a total of 80 inches or more of the circumference of all trunks measured 48 inches above the natural grade. This provision shall not apply to eucalyptus (blue gum), acacias, or any bay laurel below and located within the drip line of an established oak tree.

⁸ City of Scotts Valley Ordinance 17.44.080, 1994.

The City's tree protection regulations contain a permitting process for the removal of protected trees. The permit may require on-site replacement for native species at the discretion of the Community Development Director.

Within this parcel, nearly all mature trees above the 40% slope line meet the criteria for protected trees. In addition, there are two large coast live oaks and a cluster of approximately one dozen coastal redwoods located in the northwest portion of the parcel, just below the 40% slope line, which also meet the criteria for protected trees based on size. These trees exceed 40 inches in circumference. For greater details regarding trees at the project site, refer to Appendix D, Tree Survey Technical Report, prepared for this SEIR.

Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures in the Previous EIR

The *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* identified the following significant impact on biological resources that would be applicable to the proposed project.

"Development or other actions anticipated under the Specific Plan could result in the removal of wetland habitat. Portions of both the freshwater seep and the saturated area...could meet the Army Corps of Engineers' criteria as wetlands...Because this is a natural seep providing some value for wildlife in the area, removal of this habitat would be considered a significant impact." P.85.

Recommended mitigation measures in the Specific Plan EIR to reduce impacts to freshwater seeps require that: 1) the seep shall be avoided and/or incorporated into the design of future commercial development; and 2) if this is infeasible, project proponents for future development shall provide compensatory mitigation at a minimum 1:1 ratio for areas lost.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures of the Proposed Project

Significance Criteria

The project sites would have a significant adverse effect on biological resources if they:

- Substantially affect, either directly or through habitat modifications, any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFG or USFWS.
- Substantially affect riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFG or USFWS.
- Substantially affect federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- Interfere substantially with the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

- Conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Environmental Analysis

BIO-1. Construction of the proposed office building would destroy approximately 0.10 acre of freshwater seeps which meet the federal criteria for wetland habitats. (PS)

Approximately 0.10 acre of freshwater seep wetlands is located on the upper grassy slopes of the office building/open space site. Project plans call for these areas to be graded for the construction of the office building and the adjacent parking lots. These freshwater seeps meet the criteria for wetlands (hydrophytic vegetation, wetland soils, and hydrologic indicators) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and are subject to jurisdiction by the Corps (see Appendix C). Destruction of wetland habitats is considered a potentially significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE. The following mitigation measure would reduce potentially significant impacts to wetland resources to a less-than-significant level. (LTS)

BIO-1.1 Replace Filled Wetlands. The project sponsor shall submit the Section 404 wetland delineation to the Corps for verification. Following verification, a wetland mitigation plan shall be developed by the project sponsor to replace any affected wetlands at a one to one ratio. The sponsor shall create a wetland mitigation area on the upper slopes of the Gateway South office building site, which would lend itself to the creation of “in kind, no net loss” mitigation.

BIO-2. Project construction may disturb nesting birds on the project site. (PS)

The removal of vegetation, necessary for the construction of both developments, could result in potential disturbances to nesting birds (typically February 1 to August 31). Nesting birds, their nests, and eggs are fully protected by CDFG Game Codes 3503, 3503.5, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. If vegetation is removed outside the nesting season, there would be no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE. The following mitigation measure would reduce potentially significant impacts to nesting birds to a less-than-significant level. (LTS)

BIO-2.1 Avoid Vegetation Removal or Undertake Pre-Construction Survey. Construction activities shall be timed to avoid vegetation removal during nesting season (February 1 to August 31). If this cannot be accomplished, then a qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction nesting surveys no more than two weeks prior to construction to determine if nesting birds are present. If nesting birds are present, a minimum 150-foot buffer zone around the nesting site(s) shall be

observed, and construction activities shall be suspended in this zone until future surveys indicate that the chicks have fully fledged.

BIO-3. Construction of the proposed office building would reduce available foraging habitat for Cooper's hawk. (LTS)

Annual grasslands are utilized as foraging and breeding habitat by Cooper's hawks and other species of raptors. The proposed office building would result in the loss or fragmentation of most of the annual grassland habitat (approximately 7 acres) within the office building project site. However, annual grassland habitat would remain relatively plentiful within the project vicinity. Additionally, the proposed office building would not result in a substantial loss of breeding habitat for Cooper's hawks. Therefore, potential project impacts to Cooper's hawks are considered less than significant.

BIO-4. Construction of the proposed office building could remove trees that are protected under the City's tree preservation ordinance. (PS)

Construction grading for the proposed office building parking lot may result in the removal of the following protected trees under the City's tree protection ordinance: two coast live oaks and a cluster of approximately one dozen coastal redwoods in the northwest corner of the property. Construction grading may additionally impact the root systems of protected trees along the toe of the 40% slope line. Removal of, or damage to, these trees without a tree removal permit would conflict with the City's adopted tree preservation ordinance.

MITIGATION MEASURES. The following mitigation measures would reduce potentially significant impacts to protected trees to a less-than-significant level. (LTS)

BIO-4.1 Avoid or Employ Special Precautions Around Protected Trees. The project sponsor shall avoid protected trees where possible. Construction activities shall not encroach into a 50-foot buffer surrounding the dripline of any protected tree. Protective fencing shall be installed prior to construction to protect trees that are to be retained.

BIO-4.2 Replace Removed Trees. If removal of, or impact to, protected trees is unavoidable, the project sponsor shall apply for a removal permit, accompanied by an arborist's report, under the City's tree protection ordinance, which may require on-site replacement of protected trees with the same number and species. Additionally, on-site monitoring by the City arborist shall be conducted as required by SVMC Section 17.44.080.E.4.f.

Comparison of Impacts and Mitigation Measures Between EIR and SEIR

Impacts on biological resources identified in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* would be similar to those identified for the proposed project. For example, Impact BIO-1 (elimination of freshwater seeps)

is similar to the impact identified for the same resource in the Specific Plan EIR. The mitigation measures identified in the Specific Plan EIR to reduce impacts to freshwater seeps are similar to those identified in this SEIR for the proposed project and could be carried forward for the proposed project.

Two additional impacts resulting from the proposed project that were not included in the Specific Plan EIR are identified in this SEIR: the potential loss of nesting bird habitat (Impact BIO-2) and the loss of protected trees (Impact BIO-3). Mitigation measures for these impacts are described above and would be implemented in addition to the measures provided in the Specific Plan EIR.

3.5 HYDROLOGY

Introduction

This section discusses the hydrologic setting of the project site and identifies potentially significant impacts to hydrologic resources as a result of the proposed project. Hydrologic impacts may include effects to groundwater, surface water, or water quality. This section also includes mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potentially significant impacts, where necessary. This section was prepared based on information contained in the *Hydrology Technical Report, Gateway South Office Building and Fire Station* (July 2000) (included as Appendix F of this SEIR), *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* (June 1995), *Mount Hermon Conference Center Draft EIR* (December 1999), *Inn at Scotts Valley Mitigated Negative Declaration* (May 1997), and discussions with the Scotts Valley Water District staff.

Setting

Surface Water and Drainage

The project site is located in the Carbonera Creek drainage basin, a 7.4-square-mile area drained by the perennial, south-flowing Carbonera Creek. Annual rainfall varies between 30 and 42 inches per year, increasing toward the northern (upstream) end of the basin. The project vicinity receives average rainfall of approximately 40 inches of rain per year.¹ Runoff from the project site is collected by swales draining directly into Carbonera Creek. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency² (FEMA), the project site is not in a flood hazard zone. East of the project site, adjacent to SR-17, an existing storm drain facility collects surface water runoff from the project site and the adjacent Hilton Hotel prior to discharge to Carbonera Creek.

Carbonera Creek is the major drainage flowing through the City of Scotts Valley. The watershed is primarily mountainous, with elevations ranging from 30 to 3,200 feet above mean sea level. It is bound by the Santa Cruz Mountains to the north, the Bean Creek watershed to the west, and the Branciforte Creek watershed to the east. Carbonera Creek flows southwest and discharges to Branciforte Creek in the City of Santa Cruz. Branciforte Creek discharges to the San Lorenzo River approximately one mile downstream from the Carbonera Creek confluence.

The project site is underlain primarily by sedimentary rocks of the Tertiary age (less than 65 million years old), Santa Margarita Sandstone (coarse- to medium-grained, highly permeable sand), overlain by shallow Quaternary (less than 1.5 million years old) alluvium. The Santa Margarita Sandstone and Quaternary alluvium are relatively pervious and are subject to significant infiltration of precipitation. During the reconnaissance of the project site conducted by EIP, outcrops of the Santa Margarita Sandstone were observed at the ground surface in the southwestern portion of the office building/open space site.

¹ City of Scotts Valley, *Storm Drainage Master Plan*, City of Scotts Valley Planning Department, 1989.

² Federal Emergency Management Agency, *Q3 Flood Data, Disc 1-California*, May 1996.

Runoff from the office building/open space site generally drains from west to east towards La Madrona Drive. Runoff from the proposed fire station site also drains from west to east, towards SR-17. Surface runoff is conveyed over the sites via sheetflow and discharges to existing storm drains along La Madrona Drive and SR-17. Runoff entering the storm drains discharges into an existing storm drain system that is connected directly to Carbonera Creek. No off-site runoff passes through the project site. Older silt fences line a majority of the project site adjacent to the west side of La Madrona Drive and apparently were used to prevent stormwater runoff sedimentation into the existing gutters and storm drains.

Groundwater

The water supply for the project site and vicinity is drawn entirely from the Scotts Valley groundwater basin and is produced from two principal groundwater aquifers. These aquifers consist of the Santa Margarita Sandstone (an unconfined aquifer underlying the Scotts Valley area) and the Lompico Sandstone (a semi-confined aquifer separated in some places from the overlying Santa Margarita Sandstone by shales of the Monterey Formation). The Santa Margarita aquifer varies from 0 to approximately 350 feet in thickness and is recharged directly by precipitation and by infiltration along streams. Currently, the Santa Margarita Sandstone has limited saturation (on the order of 20 feet with an average formation thickness of approximately 200 feet, or 10% saturation) with several hundred feet of available unsaturated storage space within this highly transmissive aquifer. Flow direction in the saturated section of this aquifer is controlled by the surface of the underlying Monterey Formation. Perched water tables, of variable lateral extent, may occur within the unsaturated section of this unconfined aquifer, where cemented zones create locally saturated zones.

The Lompico aquifer ranges up to 800 feet in thickness and is recharged by precipitation in its limited outcrops in the northern portion of the groundwater basin and by flows from the overlying geologic units. The Lompico Sandstone is generally considered to be less permeable and a less productive aquifer than the shallower Santa Margarita Sandstone. This aquifer was impacted by accelerated groundwater withdrawals in the Mount Hermon and Scotts Valley areas in the 1990s because of increased water development and declining water levels in some areas of the Santa Margarita aquifer.

Groundwater quality is of major concern in the Scotts Valley groundwater basin, particularly because the principal water-producing aquifer is unconfined and directly underlies the most developed portions of the basin. Potentially, any surface or near surface pollutant releases have a direct pathway into the public water supply. Chemical plumes have been identified in the Santa Margarita aquifer. The closest plume to the project site consists of benzene extending northwesterly from the intersection of Scotts Valley Drive and Mt. Hermon Road, about one-half mile from the project site. This plume has been linked to fuel releases from underground storage tanks at gasoline stations at or near the intersection. Several other contaminants are suspected in the groundwater, including methyl tertiary butyl ether and tertiary butyl alcohol. Currently, groundwater monitoring and remediation activities are being conducted to mitigate this situation.

The City's primary water supply source is the Scotts Valley groundwater basin. There are two principal groundwater aquifers, as discussed above. Developers are required to obtain water

entitlements from the Scotts Valley Water District, in the form of a “will-serve” letter, prior to project approval. The developers of the proposed office building have received a ‘will-serve’ letter from the Scotts Valley Water District for the equivalent of 28 five-eighths inch by three-quarters inch water meters (see Appendix G).³ The Fire District has not obtained a “will-serve” letter from the Water District.

The District provides water service in the project area via a 10-inch water main along Mt. Hermon Road from Glen Canyon Road to La Madrona Drive, and a 12-inch water main along La Madrona Drive from Mt. Hermon Road to Silverwood Drive. These water lines were completed in the late 1990s as part of a capital improvement project, and were designed to accommodate future commercial development on the project site.

Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures in the Previous EIR

The following discussion provides a summary of significant impacts on hydrological resources as identified in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*, applicable to the proposed project or its immediate site. This section also identifies recommended mitigation measures described in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* to reduce potential hydrological impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Impacts to Surface Water Quality

“...development of the project site will result in a significant increase in impermeable surfaces over existing conditions...The increase in impermeable surfaces may result in increased erosion potential, elevation of flood potential, and a reduction in surface water quality.” P. 63.

In addition, the EIR stated that, “The primary impact from proposed development will be due to oil and grease from vehicular traffic carried in street and parking lot runoff... This is considered a potentially significant impact on water quality.” P. 64.

Recommended mitigation measures to reduce impacts to surface water quality require project proponents of individual development projects to prepare a plan for an engineering drainage system using best management practices (BMPs), including the following: 1) equip storm drains with sediment and grease traps, 2) use porous paving materials, 3) use cisterns for storm water storage, 4) minimize directly connected impervious surfaces, 5) roof parking areas to catch storm water, 6) direct roof and sidewalk runoff to detention basins, 7) vacuum street sweeping to remove potential contaminants, 8) use native vegetation for landscaping to reduce pesticide/fertilizer use, 9) use approved erosion control measures and landscaping to reduce sediment load in runoff, and 10) detain and meter runoff to pre-development flow, as appropriate. P. 64-65.

³ One water meter = 20 gallons per minute (gpm). 60 minutes x 20 gpm x 24 hours x 28 meters = 806,400 gpd. 28 meters = 5/8” x 3/4” equivalents.

Impacts to Groundwater Quality

"...cumulative impacts [to groundwater recharge] from continued residential and commercial development of the area served by Scotts Valley groundwater basin resources are potentially significant." P. 70.

Recommended mitigation measures to reduce impacts to groundwater recharge require project proponents of individual development projects to prepare a plan for artificial recharge of the groundwater basin, including 1) on-site artificial recharge using percolation ponds or underground recharge systems, or 2) off-site artificial recharge through direct participation by developers in off-site recharge projects or by financial contribution to recharge projects.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures of the Proposed Project

Significance Criteria

Under the guidelines of CEQA, hydrology and water quality impacts are considered significant if one or more of the following conditions would result from project construction and/or operation:

- A significant change in rate and amount of surface runoff or change in amount of water in any water body;
- A substantial degradation of water quality.
- The contamination or substantial reduction of a public water supply.
- A substantial degradation or depletion of groundwater resources.
- A substantial interference with groundwater recharge or direction and rate of groundwater flow.
- The location of facilities within a flood-prone area or alterations to the course or flow of floodwater.
- Substantial flooding, erosion or sedimentation.
- The alteration of stream flow characteristics that would result in erosion, sedimentation or flooding downstream.

Methodology

The examination of project-specific impacts on hydrological resources (surface runoff and water quality) is based on information from site observation; review of existing topographic maps and reports prepared by the City of Scotts Valley and the U.S. Geological Survey; and review of site plans prepared for the proposed office building development.

Environmental Analysis

HY-1. Construction activities for the proposed project could result in short-term increases in erosion and downstream sedimentation. (PS)

During the construction period, soils at the construction site would be exposed to the erosive forces of wind and storm runoff to a potentially significant degree. Approximately 6.6 acres are proposed to be disturbed for the office building development with 50,000 cubic yards to be excavated and 60,000 cubic yards of fill, of which approximately 10,500 cubic yards consists of imported soil. Approximately 1.5 acres would be disturbed for site grading and construction of the proposed fire station. When de-vegetated and excavated, the topography of the site would be subject to gullying under the influence of moderate to heavy rains, if preventive action were not taken. Grading activities at the construction site could increase the amount of total dissolved solids and other pollutants leaving the project area and adversely affect downstream water quality through erosion and the transport of sediments and dissolved constituents entering the storm drains in La Madrona Drive and eventually into Carbonera Creek or other tributary streams. This would be considered a potentially significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURES. While some of the mitigation measures identified in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* would reduce this potential impact, the following measures are more specific to the proposed project and would better reduce the potential impacts from construction-related erosion and downstream sedimentation to a less-than-significant level. (LTS)

- HY-1.1 Schedule Ground Disturbance for the Dry Season.* To the extent practicable, project excavation and construction shall be scheduled for the dry season (April 15 through October 15).
- HY-1.2 Comply with NPDES and SWPPP Requirements.* The permit requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) shall be satisfied prior to issuing a building permit by the City of Scotts Valley. The project is subject to the conditions of the General Construction Activity National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit from the RWQCB. This permit requires that the project sponsor develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP is required to identify the sources of sediment and other pollutants onsite, and to ensure the reduction of sediment and other pollutants in the stormwater discharged from the site. A monitoring program is required to aid the implementation of, and assure compliance with, the SWPPP.
- HY-1.3 Prepare and Adhere to an Erosion/Sedimentation Plan.* An Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan shall be submitted to the City of Scotts Valley by the project sponsor for the project prior to grading (this may be a portion of the SWPPP). An erosion control professional, landscape architect, or civil engineer specializing in erosion control shall design the Erosion and Sedimentation Control

Plan. This plan would include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following provisions:

- a. The Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan shall be submitted, reviewed, implemented and inspected as part of the approval process for the grading plan for the project.
- b. The Plan shall be designed by the developer's erosion control consultant, using concepts similar to those formulated by the Scotts Valley Public Works Department, as appropriate, based on the specific erosion and sediment transport control needs of each area in which grading, excavation, and construction is to occur. The possible methods are not necessarily limited to the following items:
 - Locate staging areas outside major streams and drainage ways.
 - Keep the lengths and gradients of constructed slopes (cut or fill) as low as possible.
 - Discharge grading and construction runoff into small drainages at frequent intervals to avoid buildup of large potentially erosive flows.
 - Prevent runoff from flowing over unprotected slopes:
 - Keep disturbed areas (areas of grading and related activities) to the minimum necessary for construction of the project.
 - Keep runoff away from disturbed areas during grading and related activities.
 - Stabilize disturbed areas as quickly as possible, either by vegetative or mechanical methods.
 - Direct runoff over vegetated areas prior to discharge into public storm drainage systems, whenever possible.
 - Trap sediment before it leaves the site with such techniques as sediment ponds or siltation fences.
 1. Interceptor ditches, drainage swales, or detention basins shall be used to prevent storm runoff from transporting sediment into local storm drains and drainage ways and to prevent sediment-laden runoff from leaving the disturbed area.
 2. Replace existing silt fences to prevent sedimentation in adjacent and down gradient drainage ways. Additional silt fences shall be constructed by the contractor as needed prior to mass grading and other soil-disturbing construction activities onsite.

- Control landscaping activities with regard to the application of fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides or other hazardous substances. Provide proper instruction regarding use of these substances to all landscaping personnel on the construction team.
- c. During the installation of the erosion and sediment transport control structures, the erosion control professional shall be on the site to supervise the implementation of the designs, and the maintenance of the facilities throughout the grading and construction period.

HY-2. Construction of the proposed project would result in an increase in impervious areas and higher levels of surface runoff, potentially increasing erosion and flood hazard in downstream drainage ways. (PS)

The proposed development would cause an increase in impervious surfaces, thus increasing the amount of surface runoff. The project would replace much of the existing undeveloped portions (vegetated and earthen surfaces) of the site with a building and parking areas. The construction and operation of this project would result in a total area of approximately 8.1 acres of impervious surfaces on both the office building/open space and fire station parcels. This is a conservative estimate given that landscaping and irrigated areas would be incorporated into the final site design.

The addition of impermeable surfaces would increase the total amount of surface runoff that currently leaves the area. Approximate calculations of the magnitude of the increase were estimated using the Rational formula, whereby a 24-hour storm event with a 10-year recurrence interval would have a peak flow from the site of 10.3 cubic feet per second (cfs) under existing conditions. A maximum surface runoff peak of 19.1 cfs would be generated from the site as a result of the increase in impervious area.⁴ This increase of 8.8 cfs over existing conditions would be routed and discharged into the existing storm drainage system that serves the site from La Madrona Drive.

The development of the proposed project site would be subject to City requirements for the provision of drainage; i.e., storm drainage must be provided such that the depth of storm flow is contained within a street curb height of 4.5 inches or within existing storm drain conduits. The project would be required to connect to the existing storm drainage system in a manner that does not exacerbate existing flooding hazards and/or water quality conditions.

⁴ The Rational Formula, $Q=CIA$

where: C = runoff coefficient of 0.9 for impervious surfaces, and 0.3 for vegetated/open space areas

I = 1.8 inches of precipitation for a 10-year storm of 1 hour duration

A = area, site total of 19.1 acres

Existing conditions:

$$Q = (0.3)(1.8)(19.1) = 10.3 \text{ cfs}$$

Post-project:

$$Q = (0.9)(1.8)(8.1) + (0.3)(1.8)(11) = 19.1 \text{ cfs}$$

Provided sufficient drainage infrastructure is in place following development, no significant drainage impacts would occur on the project site. According to preliminary site plans, two subsurface detention facilities would be constructed in the northeastern and southeastern portion of the office building site. Runoff would be channeled to these detention facilities where the water would be metered prior to discharge into the existing storm drains on La Madrona Drive. Runoff from the detention facilities would discharge into the City's existing storm drain system that is connected to Carbonera Creek. As site plans are preliminary, it is uncertain whether the detention system has been sized to attenuate the peak runoff flows of the 10-year/24-hour storm event to levels at or below peak flows generated during the 10-year/24-hour storm event for this project. As a result, the increased volume of runoff could contribute to additional depth or area of flooding along the City's storm drain system, making it necessary to modify portions of the drainage channels downstream from the project site. Preliminary plans for the proposed fire station do not indicate any on-site detention facilities. Applicants for both project sites must typically submit engineering calculations which verify the feasibility of the preliminary detention system design. As runoff impacts from both parcels are unknown, they are also considered potentially significant. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURES. While some of the mitigation measures identified in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* would reduce this potential impact, the following measures are more specific to the proposed project and would better reduce the potential impacts from increases in surface runoff to a less-than-significant level. (LTS)

The overall mitigation strategy shall include a project design focused on the development and inclusion of explicit elements within the final site design to minimize directly connected impervious areas, reduce the proportion of impervious surfaces within the project area, and allow improved management of stormwater flows generated from the project site. These measures are described below.

HY-2.1 *Design and Construct Adequately Sized Detention Facilities.* Prior to issuance of building permits for both proposed developments, the project sponsors shall submit designs for the detention facilities for approval by the City of Scotts Valley Public Works Department. Existing runoff from both project sites shall be routed through on-site storm drain detention facilities so that the runoff can be metered prior to discharge into the existing storm drain system. The design shall provide sufficient information to enable the Public Works Department to determine that peak flows for the 10-year storm event can be contained.

HY-2.2 *Incorporate Infiltration and Pollution Control Measures into Drainage System.* The project sponsor shall incorporate measures into drainage projects for both proposed developments (storm drains, conduits, and channel improvements) that maximize infiltration/permeability and trap pollutants and sediment from stormwater runoff.

HY-3. Increased runoff from additional impermeable surfaces could lower the quality of stormwater runoff. (PS)

Major contributors of contaminants to runoff in developed areas are the parking lots, streets and gutters and other impervious areas directly connected to streets or storm drains. Between rainstorms, materials accumulate on these surfaces in a variety of ways; for example, debris dropped or scattered by individuals; sidewalk sweepings; debris and other particulate matter washed into streets from yards and other unpaved areas; wastes and dirt from construction, renovation, and demolition; fecal droppings from dogs, birds, and other animals; remnants of household refuse dropped during collection or scattered by animals or wind; dirt, oil, tire, exhaust and other residue contributed by automobiles; and fallout of air-borne particles.

Without mitigation, the accumulation of urban pollutants would be a significant impact because uncontrolled overland flow from paved surfaces and landscaped areas would carry many of the above-listed contaminants, thereby contributing to the deterioration of the quality of stormwater runoff. The eventual result could be the deterioration of water quality in downstream receiving waters. Drainage ways downstream from the project site, specifically Carbonera Creek, would carry stormwater runoff to San Lorenzo River and eventually to the Pacific Ocean. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURES. While some of the mitigation measures identified in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* would reduce this potential impact, the following measures are more specific to the proposed project and would better reduce the potential impacts from increases in surface runoff to a less-than-significant level. (LTS)

HY-3.1 Install Pollutant Control Devices into the Storm Drainage System. The office building developer and the Scotts Valley Fire District shall install easily cleanable sediment catch basins, debris screens, and grease separators or similar water quality protection devices in the drainage facilities serving both project sites (i.e., vegetated swales, buffer strips, detention pond areas).

HY-3.2 Ensure Maintenance of Pollutant Control Devices. The office building developer and the Scotts Valley Fire District shall ensure maintenance of the stormwater pollution control facilities through in-lieu fees paid to the City, or by other means identified by the Public Works Department and the Scotts Valley Water District.

HY-3.3 Label Storm Drain Inlets. All storm drain inlets shall be labeled to educate the public about the adverse impacts associated with dumping into receiving waters.

HY-3.4 Clean Parking Areas. The project sponsor shall clean or sweep parking areas on a monthly basis.

HY-4. Implementation of the project would not significantly deplete groundwater resources and public water supplies, interfere with local groundwater recharge, or be located within a flood-prone area. (LTS)

Although no impacts to water supply are anticipated, the Fire District would require a “will-serve” letter from the Water District prior to approval of the fire station.

Implementation of this project would not interfere with groundwater recharge, or the direction or rate of groundwater flow. Based on the findings of the geotechnical investigation conducted by Treadwell & Rollo,⁵ localized areas of perched groundwater are located at the project site. This may be the result of thin beds associated with the Santa Margarita Sandstone less than 20 feet below ground surface of the project site. Groundwater appears to be perched within these thin layers because underlying highly impervious Monterey Formation Shale or other regional bedrock formations prevent further infiltration (recharge). Therefore, the project is located in an area predominantly associated with groundwater discharge as opposed to an area of groundwater recharge and would not interfere with local groundwater recharge.

According to FEMA, the project site is not located within a flood hazard zone. Therefore, the project would not be located within a flood-prone area.

Comparison of Impacts and Mitigation Measures Between EIR and SEIR

Impacts on surface and groundwater quality due to implementation of the *Gateway South Specific Plan* would be similar to those identified for the proposed project. As discussed under Impacts HY-1 through HY-3, the mitigation measures identified in this SEIR would be more specifically tailored to the proposed project and may achieve a greater level of impact reduction than similar mitigation measures presented in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*.

⁵ Treadwell & Rollo Environmental and Geotechnical Consultants, *Draft Report, Geotechnical Investigation, Gateway South Development, Scotts Valley, California*, June 29, 2001.

3.6 NOISE

Introduction

This section provides a description of general noise and ground-borne vibration principles, as well as a discussion of sources of noise and ground-borne vibration, sensitive receptors, and noise levels surrounding the project site. Key noise-related issues examined here include construction-period activities and increased vehicular noise on the roadways serving the project site. The setting description was prepared based on information contained in the Noise section of the *Gateway South Specific Plan Final EIR* (June 1995). Where appropriate, mitigation measures are presented that would minimize or eliminate potential significant noise impacts.

Setting

Fundamentals of Noise

Sound is technically described in terms of amplitude (loudness) and frequency (pitch). The standard unit of sound amplitude measurement is the decibel (dB). Since the human ear is not equally sensitive to sound at all frequencies, a special frequency-dependent rating scale has been devised to relate noise to human sensitivity. The decibel scale adjusted for A-weighting (dBA) provides this compensation by discriminating against frequencies in a manner approximating the sensitivity of the human ear. Over the audible range of pitch, the human ear is less sensitive to low frequencies and is more sensitive to mid-level and high-pitched sound. Table 3.6-1 lists dBA noise levels for common events in the environment and industry.

Table 3.6-1
Typical Sound Levels Measured in the Environment and Industry

Noise Source (Distance)	A-Weighted Sound Level in Decibels (dBA)	Subjective Impression
Civil Defense Siren (100')	130	Pain Threshold
Jet Takeoff (200')	120	
Rock Music Concert (50')	110	
Pile Driver (50')	100	Very Loud
Ambulance Siren (100')	90	
Diesel Locomotive (25')	85	Loud
Pneumatic Drill (50')	80	
Freeway (100')	70	Moderately Loud
Vacuum Cleaner (10')	60	
Light Traffic (100')	50	
Large Transformer (200')	40	Quiet
Soft Whisper (5')	30-0	Threshold of Hearing

Source: Peterson & Gross, 1963.

A noise environment consists of a base of steady "background" noise that is the sum of many distant and indistinguishable noise sources. Superimposed on this background noise is the sound from individual local sources. These can vary from an occasional aircraft or train passing by to virtually continuous noise from, for example, traffic on a major highway.

Several rating scales have been developed to analyze the adverse effect of community noise on people. To account for the varying nature of environmental noise, these scales consider that the potential effect of noise upon people is largely dependent upon the total acoustical energy content of the noise, as well as the time of day when the noise occurs. Common measures along these scales are as follows:

- L_{eq} , the equivalent energy noise level, is the average acoustic energy content of noise, usually measured over one hour. Thus, the L_{eq} of a time-varying noise and that of a steady noise are the same if they deliver the same acoustic energy to the ear during exposure. L_{eq} values do not include a penalty for noise that might occur at night.
- L_{dn} , the day-night average noise level, is a 24-hour average L_{eq} with a 10 dBA "penalty" added to noise during the hours of 10:00 pm to 7:00 am to account for the greater nocturnal noise sensitivity of people.
- CNEL, Community Noise Exposure Level, is a 24-hour average with a 5 dBA penalty added to noise during the evening from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm and a 10 dBA penalty added during the nighttime from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am. The CNEL is very similar to the L_{dn} , with the CNEL about 0.2 to 1 decibel greater than the L_{dn} .

Community noise environments are typically represented by noise levels measured throughout the day and night, or over a 24-hour period (i.e., by L_{dn}); the one-hour period is especially useful for characterizing noise caused by short-term events, such as operation of construction equipment or concert noise (i.e., with L_{eq}). Community noise levels are generally perceived as quiet when the L_{dn} is below 45 dBA, moderate in the 45 to 60 dBA range, and loud above 60 dBA. Very noisy urban residential areas are usually around 70 dBA L_{dn} . Along major thoroughfares, roadside noise levels are typically between 65 and 75 dBA L_{dn} . Noise levels above 45 dBA at night can disrupt sleep, and levels greater than 85 dBA can cause temporary or permanent hearing loss. In general, a difference of 3 dBA is a minimally perceptible change, while a 5 dBA difference is the typical threshold that would cause a change in community reaction. An increase of 10 dBA would be perceived by people as a doubling of loudness.¹

Noise levels from a source diminish as distance from the source to the receptor increases. Other factors such as the weather and reflecting or shielding intensify or reduce noise levels at any given location. A commonly used rule of thumb for traffic is that for every doubling of distance from the road, the noise level is reduced by about 3 dBA. A doubling of traffic on any given roadway would cause a noise increase of approximately 3 dBA. Noise levels may also be reduced by intervening structures. For example, a single row of buildings between the receptor and the noise source reduces the noise level by about 5 dBA. Generally, the most effective way to reduce noise in a development is

¹ Federal Transit Administration, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, April 1995.

through site planning techniques such as building placement, providing buffering distances and orienting buildings so that noise does not “bounce” between walls. Where this is not enough noise protection, barriers such as sound walls are used. Sound walls can be effective barriers only for single-story receptors. Where sound walls are used, they perform best if placed at the source of the noise rather than at the noise receptor.

Existing Noise Sources

According to the *City of Scotts Valley General Plan*, vehicular traffic along SR-17, Mt. Hermon Road, and Scotts Valley Drive are the most significant sources of noise in the City. The project site is in the vicinity of Mt. Hermon Road and is bordered by SR-17 to the east. Approximately 60,000 daily auto and truck trips occur on SR-17. Some of these vehicles may generate from 90 to 95 dBA along and adjacent to the highway. Truck traffic and buses along Mt. Hermon Road also contribute to the noise levels.

The highest ambient background noise level in 1994 was 73 dBA, occurring about 11 feet from the edge of Mt. Hermon Road near Glen Canyon Road at noon during an average weekday.² This intersection is located approximately one-half mile north of the project site. Noise levels were measured at 68.9 dBA on La Madrona Drive adjacent to the site. SR-17 generally runs along the eastern boundary of the project site and is significantly lower in elevation. Additionally, a significant amount of vegetation (i.e., trees and bushes) lines the highway and serves as a noise buffer between the project site and SR-17.

Sensitive Receptors

Noise sensitive land uses are typically given special attention to achieve protection from excessive noise. Noise sensitive land uses, as defined in the City's General Plan, include hospitals, churches, libraries, schools, and retirement homes. Sensitive land uses in the project vicinity include the Monte Fiore residential subdivision approximately 800 feet to the west, the Baytree Apartments approximately 800 feet to the north, and the Hilton Hotel immediately north of the project site. No other sensitive land uses (i.e., hospitals, churches, libraries, schools, and retirement homes) are within 1,000 feet of the project site.

Applicable Policies and Regulations

State of California. California requires each local government entity to adopt and implement a Noise Element as part of its general plan. The Noise Element must analyze and quantify current and projected noise levels from specified sources and prepare noise contours from these sources to be used as a guide for establishing a pattern of land uses that minimizes the exposure of community residents to excessive noise. The Office of Noise Control at the California Department of Health Services has published guidelines for evaluating the compatibility of various land uses as a function of community noise exposure.

² City of Scotts Valley, *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*, June 1995, Section 2.7.2 – Noise.

City of Scotts Valley General Plan. The Noise Element of the General Plan includes goals and policies to prevent noise pollution and includes standards for noise exposure for various land uses. The General Plan emphasizes noise mitigation by proper site planning and project design rather than by using noise barriers. The Noise Element requires mitigation for new development that could be exposed to community noise levels above the allowable noise exposure standards of the General Plan. Table 3.6-2 presents the allowable noise increase levels typically deemed acceptable based on the existing adjacent land use.

**Table 3.6-2
City of Scotts Valley Noise Increase Standards**

Proposed New Use/ Location of dBA Reading		Maximum Noise Increase in dBA Adjacent to Existing:			
		Sensitive Land Use	Residential Land Use	Commercial Land Use	Industrial Land Use
Sensitive:	at Property Line	3	5	5	5
	50' from Property Line	3	3	--	--
Residential:	at Property Line	3	5	5	5
	50' from Property Line	3	3	--	--
Commercial:	at Property Line	3	5	5	5
	50' from Property Line	3	3	--	--
Industrial:	at Property Line	3	5	5	7
	50' from Property Line	3	3	--	--

Source: City of Scotts Valley General Plan.

General Plan Policy NP-442 states that new developments that may increase the day-night noise level by more than the levels identified in Table 3.6-2 shall be approved only when proper noise attenuation design measures have been incorporated to the City's satisfaction.

General Plan Action NA-452 states that in areas where the annual day-night noise level exceeds 60 dBA, the City shall require an acoustical engineering study for proposed new construction. Each acoustical analysis should recommend methods to reduce the interior day-night annual average noise levels to below 45 dBA for private dwellings, motels, hotels, offices, and noise sensitive uses.

Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures in the Previous EIR

The following discussion provides a summary of significant impacts on ambient noise levels as identified in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*, applicable to the proposed project or its immediate site. This section also identifies recommended mitigation measures described in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* to reduce potential noise impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Exposure to High Levels of Traffic Noise

Future development of projects within the Specific Plan will be subject to high noise levels associated with traffic on SR-17 and Mt. Hermon Road. This impact is not a result of the Specific Plan but is an existing environmental condition that will impact future development of projects within the Specific Plan.

Exposure to Noise Levels in excess of 60 dBA at Residential Land Uses

Adjacent residential uses, as well as future residential uses within the Specific Plan, may be subject to noise levels that exceed 60 dBA at the property line of future commercial developments. Noisy activities associated with loading docks, truck cleaning, and garbage trucks located in the commercial parcels adjacent to existing and/or future residential homes are considered significant noise impacts.

Recommended mitigation measures to reduce noise impacts require project proponents of future commercial development projects to design the site so that loading docks, truck cleaning, garbage receptacles, etc. are set back far enough away from existing and future adjacent residential land uses. Site design shall be subject to review and approval by the Planning Director prior to approval of the tentative site drawings.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures of the Proposed Project

Significance Criteria

According to CEQA, Appendix G, a project will normally have a significant effect on the environment if it will increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas. As mentioned above, a 5 dBA difference is the typical threshold that would cause a change in community reaction. In addition, in conformance with the Noise Element of the *Scotts Valley General Plan*, the maximum increase in ambient noise levels due to new commercial uses is also 5 dBA at adjacent residential or commercial land use property lines.

Methodology

Noise impacts from the proposed project would result from increases in traffic on adjacent roadways and construction activities. Quantitative and qualitative analyses were performed to evaluate the effects of the various noise sources.

For vehicle traffic, the analysis was performed using modeling techniques derived from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Caltrans. All noise levels presented are ambient exterior noise levels for each of the modeled receptor sites. Increases of interior noise levels were assumed to be the same as the anticipated increases in exterior noise levels. For example, if project-related traffic would cause a 5 dBA change to exterior noise levels, a 5 dBA change would also be experienced indoors.

Traffic noise impacts for future sensitive receptors created by the project were assessed in terms of compatibility with acceptable levels for land uses as specified in the General Plan Noise Element.

New mechanical equipment (both on roof tops or at grade) would be sufficiently set back from any existing or future residential land uses. The nearest residential land use, the Monte Fiore subdivision, is physically separated from the project site due to intervening topography. The Baytree Apartments are about 800 feet to the north of the project site. Neither of these residential developments is close enough to the project site to be affected by future mechanical equipment. Therefore, these stationary noise sources would have less-than-significant impacts.

Environmental Analysis

NO-1. There would be a temporary increase in noise levels during construction of the proposed project. (PS)

Implementation of the proposed project would result in temporarily elevated noise levels due to the use of construction machinery. Noise impacts may be significant if construction is phased so that a portion of the site is actively under construction next to dwellings or other sensitive uses that are already occupied. Sensitive land uses consist of a residential subdivision to the west, townhouses to the north, and the Hilton Hotel adjacent to the project site.

Construction activities are carried out in discrete steps, each of which has its own mix of equipment and its own noise characteristics. Noise levels surrounding a construction site would therefore vary as work progresses. Despite the variety in the type and size of construction equipment, similarities in the dominant noise sources and patterns of operation allow noise impacts to be categorized by work phase. Typical construction equipment noise levels are illustrated in Table 3.6-3.

The noisiest construction machinery is typically earth-moving equipment, which includes bulldozers, scrapers, and loaders. This equipment is used during site preparation and road building. Typical operating cycles involve one or two minutes of operation at full power followed by three to four minutes at lower power settings. Noise levels at 50 feet from earth-moving equipment range from 73 to 96 dBA.

The range of noise levels during subsequent phases of construction is similar, although framing and building construction tends to be less noisy. Noise levels vary from 79 to 89 dBA at 50 feet during this phase. Noise levels during grading and site preparation tend to range from 88 to 96 dBA at 50 feet with a combination of equipment in operation.

Given the site's proximity to the Hilton Hotel and its elevation, construction noise would be noticeable and could disturb nearby land uses. This would be a potentially significant impact of the proposed project.

Table 3.6-3
Average Noise Levels and Abatement Potential of Construction Equipment Noise at
50 and 100 Ft. (dBA)

Equipment	Noise Level at 50 Ft. (Before Mitigation)	With Feasible Noise Control^{/a/} (After Mitigation)	Noise Level at 100 Ft. (Before Mitigation)	With Feasible Noise Control^{/a/} (After Mitigation)
Earthmoving				
Front Loaders	79	75	73	69
Backhoes	85	75	79	69
Dozers	80	75	74	69
Tractors	80	75	74	69
Scrapers	88	80	82	74
Graders	85	75	79	69
Trucks	91	75	85	69
Pavers	89	80	83	74
Materials Handling				
Concrete Mixer	85	75	79	69
Concrete Pump	82	75	76	69
Crane	83	75	77	69
Derrick	88	75	82	69
Stationary				
Pumps	76	75	70	69
Generator	78	75	72	69
Compressors	81	75	75	69
Impact^{/b/}				
Pile Drivers	101	95	95	89
Rock Drills	98	80	92	74
Jack Hammers	88	75	82	69
Pneumatic Tools	86	80	80	74
Other				
Saws	78	75	72	69
Vibrators	76	75	70	69

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Noise from Construction Equipment and Operations, Building Equipment, and Home Appliances*, December 1971.

Notes:

/a/ Estimated levels obtainable by selecting quieter procedures or machines and implementing noise-control features requiring no major redesign or extreme cost.

/b/ Pile-driving and rock-drilling are not proposed as part of the project.

MITIGATION MEASURE. The following measure would reduce the potential impacts from construction noise to a less-than-significant level. (LTS)

NO-1.1 Implement Best Management Practices to Reduce Construction Noise. The project sponsor shall incorporate the following practices into the construction documents to be implemented by the project contractor and these shall be provided to the Community Development Director for approval prior to the issuance of building permits:

- a. Maximize the physical separation between noise generators and noise receptors. Such separation includes, but is not limited to, the following measures:
 - Provide enclosures such as heavy-duty mufflers for stationary equipment and barriers around particularly noisy areas on the site or around the entire site;
 - Use shields, impervious fences, or other physical sound barriers, to inhibit transmission of noise to sensitive receptors;
 - Locate stationary equipment to minimize noise impacts on the community; and
 - Minimize backing movements of equipment.
- b. Use quiet construction equipment whenever possible, particularly air compressors.
- c. Prohibit unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines.
- d. Schedule construction activity that produces higher noise levels during less noise-sensitive hours (normally 8 am to 5 pm on weekdays and 9 am to 4 pm on Saturdays). Minimize noise intrusive impacts during the above most noise-sensitive hours by planning noisier operations during times of highest ambient noise levels.
- e. Select routes for movement of construction-related vehicles and equipment in conjunction with the City of Scotts Valley Planning Department so that noise-sensitive areas, including residences, hotels, and outdoor recreation areas, are avoided as much as possible. Include these routes in materials submitted to the Community Development Director for approval prior to the issuance of building permits.
- f. Designate a noise disturbance coordinator who will be responsible for responding to complaints about noise during construction. The telephone number of the noise disturbance coordinator shall be conspicuously posted at the construction site and shall be provided to the Community Development Director. Copies of the construction schedule shall also be posted at nearby noise-sensitive areas.

NO-2. Traffic generated from the proposed project would not significantly increase ambient noise levels within the project vicinity. (LTS)

The traffic generated due to the project would increase ambient noise levels. Noise generated from traffic on SR-17 off-ramps, Mt. Hermon Road, and La Madrona Drive has been analyzed for existing conditions (2002) and for future conditions (2025), both with and without the project. As presented in Table 3.6-4, the traffic noise without the project at 100 feet from the centerline of these roads ranged from 55 to 65 dBA Ldn. The addition of project traffic would not result in a perceptible increase in noise on any roadway segment within the project vicinity. The greatest increase in traffic noise levels is approximately 1.9 dBA along La Madrona Drive south of Altenitas Road in 2002 conditions with the project. The increase in traffic noise levels in 2002 and 2025 conditions with the project are all less than 3 dBA and is compatible with acceptable levels for land uses as specified in the General Plan Noise Element. Therefore, traffic-related noise impacts resulting from an increase in vehicle trips generated by the project would be considered a less-than-significant impact.

**Table 3.6-4
Traffic Noise Levels in the Project Vicinity without and with the Project
24-Hour dBA (Ldn)**

Roadway Segment	2002 No Project	2002 w/Project	2025 No Project	2025 w/Project
Mt. Hermon Road south of Scotts Valley Drive	63.1	63.1	64.6	64.6
Mt. Hermon Road south of Glen Canyon Road	63.0	63.1	63.7	63.8
Mt. Hermon Road @ State Highway 17 SB Off-Ramp	61.5	61.7	63.6	63.7
La Madrona Drive south of Altenitas Road	54.8	56.7	57.6	58.6
Mt. Hermon Road @ State Highway 17 NB Off-Ramp	60.8	61.1	61.4	61.6

Source: EIP Associates.

Note: Based on FHWA traffic noise modeling analysis using California vehicle noise factors.

NO-3. Operational activities from the proposed project would not significantly increase ambient noise levels within the project vicinity. (LTS)

Operational activities associated with the proposed project (i.e., loading operations, garbage pick-up, and fire truck cleaning) would be at sufficient distances away from adjacent residential land uses to be imperceptible in terms of increasing ambient noise levels. Loading activities, consisting of small- to medium-sized trucks, generate noise typically in the range of 60 to 65 dBA at 50 feet during loading activities (i.e., idling, backing, use of hydraulic liftgates, etc.), while larger trucks generate noise in the range of 70 to 75 dBA at 50 feet. Trash compaction

and collection typically generate noise ranging from 70 to 75 dBA at 50 feet. Traffic circulation and parking lot noise typically range from 60 to 65 dBA at 50 feet.

Both the Monte Fiore residential subdivision and the Baytree Apartments are approximately 800 feet from the project site boundaries. Stationary source noise attenuates at a rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance. Thus, if a stationary noise emitted a noise level of 70 dBA at 50 feet, then at 100 feet, the noise level is attenuated to 64 dBA; at 200 feet, 58 dBA; at 400 feet, 52 dBA; and at 800 feet, 46 dBA. Since the ambient noise levels near the project site range from 69 to 73 dBA, these operational noises would be imperceptible at adjacent residential property lines. In addition, the Monte Fiore subdivision is separated from the project site by an intervening hillside that would remain as permanent open space and would act as a noise buffer between the proposed project and this sensitive land use.

Although siren noise levels emitted from fire trucks are typically about 90 dBA, which is loud, noise generated by emergency vehicles is not considered to be a nuisance considering the urgent and imperative nature of the operations. Siren noise is also typically infrequent and temporary, and would not be considered a significant noise impact on sensitive receptors. Therefore, operational noise generated by the proposed project would be less than significant.

Comparison of Impacts and Mitigation Measures Between EIR and SEIR

Impacts to ambient noise levels due to the implementation of the *Gateway South Specific Plan* did not address construction noise impacts identified for the proposed project, as discussed under Impact NO-1. The EIR considered traffic noise a potentially significant impact to future development within the Specific Plan. The proposed uses of the project site, a commercial office building and a fire station, are not considered noise-sensitive land uses. Also, the measured noise levels at La Madrona Drive, which includes vehicular traffic from SR-17, was within the noise range generally acceptable for commercial uses. Project-specific noise analysis for this SEIR indicates that project-related traffic noise and other operational noises are considered less than significant. Therefore, mitigation measures identified in the Specific Plan EIR to reduce operational and traffic noise impacts to a less-than-significant level would not be required for the proposed project.

3.7 AIR QUALITY

Introduction

This section describes the impacts of the proposed project on local and regional air quality. The section has been prepared using methodologies and assumptions recommended in the *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines* of the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD).¹ The setting description was prepared based on information contained in the Air Quality section of the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* (June 1995) and from local air quality monitoring data. Where appropriate, mitigation measures are presented that would minimize or eliminate potential significant air quality impacts.

Setting

Topography and Meteorology

The project site is located in the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), which consists of Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties. The Santa Cruz Mountains are located in the northwest area of this basin. The Diablo Range marks the northeastern boundary, and together with the southern extent of the Santa Cruz Mountains, forms the Santa Clara Valley that extends into the northeastern tip of the Basin. Further south, the Santa Clara Valley merges with the San Benito Valley that runs northwest to southeast and has the Gabilan Range as its western boundary. To the west of the Gabilan Range is the Salinas Valley that extends from Salinas at the northwest end to King City at the southeast end. The western side of the Salinas Valley is formed by the Sierra de Salinas, which also forms the eastern side of the smaller Carmel Valley; the coastal Santa Lucia Range defines the western side of the valley.

The semi-permanent high-pressure cell in the eastern Pacific is the basic controlling factor in the climate of the air basin. In the summer, the high-pressure cell is dominant and causes persistent west and northwest winds over the entire California Coast. Air descends in the Pacific forming a stable temperature inversion of hot air over a cool coastal layer of air. The onshore air currents pass over cool ocean water to bring fog and relatively cool air into the coastal valleys. The warmer air above acts as a ceiling to inhibit vertical air movement.

The generally northwest to southeast orientation of mountainous ridges tends to restrict and channel the summer onshore air currents. Surface heating in the interior portion of the Salinas and San Benito Valleys creates a weak low pressure that intensifies the onshore air flow during the afternoon and evening.

¹ Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines*, Adopted – October 1995, revised – February 1997, August 1998, December 1999, and September 2000.

In the fall, the surface winds become weak and the marine layers grow shallow, dissipating altogether on some days. The air flow is occasionally reversed in a weak offshore movement and the relatively stationary air mass is held in place by the Pacific high-pressure cell, which allows pollutants to build-up over a period of a few days. It is most often during this season that the north or east winds develop to transport pollutants from either the San Francisco Bay Area or the Central Valley into the NCCAB.

During the winter, the Pacific high-pressure cell migrates southward and has less influence on the air basin. Air frequently flows in a southeasterly direction out of the Salinas and San Benito Valleys, especially during night and morning hours. Northwest winds are nevertheless still dominant in winter, but easterly flow is more frequent. The general absence of deep, persistent inversion and the occasional storm systems usually result in good air quality for the basin as a whole in winter and early spring.

In Santa Cruz County, coastal mountains exert strong influence on atmospheric circulation and result in generally good air quality. Small inland valleys such as Scotts Valley with low mountains on two sides have a poorer circulation than at the City of Santa Cruz on the coastal plain. Scotts Valley is downwind of major pollutant generating centers (i.e., Silicon Valley), and these pollutants have time to form oxidants while in transit to Scotts Valley. Consequently, air pollutants tend to build up more at Scotts Valley than at Santa Cruz.

Regional Air Quality

With the assistance of the MBUAPCD, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) compiles inventories and projections of emissions of the major pollutants and monitors air quality conditions. Air quality conditions are reported in the NCCAB for criteria air pollutants. Criteria air pollutants refer to a group of pollutants for which regulatory agencies have adopted ambient air quality standards and pollution reduction plans. Criteria air pollutants include ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulate matter, and lead. Reactive organic compounds and gases (ROG) are also regulated pollutants because they are precursors to ozone formation. A subset of particulate matter is regulated as inhalable particulate matter less than ten microns in diameter (PM₁₀). Toxic air contaminants (TACs) refer to a category of air pollutants that pose a present or potential hazard to human health, but which tend to have more localized impacts than criteria air pollutants. TACs are not monitored at any air monitoring stations located within the NCCAB.

The air basin is a nonattainment area for the State Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone and inhalable PM₁₀. Because it has not violated the state ozone standard more than three times at any monitoring location within the district during the calendar year since 2000, the district is designated "nonattainment-transitional" for ozone by operation of law. The adopted state and national ambient air quality standards and the air quality conditions are summarized for ozone, CO, and PM₁₀ in Table 3.7-1.

**Table 3.7-1
Ambient Air Quality Standards and Monitoring Data for the Project Vicinity**

	Ozone ¹		CO ¹		PM ₁₀ ¹	
	1-hour (ppm)	8-hour (ppm)	1-hour (ppm) ²	8-hour (ppm)	24-hour ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	Annual ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)
Regulatory Standards						
California	0.09	N/A	20.0	9.0	50	20
National	0.12	0.08	35.0	9.0	150	50
Monitoring Data						
1999: Scotts Valley Drive	0.084	0.072	1.07	0.75	47	17
2000: Scotts Valley Drive	0.096	0.078	1.11	0.78	30	14
2001: Scotts Valley Drive	0.085	0.073	1.44	1.01	35	17

Source: California Air Resources Board, 2002.

Notes:

Bold values are in excess of the California or National Ambient Air Quality Standard.

ppm = parts per million

$\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ = micrograms per cubic meter

N/A = not available or not applicable

¹ Data provided for ozone from the MBUAPCD monitoring station at 4859 Scotts Valley Drive, Scotts Valley, California; CO data provided from the Davenport Firehouse station located in Davenport, California; PM₁₀ data provided from the Santa Cruz station located at 2544 Soquel Avenue in Santa Cruz, California.

Local Air Quality

The MBUAPCD operates a network of air quality monitoring stations in the region. The closest air quality monitoring stations to the project site are located in Scotts Valley – 4859 Scotts Valley Drive, about 2 miles north of the project site; in Santa Cruz – 2544 Soquel Avenue, about 6 miles southeast of the project site; and in Davenport – Davenport Firehouse, about 7 miles to the west of the project site. The Scotts Valley monitoring station records data for only ozone, while the Santa Cruz and Davenport monitoring stations record data for suspended particulates (PM₁₀) and CO as well as ozone. The monitoring results of the Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz and Davenport stations are presented with the ambient air quality standards in Table 3.7-1.

Most violations in the NCCAB occur at the Pinnacles National Monument. CARB has determined that ozone levels at Pinnacles are highly influenced by smog transported from a number of regional sources including the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin, the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin, and the NCCAB.

Existing Sources of Emissions

Air pollution sources can be grouped into three categories, mobile sources, area-wide sources, and stationary sources. Mobile sources include all on-road vehicles as well as off-road mobile equipment, aircraft, and trains. Area-wide sources are stationary, but typically occur throughout developed areas. These sources include use of consumer products, like fertilizers, paints, and sprays, and fuel

combustion at residences. Stationary sources include industrial sources and heating, ventilation and air conditioning and cooling (HVACC) equipment at commercial facilities. Additional emissions are generated by natural sources such as wildfires. The inventory of emissions for each of the state's air basins is maintained by CARB and MBUAPCD.

The 2000 and 2020 emission inventory for Santa Cruz County and the entire NCCAB is shown in Table 3.7-2. Exhaust emissions from on-road motor vehicles are the primary source of ROG, nitrogen oxides, and CO in the air basin, and road dust sent airborne by traveling vehicles is a primary source of particulate matter. Area-wide and stationary sources make up the remainder of the emission inventory in the region.

Table 3.7-2
Annual Air Emissions By Source Category in the NCCAB, 2000 and 2020
(Tons/Day – Annual Average)

	2000 Base Year				2020 Forecast			
	ROG ¹	NO _x	CO	PM ₁₀	ROG ¹	NO _x	CO	PM ₁₀
Santa Cruz County								
On-Road Motor Vehicles Emissions ²	11	12	94	0.4	3	3	21	0.4
Total Emissions (All Sources)	26	22	136	14.5	20	12	65	18.2
North Central Coast Air Basin								
On-Road Motor Vehicles Emissions ²	30	45	296	1.3	8	12	69	1.6
Total Emissions (All Sources)	77	87	517	76.5	56	50	273	89.0

Source: *California Air Resources Board, Emissions Inventory Branch, Emissions by Category.*

Notes:

1. Reactive organic gases (excluding emissions from natural vegetation).
2. On-Road Motor Vehicle Emissions category in this table includes paved and unpaved road dust from traffic.

Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors are facilities or land uses most likely to be used by people that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants (the very young, the elderly, people weak from illness or disease, or persons doing heavy work or exercise). Residential areas, schools, childcare centers, hospitals, retirement homes, and convalescent homes are each considered sensitive to air pollution.

The proposed project would be located in an area generally consisting of commercial and residential land uses. The nearest sensitive land use to the project site would be the Baytree Apartments located northeast across Mt. Hermon Road (approximately 800 feet from the project site) and the Monte Fiore residential subdivision located approximately 800 feet west of the project site.

Applicable Policies and Regulations

Ambient Air Quality Standards. The federal Clean Air Act, including amendments of 1990, and the California Clean Air Act of 1988 establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards and state-level ambient air quality standards, respectively, for ozone, CO, NO₂, SO₂, PM₁₀, and lead. The federal and state ambient air quality standards for ozone, CO, and PM₁₀ are summarized in Table 3.7-1. The standards are upper limits designed to protect all segments of the population including those most susceptible to the pollutants' adverse effects (e.g., sensitive receptors).

Air Quality Management Plans. The federal Clean Air Act, as amended, and the California Clean Air Act provide the legal framework for attaining and maintaining the ambient air quality standards. Both the federal and state acts require that the CARB designate as "nonattainment areas" portions of the state where federal or state ambient air quality standards are not met. Where a pollutant exceeds standards, air quality management plans must be formulated that demonstrate how the standards will be achieved. These laws also provide the basis for the implementing agencies to develop mobile and stationary source performance standards.

Santa Cruz County is wholly within the NCCAB, which is in the jurisdiction of the MBUAPCD. This air basin also includes Monterey and San Benito Counties. The NCCAB does not meet the state ambient air quality standards for ozone and PM₁₀; however, air monitoring data for 2000 show that the District meets the criteria for a nonattainment-transitional area, having had less than three exceedances of the State ozone standard at any one air monitoring station. While the classification of nonattainment-transitional is by operation of law, CARB does not recognize the designation until it has validated the data.

MBUAPCD is primarily responsible for planning, implementing, and enforcing the federal and state ambient standards in Scotts Valley. EPA's approval of the *1991 Air Quality Plan for the Monterey Bay Region* or Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), which indicates how MBUAPCD will implement State air quality requirements, resulted in the 1991 Plan being incorporated into the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The region's SIP is a compilation of plan components and air pollution control regulations that when taken together are designed to enable the region to attain and maintain the State standards. The MBUAPCD has updated the 1991 Plan three times with the 2000 AQMP being the most recent version.

The 2000 AQMP includes revisions to the base year emission inventories and 2005, 2010, 2015 and 2020 emission forecasts for volatile organic compounds (VOC) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) (pollutants which form ozone). The most significant changes include updates to the on-road and off-road mobile source emission inventories.

The NCCAB remains on the borderline between attainment and nonattainment in part due to variable meteorological conditions occurring from year to year, transport of air pollution from the San Francisco Bay Area, and locally generated emissions. The photochemical model indicates that while the severity and extent of ozone exceedances are reduced in 2010 in comparison to 1990, some areas of

the Basin may still not achieve the standard with current control measures. Additional controls may be needed to avoid future exceedances, especially under adverse meteorological conditions.

Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures in the Previous EIR

The following discussion provides a summary of significant impacts on air quality as identified in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR*, applicable to the proposed project or its immediate site. This section also identifies recommended mitigation measures described in the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* to reduce potential air quality impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Exceed Threshold Criteria for PM₁₀

“Buildout of the property is expected to occasionally exceed the threshold criteria for PM₁₀ [during construction phase only]. This is considered a significant impact. However, implementation of the following mitigations will reduce this impact to a level of insignificance.” Mitigation Measure 8, P. 101.

Recommended mitigation measures to reduce air quality impacts require project proponents of future development projects to prepare a construction air pollution control plan to include, but not limited to, the following techniques:

- Sprinkle unpaved construction sites with non-potable water at least twice per day;
- Cover trucks hauling excavated materials with tarpaulins or other effective covers;
- Cease grading activities when winds are greater than 30 mph;
- Cover soils storage piles not to be used within one business week;
- Install wheel washers for all exiting trucks;
- Limit the area under construction;
- Sweep streets serving the construction sites at least once per day;
- Pave and plant as soon as possible;
- Reduce unnecessary idling; and
- Use adhesives, clean-up solvents, paint, and asphalt paving materials with a low ROG content.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures of the Proposed Project

Significance Criteria

According to CEQA, Appendix G, and the MBUAPCD, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if it would: 1) violate an ambient air quality standard (137 lbs/day for VOCs, 137 lbs/day for NO_x, 550 lbs/day for CO, and 82 lbs/day for PM₁₀); 2) contribute substantially to an

existing or projected air quality violation; or 3) expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. For the purposes of this SEIR, impacts to the air basin are considered significant if they meet or exceed the thresholds of significance.

Methodology

During implementation of the proposed project, heavy equipment used in the construction activities would cause emissions of diesel exhaust and generate emissions of dust. Emissions caused during construction phases were analyzed according to the MBUAPCD guidelines with recommendations for implementation of control measures. In the following analysis, mobile and stationary source emissions of reactive organic gases, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and carbon monoxide were estimated using the CARB's URBEMIS 2001 computer model assuming that project buildout would be complete by 2004. Mobile source emissions estimates rely on vehicle trip generation rates derived from factors published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and project-specific vehicle trips summarized in Section 3.1, Transportation, of this SEIR. The CALINE4 CO computer-modeling program was used to derive CO concentrations at study area intersections and determine whether localized traffic congestion might result in a violation of the CO ambient air quality standards. CALINE4 was developed by the California Department of Transportation to estimate local CO concentration resulting from motor vehicle emissions.

Environmental Analysis

AQ-1. Construction activities for the proposed project could result in short-term increases in PM₁₀ emissions. (PS)

Foreseeable construction activities would occur during site preparation, grading, placement of utilities and other infrastructure, placement of foundations for structures, and fabrication of structures. Construction activities would require the use of heavy trucks, excavating and grading equipment, concrete breakers, concrete mixers, and other mobile and stationary construction equipment. Emissions during construction would be caused by material handling, traffic on unpaved or unimproved surfaces, use of paving materials and architectural coatings, exhaust from construction worker vehicle trips, and exhaust from diesel-powered construction equipment.

Heavy construction activity on dry soil exposed during construction phases could cause emissions of dust (usually monitored as PM₁₀). VOCs, NO_x, CO, and additional particulate matter emissions would be created from the combustion of diesel fuel by heavy equipment and construction worker vehicles. Throughout the construction phases, construction-related emissions would vary day to day depending on the specific phase at the time. When considered in the context of long-term project operations, construction and demolition-related emissions would be short-term and temporary, but these activities still can cause significant effects on local air quality.

The short-term construction-related activities associated with the proposed project would result in dust and equipment exhaust emissions that could, at times, contribute to nuisances or deterioration of local air quality. Construction projects using typical construction equipment such as dump trucks, scrapers, bulldozers, compactors and front-end loaders which temporarily emit precursors of ozone (i.e., VOCs or NO_x) are already included in the emission inventories of State- and federally-required air plans and would not have a significant impact on the attainment and maintenance of ozone ambient air quality standards. However, unless PM₁₀ emissions are reduced by implementation of feasible control measures, impacts caused by these emissions would be potentially significant. This would be considered a potentially significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 8 from the *Gateway South Specific Plan EIR* (listed on p. 3.7-6) would reduce potential construction-related air quality impacts to a less-than-significant level. (LTS)

AQ-2. *The regional air emissions due to the proposed project would not contribute substantially to an existing air quality problem. (LTS)*

The project would increase the number of vehicles and vehicle trips in the project area and, thus, increase associated air emissions. However, as indicated in Table 3.7-3, operational emissions (including vehicle source emissions) associated with the proposed project would not exceed adopted threshold emissions for VOC, NO_x, and PM₁₀ and would not contribute to an existing air quality problem. Therefore, emissions of VOC, NO_x, and PM₁₀ associated with this project are not considered a significant impact.

**Table 3.7-3
Summary of Regional Emissions with the Proposed Project**

Operational Activity	VOC (lb/day)	NO_x (lb/day)	CO (lb/day)	PM₁₀ (lb/day)
Area-wide Sources	0.07	0.99	0.39	0.00
Mobile Sources	53.62	68.03	601.31	29.14
Total Operational Emissions	53.69	69.02	601.7	29.14
Significance Threshold	137	137	550	82

Source: EIP Associates, 2002.

Note: Estimates are results of modeling using the California Air Resources Board's URBEMIS 2001.

In contrast to the above pollutants, CO emissions would be expected to exceed the adopted threshold emission of 550 pound per day (lb/day). Because the project is anticipated to exceed the 550 lbs/day significance threshold based on the URBEMIS 2001 modeling results, MBUAPCD recommends further modeling (i.e., CALINE4) to assess if the project would cause a substantial contribution to the exceedance of the 1-hour or 8-hour CO Ambient Air

Quality Standards (AAQS). Based on the CALINE4 computer-modeling results (Tables 3.7-4a and 3.7-4b), local CO concentrations do not exceed AAQS. Therefore, emissions of CO associated with the project are not considered a significant impact.

Table 3.7-4a
Summary of Localized CO Analysis (1-hour) without and with the Project, 2002 and 2025

Intersection	1-Hour CO Concentrations (ppm)			
	Existing 2002 No Project	Existing 2002 w/Project	Future 2025 No Project	Future 2025 w/Project
Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive	5.3	5.3	4.6	4.6
Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Road	4.6	4.7	3.7	3.7
Mt. Hermon Road/SR 17 SB Off-Ramp	3.8	4.0	3.6	3.7
La Madrona Drive/Altenitas Road	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.2
Mt. Hermon Road/SR 17 NB Off-Ramp	3.5	3.6	2.8	2.9
1-Hour Ambient Air Quality Standard	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0

Source: EIP Associates, 2002.

Note: Concentrations are based on CALINE4 outputs that are adjusted with anticipated background CO concentrations of 1.4 ppm (1-hr).

Table 3.7-4b
Summary of Localized CO Analysis (8-hour) without and with the Project, 2002 and 2025

Intersection	8-Hour CO Concentrations (ppm)			
	Existing 2002 No Project	Existing 2002 w/Project	Future 2025 No Project	Future 2025 w/Project
Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive	3.7	3.7	3.2	3.2
Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Road	3.2	3.3	2.6	2.6
Mt. Hermon Road/SR 17 SB Off-Ramp	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.6
La Madrona Drive/Altenitas Road	1.4	1.6	1.4	1.5
Mt. Hermon Road/SR 17 NB Off-Ramp	2.5	2.5	2.0	2.0
8-Hour Ambient Air Quality Standard	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0

Source: EIP Associates, 2002.

Note: Concentrations are based on CALINE4 outputs that are adjusted with anticipated background CO concentrations of 1.0 ppm (8-hr).

Comparison of Impacts and Mitigation Measures Between EIR and SEIR

Impacts on air quality due to implementation of the *Gateway South Specific Plan* would be similar to those identified for the proposed project, as discussed under Impact AQ-1. The mitigation measures identified in the Specific Plan EIR to reduce construction air quality impacts to less-than-significant levels are identical to those identified for the proposed project. These mitigation measures are recommended by MBUAPCD and are presented in MBUAPCD's 2000 *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines*. The EIR did not identify any significant operational, long-term air quality impacts of the Specific Plan. This SEIR indicates that the proposed project would not result in localized or regional air emissions that create a significant air quality impact.

Section 4

Alternatives Analysis

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 and Public Resources Code Section 21002.1), an EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. After a market evaluation by the project sponsor, the only reasonable, feasible alternative for the project site would involve the type of "big box" retail and volume retailers that Scotts Valley leaders have strongly rejected in the past. There is no basis to believe that a light industrial alternative would be reasonable or feasible, or that it would create less significant impacts. While a higher-density residential project could be supported by market conditions, constraints on water resources, among other reasons, make this option infeasible. Therefore, the only proposed alternative is the No Project Alternative, described below, which proposes commercial uses consistent with the site's zoning and Specific Plan's maximum development limitations for Planning Area B.

4.2 NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Description

The No Project Alternative would entail no changes to the project site in the short term. In the long term, however, it would be reasonable to assume that the project site would eventually develop as a commercial service use consistent with the C-S zoning of Planning Area B in the *Gateway South Specific Plan*, and would be a smaller development within the square footage cap of 151,000 sf for the area. As approximately 136,000 sf of commercial service uses have been developed or are approved in Planning Area B, approximately 15,000 sf of allowable development remains. Given this potential scenario, the lower, flatter portions of the site adjacent to La Madrona Drive would develop as a 15,000-square-foot commercial service or retail use with parking for approximately 60 vehicles on surface-level parking areas fronting La Madrona Drive.¹ The upper slopes of the site would remain as forested open space, similar to the proposed project. The proposed fire station site would remain undeveloped.

Environmental Analysis

If the project site developed in accordance with the *Gateway South Specific Plan* and City zoning, the impacts associated with the proposed project would not occur as described below.

¹ The City of Scotts Valley requires one parking space per 250 gross square feet of commercial/retail development. $15,000/250 = 60$.

Transportation. Although no significant traffic impacts were associated with the proposed project under Project Conditions, the No Project Alternative would substantially reduce the intersection delays associated with the proposed project. As the No Project Alternative would be approximately 90% smaller than the proposed project in terms of square footage, it would generate approximately 90% fewer daily and peak-hour trips than the proposed project, or approximately 240 daily trips if it were developed as a commercial service retail use, compared with approximately 2,380 daily trips generated by the proposed project. Under the cumulative traffic scenario, the No Project Alternative would likely reduce cumulative traffic impacts associated with the proposed project to a less-than-significant level at the intersections of Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive, Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive/SR-17 Southbound Off-Ramp, and Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive.

Biological Resources. Potentially significant biological impacts associated with the proposed project, such as the filling of freshwater seeps and potential effects to nesting birds, may be similar with the No Project Alternative. The smaller development may also avoid protected trees on the northwest corner of the project site, potentially avoiding damage or removal of these biological resources. The No Project Alternative would be substantially smaller than the proposed project, so that avoidance of wetland seeps may be possible. If avoidance were not feasible, mitigation measures such as on-site wetland replacement and pre-construction nesting bird surveys, as identified in Section 3.4, Biological Resources, would reduce significant biological impacts associated with the No Project Alternative. Although not considered a significant impact, removal of grasslands associated with the proposed project would also occur under the No Project Alternative.

Hydrology. Potentially significant hydrological impacts associated with the proposed project, such as construction-related increases in erosion and downstream sedimentation, and flooding due to increased surface runoff, would be reduced under the No Project Alternative due to the less intensive development, but perhaps not to a less-than-significant level. If significant hydrological impacts were identified, mitigation measures for the proposed project would also reduce impacts associated with the No Project Alternative.

Visual Quality. Although no significant adverse impacts to visual resources were identified with the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would be a substantially smaller development than the proposed project, would preserve more views of the surrounding ridgelines in the project area, and would appear less visible from public viewpoints and scenic corridors. Potentially significant visual impacts associated with the proposed project, such as potential design conflicts with the proposed fire station, would be eliminated under the No Project Alternative. It would be unknown, however, if the No Project Alternative would meet the requirements for "Landmark Architecture" at this location. Mitigation measures calling for compliance with the Scotts Valley Design Guidelines, as identified in Section 3.2, Visual Resources for the fire station project, would also apply to the No Project Alternative to reduce potential design conflicts. Potential light and glare effects on motorists traveling on SR-17 would be reduced under the No Project Alternative, given the less intensive development.

Land Use, Plans, and Zoning. As no potentially significant land use, plans, or zoning impacts were identified for the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would also have no impacts. No amendment to the *Gateway South Specific Plan* would be required under the No Project Alternative, because commercial square footage would remain within the allowable 151,000 sf specified for the project area by the Specific Plan.

Air Quality. Potentially significant air quality impacts associated with the proposed project, such as emissions from project construction, would be reduced under the No Project Alternative but not likely to a less-than-significant level. Mitigation measures for the proposed project would also reduce significant air quality impacts associated with the No Project Alternative.

Noise. Potentially significant noise impacts associated with the proposed project, such as temporary construction-related noise, would be reduced under the No Project Alternative given the reduced level of development but not likely to a less-than-significant level. Mitigation measures for the proposed project would also reduce significant construction-related noise impacts associated with the No Project Alternative.

Project Objectives

The No Project Alternative would not meet some of the City's objectives to strengthen Scotts Valley's commercial areas. It is unknown if the No Project Alternative would provide a high-quality commercial development with a strong sense of entry into the gateway of Scotts Valley or would meet the design criteria for "Landmark Architecture" at this location. The absence of a fire station in this location would not meet the City's objectives of providing additional fire-fighting capabilities in this part of Scotts Valley.

Section 5

Other CEQA Topics

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The following section provides a discussion of other CEQA-mandated topics (not covered in the preceding section of this SEIR) including significant unavoidable impacts, growth inducement, and cumulative impacts.

5.2 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

In accordance with Section 21067 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and with Sections 15040, 15081, and 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this section identifies impacts that could not be eliminated or reduced to an insignificant level by mitigation measures included as part of the proposed project, or by other mitigation measures that could be implemented, as described in Chapter III, Environmental Analysis.

Implementation of the mitigation measures identified in Chapter III, specifically to address transportation, biological resources, hydrological resources, visual quality, air quality, and noise impacts, could reduce potentially significant impacts of the proposed project to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, no significant and unavoidable project impacts are anticipated. In the long-term future, however, with cumulative conditions, the Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive intersection would which would operate at and unacceptable LOS F in the AM peak hour. The proposed project's contribution can be reduced with Mitigation Measure TR-9.1 to less than cumulatively considerable. As a result, even though the intersection operation is unacceptable, the cumulative impact is considered less than significant (per CEQA Guideline Section 15130(a)(3)).

5.3 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

State CEQA Guidelines defines growth inducement as a project which would 1) induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (by proposing new homes or businesses), or indirectly (through extension of roads or other infrastructure); 2) displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere; or 3) displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Growth inducement is addressed on p. 28 of the Initial Study (Appendix A), and summarized here.

The proposed office building development would create approximately 495 jobs.¹ Another 12 fire station personnel would be located at the fire station site. These employees would be relocated from existing Fire District facilities in Scotts Valley, and would therefore not constitute new population

¹ Using an accepted ratio of 1 employee per 275 gross square feet of office use.

growth. The addition of 495 new office workers would not be considered a substantial concentration of population growth since the employment intensity is generally consistent with the area's Specific Plan land use designation and zoning, although at somewhat higher intensity than originally envisioned under the Plan. In terms of inducing new housing demand, these 495 workers can be categorized into those that are currently living in Scotts Valley, those that would be commuting from neighboring cities, and those that would relocate to Scotts Valley from other areas. Only the third category would result in population growth in Scotts Valley. If all 495 workers are conservatively assumed to relocate from other areas to Scotts Valley, this new population would place a demand on housing, community services, and public infrastructure. However, according to the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments forecasts between 2000 and 2020, approximately 1,500 new households and approximately 4,000 new jobs are expected in Scotts Valley. Accordingly, the new employees/households potentially associated with the project would not induce a substantial increase beyond the City's already projected growth rate. Furthermore, the General Plan requires that new development participate in a Capital Improvement Financing Program such that development projects not create excess demand for community services and public utilities.

The potential population growth in Scotts Valley due to the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts. The need for a balanced jobs/housing ratio is a primary goal of the General Plan Housing Element. The employment generated by the proposed project would assist the City in achieving an improved jobs/housing ratio.

5.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 requires discussion of significant cumulative effects. Cumulative effects are those project effects that are added to, and increased by, other projects affecting the same resource. The Guidelines direct that cumulative effects reflect either a list of past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects, or a summary of projections in adopted general plans or related planning documents that evaluate regional or areawide conditions.

A list of approved or pending projects in Scotts Valley was utilized to develop the cumulative conditions scenario. These projects include 1) buildout of the *Gateway South Specific Plan* (62 remaining dwelling units, 12,230 sf office space, and 15,000 sf of commercial space remaining from the originally proposed 151,000 sf); 2) Skypark Town Center (160,000 sf retail, 40,000 sf office, and 120 dwelling units); 3) Polo Ranch (46 dwelling units and two parks); 4) various small residential developments (25 total dwelling units); and 5) Bethany College Expansion (400 students).

In this SEIR, cumulative effects are addressed below by environmental topic. In some cases where cumulative impacts have been addressed in Chapter III, Environmental Analysis, the discussion of cumulative impacts is present below in a summary format.

Transportation

Section 3.1 evaluates transportation impacts associated with the proposed project. Six intersections in the vicinity of the proposed project were analyzed. Levels of service were calculated for existing conditions, future conditions with and without the project, and cumulative conditions with and without the project.

The cumulative analysis determined that, even without the addition of project-generated traffic, many of the study intersections would operate under unacceptable conditions: Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive, LOS F; Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 Southbound off-ramp, LOS E; La Madrona Drive/Altenitas Road, LOS F; and Mt. Hermon Road/El Rancho Drive-SR-17 Northbound ramps, LOS E. Because the proposed project would increase the V/C ratio greater than or equal to one percent at Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive, the Mt. Hermon Road/La Madrona Drive-SR-17 off-ramp, and Mt. Hermon Road/Glen Canyon Drive, the project would have a potentially significant cumulative impact. Mitigation measures to reduce these impacts, including physical improvements to the intersections, were identified in Section 3.1; however, the proposed measures at Mt. Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive may not be feasible.

Visual Quality

The geographic context for cumulative visual impacts is the Gateway South Specific Plan Area. Impacts to visual resources would be cumulatively considerable when past, present and future projects on vacant and developable parcels in the Specific Plan Area are assessed. In the Gateway South Specific Plan Area, there are 62 remaining dwelling units maximum allowable for development, 12,230 sf of approved commercial space in Area "A", and 15,000 sf of commercial space remaining from the originally proposed 151,000 sf in Area "B". The proposed project would utilize the 15,000 sf of allowable commercial space, and would add another 133,000 sf of development in the Specific Plan Area. Visual impacts associated with the increase in development have been evaluated in Section 3.2, Visual Quality. As described in this section, the proposed project would have no significant impacts that could not be reduced to a level of less-than-significant with implementation of recommended mitigation measures.

The addition of another 12,000 sf of office space in the Gateway South Specific Plan Area, which would occur on a flat, vacant lot at the intersection of La Madrona Drive and Mt. Hermon Road, would be visible from the project site, but would not affect visual resources, such as trees, rock outcroppings, historic resources, as none are located on this parcel. Similar to the proposed project, this development may be visible for 1-2 seconds from a scenic corridor when traveling southbound on SR-17, and would not be considered a substantial visual change within this scenic corridor. The 62 residential units allowable in the Specific Plan Area would be constructed along residentially-zoned properties along Mt. Hermon Road. One high-density residential parcel is located about 350 feet to the north of the project site on Mt. Hermon Road at Altenitas Drive. Other residentially-zoned parcels are located further north on Mt. Hermon Road over 800 feet from the project site. These areas are screened from the project site by intervening topographical features and existing development,

including the Hilton Hotel. As a result, residential development in this area would not be visible from the proposed project, and the viewer would not perceive the cumulative effect of the proposed project together with existing and future residential developments in the Specific Plan Area. Future residential development would undergo site-specific environmental review to ensure that they would be consistent with the goals and objectives contained in the Specific Plan, including provisions for landmark architecture and design compatibility with adjacent development. Also, there are few vantage points where cumulative development can be seen. For these reasons, there would be a less-than-significant cumulative effect on visual resources.

Land Use, Plans, and Zoning

The geographic context for cumulative impacts to land use, plans, and zoning is the Gateway South Specific Plan Area. Impacts to land use would be cumulatively considerable when past, present and future projects on vacant and developable parcels in the Specific Plan Area that would not meet the land use and planning objectives contained within the Specific Plan are assessed. For example, proposed projects in the Specific Plan Area that would not be consistent with the land use or zoning designations for the site, or would intensify the development beyond allowable square footage allotments, would result in significant cumulative land use effects. All existing and future projects in the Specific Plan Area have been or will be consistent with the zoning and land use designations for their respective sites, and have been within allowable square footage limits (with the exception of the proposed project). Examples include the recently-completed Baytree Apartments, Glen Canyon Townhomes, and the approved yet unbuilt retail development on La Madrona Drive at Mt. Hermon Road. Future projects on remaining vacant and developable land within the Specific Plan Area would undergo site-specific environmental review to evaluate potential effects on land use, plans, and zoning. Mitigation measures contained within these environmental evaluations would seek to reduce potential land use impacts, if any, to less-than-significant levels. While it is possible that future developments may exceed allowable square footage limits, these projects would require a Specific Plan Amendment and appropriate environmental review to evaluate the effects of such an exceedance, similar to the proposed project. For these reasons, there would be a less-than-significant cumulative effect on land use, plans, or zoning.

Biological Resources

Biological impacts associated with this proposed project have been evaluated in Section 3.4, Biological Resources. As described in this section, the proposed project would have no significant impacts that could not be reduced to a level of less-than-significant with implementation of the recommended mitigation measures. Compliance with the City's tree protection ordinance would ensure preservation of the City's heritage trees or their replacement. Additionally, future projects within the Specific Plan Area would undergo site-specific environmental review to evaluate potential effects on biological resources. Mitigation measures contained within these environmental evaluations would reduce potential impacts on biological resources, if any, to less-than-significant levels. For these reasons, a significant cumulative effect on biological resources is not expected.

Hydrology

Section 3.5 evaluates hydrological impacts associated with the proposed project. As described in the Specific Plan EIR, the incremental increase in water consumption and decrease in recharge to groundwater due to development within the Specific Plan Area are small in comparison to total pumpage from the basin and the estimated perennial yield for the basin. Additional water consumption rates from the proposed project would be smaller still. However, continued development of the area served by Scotts Valley groundwater basin resources may create excessive draw down and loss of pumping efficiency in areas where primary producing wells operate, the drying up of some of the shallower wells, and the reduction in surface water flows out of the basin.

Potential measures to reduce the hydrological impacts may include artificial recharge to groundwater, incorporation of water conservation measures in any site development, and minimizing the use of impervious ground covering materials. The *Scotts Valley General Plan* includes the following policy and actions designed to help recharge the groundwater basin:

- **Policy OSP-337.** The City shall maintain a storm drainage system which provides optimal flood protection and maximum groundwater recharge.
- **Action OSA-341.** The City shall require the updated storm drainage master plan to map significant recharge areas and natural drainage channels. The master plan shall include methods to combine recharge facilities into storm drainage plans.
- **Action OSA-342.** A percentage of storm drainage fees will be put into a fund to acquire recharge areas and construct improvements thereto when the need arises. These lands shall be maintained as open space and/or neighborhood parks.
- **Action OSA-343.** As part of the environmental review process, the City shall, in cooperation with the water district, require developers to study and mitigate any loss of recharge. Mitigations may take the form of on-site recharge, construction of recharge improvements, contribution to the program cited above, or a combination of any or all of these.

Other policies and actions in the General Plan include implementation of water conservation programs and high quality wastewater recharge into appropriate basins. Implementation of these policies and actions will help to recharge the groundwater basin and reduce this cumulative impact to a less-than-significant level.

Air Quality

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(b) requires that an EIR discuss consistency between the proposed project and applicable regional plans, including the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). Consistency determinations with the AQMP are used by the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District to address a project's cumulative impact on regional air quality.

Consistency of air emissions associated with a commercial, industrial or institutional project intended to meet the needs of the population as forecast in the AQMP is determined by comparing the estimated current population of the county in which the project is to be located with the applicable population forecast in the AQMP. The current population of Santa Cruz County is 255,602.² The AQMP population forecast for the year 2005 is 270,060.³ Population increases associated with the project have been considered in the AQMP forecast. Accordingly, the project is consistent with the AQMP and would not contribute to a cumulative air quality impact.

Noise

Section 3.6 evaluates noise impacts associated with the proposed project. Based on the analysis, traffic generated due to development within the Specific Plan Area would increase ambient noise levels. However, based on a comparison of 2002 traffic noise levels and 2025 traffic noise levels, additional traffic related to future development within the Specific Plan Area would not result in a perceptible increase in noise (i.e., a 5 dBA increase) on any roadway segment. Therefore, traffic-related noise impacts resulting from an increase in vehicle trips generated by future development within the Specific Plan Area, including the project site, would be considered cumulatively less than significant.

² United States Census Bureau, *United States Census 2000*, Santa Cruz County, downloaded from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06087.html>, October 10, 2002.

³ Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), *AMBAG Regional Population and Employment Forecast, 1997*, revised January 8, 1999.

Section 6

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6.1 EIR PREPARERS

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