CHAPTER 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Pursuant to the County of San Diego *Environmental Impact Report Format and General Content Requirements* (2004), this section evaluates those environmental effects that were found not to be significant as part of the SEIR process or as part of the Initial Study preparation process. Based on analysis conducted as part of this SEIR, implementation of the proposed Project would result in no significant impacts the issue areas of hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, public services, recreation, and utilities and service systems. Based on analysis conducted as part of the Initial Study preparation process, implementation of proposed Project would found to have no significant impacts in the issue areas of: agriculture, cultural resources, geology and soils, minerals, and population and housing. These conclusions were aided in part through technical analysis conducted by independent consultants and documented in reports in the areas of hydrology, water quality, and cultural resources. The technical reports are appended to this SEIR for reference as Appendices G1, G2, and H, respectively.

4.1 Effects Found Not Significant as Part of the EIR Process

The following issues were identified as potentially significant during the Notice of Preparation process but were concluded to be effects found not to be significant after further analysis: hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, public services, recreation, and utilities and service systems. A more detailed analysis related to why these issues have been determined not to be significant through the EIR process is provided below.

4.1.1 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The County of San Diego identified the issue of hazards and hazardous materials as being related to a potential increase in fire hazards that could expose people or property to increased risks from wildfires. Fire hazards as they relate to hazards and hazardous materials are addressed in this portion of the SEIR. Although not specified in the County's *EIR Request Letter*, potential hazard impacts associated with blasting operations also are evaluated. No other issues related to hazards or hazardous materials have been identified.

4.1.1.1 Existing Conditions

No known hazardous materials are present on the property. The project site is vacant and is primarily covered with native vegetation. Onsite vegetation is combustible and is susceptible to wildfire, which is regarded as a hazard. The project site contains bedrock that may require blasting during grading operations. Blasting is regarded as a potential hazard due to use of explosives and the potential for ground vibration.

4.1.1.2 Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The Project would have a significant adverse effect on the issue of hazards if any of the following would occur as a result of a Project-related component. Would the Project:

- Expose people or structures to significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildfire hazards, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands.

- Present an accidental risk of explosion or result in damage to property due to blasting operations.

4.1.1.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination as to Significance

- ***Would the Project expose people or structures to significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildfire hazards, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?***

On July 14, 2004, the County adopted Ordinance No. 9669, repealing and reenacting the County Fire Code. Section 35.39100.030 of Ordinance No. 9669 revised Appendix II-A of the Fire Code portion of the California Building Standards Code to add "Division II Special Hazards Appendix II-A Suppression and Control of Hazardous Fire Areas." Appendix II-A applies to the proposed Project because the project site is considered to be located in a hazardous fire area. For new construction such as proposed by the Highlands Ranch SPA, Ordinance 9669 addresses, among other issues, access, water supply, structure design, and the clearance of brush or vegetative growth from around structures. Compliance with Ordinance No. 9669 is mandatory for all new construction in the County.

The proposed Highlands Ranch SPA and TM propose a primary vehicular access point at Pointe Parkway and a secondary access at the northwestern Project boundary. As required by Ordinance No. 9669, all private roads would be constructed with a 32-foot curb-to-curb section with a maximum street grade of 15%, while Montemar Drive would be provided with a 28-foot wide asphalted surface within an existing designated right-of-way. The area where the improvements would occur is already disturbed, but does contain non-native grassland. As discussed in Section 3.2, *Biological Resources*, with the implementation of required mitigation there would be no additional significant impacts to the environment as a result of these improvements.

The Project is proposed to be gated. All automatic gates across fire access roadways are required to be equipped with approved emergency key-operated switches overriding all command functions and other devices approved by the Fire Chief, which will activate the gate on the approach of emergency apparatus. Gates are required to have battery back-up or manual mechanical disconnect in case of power failure. All automatic gates are required to meet fire department policies.

Water supply will be provided to the Project by OWD. The Highlands Ranch TM has been designed with adequate water infrastructure to meet fire flow requirements. OWD has indicated that an adequate supply of water to meet fire flow is available to the project site.

As required by Ordinance No. 9669, Section 26, "Fire-Resistive Construction in a Wildland/Urban Interface Area," all structures in the proposed Project are required to comply with County structural design requirements. The County also has the authority to require additional fire protection features in proposed structures such as fire sprinklers, spark arrestors on chimneys, etc.

A 100-foot fuel modification zone around all proposed structures would be required by the Project's Fire Management Plan, SPA, and TM, except in the extreme northwestern portion of the development, where fire protection walls would be provided in lieu of a full 100-foot fuel modification zone (as described below). In accordance with the Fire Management Plan (included as Appendix J to this SEIR), the proposed Highlands Ranch SPA provides specific guidelines for landscaping of the upper portions of manufactured slopes, where brush management zones would occur. According to the SPA, these areas would be fully irrigated and would extend a minimum of thirty-five feet from each dwelling unit. The use of deep rooted shrubs and trees is also encouraged to help prevent erosion. Maintenance of brush thinning with the fuel modification zone outside of individually owned residential lots would be the responsibility of the Project's homeowners' association. The Project would be subject to the San Diego County Weed Abatement Ordinance, which generally requires weed abatement for fire protection purposes and provides distances from properties as necessary in order to provide adequate buffer zones between development and natural areas subject to fire hazards. For the Highlands Ranch project, weed abatement on downhill slopes would be required for a horizontal distance of 100 feet (except in the northwestern portion of the development, as described below). As noted in the Fire Management Plan, a buffer distance of 100 feet would be sufficient to minimize the hazard to proposed structures within the development.

Within the extreme northwestern portion of the proposed Project, fuel management zones are not feasible because they would require regular maintenance on adjacent off-site properties. In these locations, and as depicted on SEIR Figure 1-13, fire protection walls consisting of masonry block materials measuring six feet in height would be provided. In order to enhance the fire protection afforded by these walls, exterior irrigation sprinklers would be installed along the fire protection walls for the purpose of reducing fire intensity and flame lengths should a fire occur. The exterior irrigation sprinklers would consist of a combination of 50 percent spray and 50 percent rotary heads with overlapping pattern, which would be directed toward the adjacent, off-site native vegetation. The system would be designed in conformance with the Project's Fire Management Plan, which requires all potentially hazardous flammable vegetation be simultaneously irrigated (sprayed) from the fire wall toward the off-site vegetation for a minimum distance of 20 feet. Spraying heads with longer ranging rotary spray heads shall be installed to increase the coverage to 50 feet from the fire wall. The system would be capable of being activated manually and would be permanently signed "Fire Emergency." Manual operation would permit activation of the system in advance of a wildfire to wet the fuels and allow for periodic testing.

Because the Project is required to comply with all provisions of County Ordinance No. 9669, potential fire hazard impacts would be reduced to below a level of significance.

- ***Would the Project present an accidental risk of explosion or result in damage to property due to blasting operations?***

The Project may require the short-term use of explosives to accomplish site preparation during grading and excavation where bedrock is present. A potential impact from blasting may occur during the construction phase of the Project. Onsite storage and use of explosives during construction could present a risk of accidental explosion and/or ground vibration during blasting. The use of explosives is highly regulated by the County. The Project would be required to obtain a blasting permit and

comply with the County Code of Regulations, Section 7701, which regulates blasting. The following requirements are mandated by County Ordinance:

- Prior to issuance of a blasting permit, the Fire Chief must approve fire safety requirements. The blaster shall permit fire protection district and Sheriff's Department personnel to inspect the blast site and blast materials or explosives at any reasonable time. The blaster shall notify the Sheriff and the appropriate fire protection district, on the day of a scheduled blasting operation not less than one (1) hour before blasting.

- The owner shall give, or cause to be given a one-time, reasonable notice in writing for ongoing operations to all residences and businesses within six hundred feet (600') of any potential major blast location, or three hundred feet (300') from any minor blast location. In addition, a notice by the blaster shall be given or caused to be given, not less than twenty-four (24) hours nor more than one (1) week before blasting operations and shall be in a form approved by the Sheriff.

- Adequate precautions shall be taken to reasonably safeguard persons and property before, during and after blasting operations. An approved inspector shall inspect all structures within three hundred feet (300') of the blast site before blasting operations, and complete pre-blast inspection reports. A post-blast inspection shall be conducted of all structures for which written complaints alleging blast damage have been received. A written report of such inspection shall be immediately filed with the Sheriff.

- All major blasting operations shall be monitored by an approved seismograph located at the nearest structure within six hundred feet (600'). All daily seismograph reports shall be maintained by the blaster.

With mandatory compliance with County blasting regulations, no significant impact would occur.

4.1.1.4 Cumulative Impact Analysis

No cumulative impacts have been identified related to fire or blasting hazards. All discretionary projects in the County of San Diego are subject to the requirements of the Uniform Fire Code and the County Fire Code as they relate to wildland/urban interface standards, and new construction is mandated to be in compliance with these requirements. All blasting in the County is required to comply with County blasting regulations. Cumulative fire-related and blasting hazard impacts would not occur through implementation of mandatory County standards and requirements.

4.1.1.5 Conclusions

The Project is required to comply with the mandatory provisions of the Uniform Fire Code and the County Fire Code, which would reduce wildland fire hazards to below a level of significance. The Project is required to comply with the mandatory provisions of the County's blasting requirements, which would reduce potential blasting safety hazards to below a level of significance.

4.1.2 Land Use and Planning

This section contains a discussion of existing land uses, community character, and planning-related issues, and also identifies potentially significant impacts, if any, along with appropriate mitigation measures, as necessary. Various sources were used during the preparation of this section, including the San Diego County General Plan [hereafter, the "General Plan"] and Zoning Ordinance (San Diego County Ordinance 5281), as well as the Spring Valley Community Plan.

4.1.2.1 Existing Conditions

The proposed project site is governed by the County's General Plan, as amended (07/99), the San Diego County Zoning Ordinance, and the Spring Valley Community Plan. The Spring Valley Community Plan provides the land use designations as well as the zoning classifications for the proposed project site. The project site is currently included within the existing Panorama Ridge Specific Plan (SPA 83-01). Zoning on the property is S88, the Specific Planning Area Use Regulation. According to the Zoning Ordinance (Ordinance No. 5281), the S88 zone is intended to accommodate lands on which a Specific Plan designation has been adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

Figure 1-3, Aerial Photograph, depicts the land use pattern surrounding the proposed project site. As shown on *Figure 3-1*, the proposed project site is surrounded by a variety of large to small lot residential developments, and some undeveloped lands on the steeper portions of Dictionary Hill. The project site is within the Spring Valley Community Plan boundaries. Land uses surrounding the Highlands Ranch project site are described in SEIR Section 3.1, *Aesthetics/Visual Quality*, and are summarized below:

1. The Pointe Specific Plan: East of the project site is The Pointe San Diego Specific Plan project, which is currently under construction. The Pointe consists of two distinct properties located on the north and south sides of Jamacha Boulevard. The northwest portion of this development is adjacent to the Highlands Ranch project site on the east side. The Pointe is designated as (21) Specific Plan by the Spring Valley Community Plan and consists of residential developments on lot sizes ranging from 5,000 square feet and larger.

2. La Presa Portions of Dictionary Hill: South of the project site on the southern face of Dictionary Hill within the La Presa community of San Diego County is a residential neighborhood that is characterized by housing types that vary significantly in age, size, and style. Interspersed throughout are disjointed areas of open space that are reflective of the steep topographic character of the neighborhood.

3. Western Face of Dictionary Hill: Existing developments west of the project site generally consist of large-lot, rural residential developments. These developments are generally located on the lower portions of Dictionary Hill, and would be buffered from the Highlands Ranch project site by natural open space resulting from the steep slopes that characterize the west face of Dictionary Hill.

4. Northwestern Face of Dictionary Hill: The northwestern face of Dictionary Hill is characterized by generally steep topography, although slopes are typically gentler than those that characterize the western and southwestern faces. This neighborhood, which would be immediately adjacent to the project site, is characterized by large estate lots clustered together where topographic constraints allow for development. Open space areas have been preserved where topographic constraints render residential developments infeasible.

5. Northeastern Face of Dictionary Hill: The northeastern face of Dictionary Hill contains a newer residential neighborhood characterized by the small lots and tract homes. Topographic relief between the Highlands Ranch project site and this neighborhood is very minor in comparison with other neighborhoods surrounding the site.

The Highlands Ranch project site is situated between the two distinct communities of Spring Valley and La Presa, both of which are a part of the Spring Valley Community Plan. This area is generally an older suburban community with a wide range of construction types due to the fragmented ownership and subsequent development of the area. The existing communities are comprised of a variety of housing types, ranging from apartments to large estate lots. South of Apple Street in the La Presa community, older, single-family residential developments predominate, with some apartment units located in the southwestern portion of the community. North of Apple Street on the southern and western faces of Dictionary Hill are generally larger lot homes on steep slopes. While very little planned open space exists on the southern or western faces of Dictionary Hill, topographic constraints on development have resulted in small interspersed areas of open space.

North of Troy Street in the Spring Valley community are generally older, semi-rural residential developments. East of Bancroft Drive along Route 94 are sporadic commercial developments. South of Route 94 are several existing single-family tract home neighborhoods. To the east of the project site, near the intersection of Sweetwater Springs Boulevard and Jamacha Boulevard, the Pointe San Diego residential development is currently under construction.

Aside from Dictionary Hill, several other geographic features characterize the community surrounding Highlands Ranch. Located approximately 6 miles north of the site is Mount Helix, a significant topographic feature on the horizon. South of the Highlands Ranch project site is the Sweetwater Regional Park, which surrounds the Sweetwater Reservoir. The City of La Mesa is located northwest of the project site and is typified by the large mesa on which it resides, with older residential development comprising the majority of the City. Northeast of the project site is the newer residential community of Rancho San Diego, and farther to the east is the incorporated City of El Cajon. Southeast of the project site is an area known as Jamacha Junction, a mixture of residential and commercial development, and southeast of this area is the rural residential community of Jamul.

4.1.2.2 Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The Project would have a significant adverse impact on community character or land use if any of the following would occur as a result of a project-related component. Would the Project:

- Conflict with the San Diego County General Plan, the Spring Valley Community Plan, or the Spring Valley Design Guidelines.

- Result in substantial, demonstrable land use incompatibility with adjacent existing or planned land uses.

- Physically divide an established community.

- Conflict with adopted land use regulations, including:

    a. The State Natural Communities Conservation Plan program, the County Multiple Species Conservation Plan, or the County of San Diego Resource Protection Ordinance.

    b. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board San Diego Region Stormwater Permit or the County Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance.

    c. The County Wildland/Urban Interface Standards, Ordinance No. 9669.

    d. The Air Pollution Control District's Air Quality Management Plan.

4.1.2.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination as to Significance

- ***Would the Project conflict with the San Diego County General Plan, the Spring Valley Community Plan, or the Spring Valley Design Guidelines?***

Per direction provided in the *Environmental Impact Report Format and General Content Requirements* (County of San Diego, 2004), this analysis focuses on the Project's inconsistencies with regional and/or general plans. This analysis does not include

> "*a discussion of the projects consistency with regional and general plans … If no inconsistencies are found, the plans that were reviewed must simply be listed accompanied by a statement that no inconsistencies were found (EIR Format and General Content Requirements, 2004, pg. 15).*"

As a result, this analysis identifies the relevant regional and general plan policies that were reviewed which are applicable to the proposed project site. Situations where the proposed Project is consistent with applicable sections of regional and general plans are simply identified and referenced, and no detailed evaluation of the plans is provided.

County of San Diego General Plan: The San Diego County General Plan provides general goals and policies applicable to the unincorporated portion of the County as a whole. A higher level of detail, including land use and zoning regulations, are provided by the County's many community plans, such as the Spring Valley Community Plan that is applicable to the proposed project site. The proposed Project would not conflict with any of elements of the San Diego County General Plan as follows: Open Space; Regional Land Use; Circulation; Recreation; Seismic Safety; Scenic Highway; Public Safety; Noise; Housing; Conservation; Energy; Public Facilities. All elements were examined

and no inconsistencies with any of the General Plan Element policies related to the Project were identified.

Spring Valley Community Plan: The project site falls within the boundaries of the Spring Valley Community Plan (SVCP). The proposed project site is in a Current Urban Development Area (CUDA) and has a (21) Specific Plan designation. No inconsistencies with any of the Spring Valley Community Plan policies related to this Project were identified. The Project would not conflict with any elements of the Spring Valley Community Plan as follows: Community Character; Land Use; Housing; Circulation; Public Services; Facilities, and Improvements; Conservation; Recreation; Scenic Highways; Public Safety; Noise, or Energy. All elements of the Spring Valley Community Plan were examined and no inconsistencies with any of the policies were identified. A detailed analysis of Project consistency with the goals and policies of the Spring Valley Community Plan is contained in the Visual Impact Analysis Report included as Appendix C to this SEIR.

Spring Valley Design Guidelines: Design Guidelines are provided for certain development types within the SVCP boundaries. The purpose of the Design Guidelines is to "*…ensure that every new development proposal carefully considers the community context in which it takes place and makes a conscientious effort to develop a compatible relationship with the natural setting, neighboring properties, and community design goals."* The Design Guidelines require a design review process and provide specific design guidelines for the following topical areas: site design; preservation of resources; architectural and landscape character; signage; screening; site lighting; historic preservation; mobile home park development; hillside development; and floodplain and riparian areas. The Project would not conflict with any of the elements of the Spring Valley Design Guidelines under the review of the following policies: Site Design; Preservation of On-Site Resources; Architectural Character; Landscape Character; Signage; Screening; Site Lighting; Historic Preservation; Mobilehome Park Development; Hillside Development; and, Floodplain and Riparian Areas. All elements of the Spring Valley Design Guidelines were examined, and no inconsistencies with any of the elements were identified. A detailed analysis of Project consistency with the design objectives of the Spring Valley Community Plan is contained in the Visual Impact Analysis Report included as Appendix C to this SEIR.

- ***Would the Project result in substantial, demonstrable land use incompatibility with adjacent existing or planned land uses?***

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in modification of the existing, undeveloped character of Dictionary Hill to a combination of natural and modified hillsides surrounding a development area containing 211 residential homes, roadways, and two private parks. The proposed Project is similar to recent developments in the project area and adjacent to the site and would be more sensitive to the landform than the existing older parts of Spring Valley. The proposed Project would be similar to the landform modification associated with The Pointe San Diego development located along Pointe Parkway southeast of the proposed project site. Continuity between these two projects would be provided, creating an overall consistent approach to developing the less steep areas, with the remaining steeper areas left in natural open space.

For the most part, the steeper natural hillsides of the Highlands Ranch property would remain in open space surrounding the proposed development on all sides. *Table 4-1, Pre- and Post-Project Slope*

Gradients, depicts the existing and proposed slope gradients on the project site. As shown, the slope gradient percentages would only change slightly, demonstrating that the Project design would mimic the natural landform. The Project has been designed to closely follow the site's natural topographic contours. This would result in visual characteristics similar to the surrounding existing condition and complementary to the existing neighborhoods to the south, east, and north of the project site. The Project proposes residential development surrounded by open space, which is compatible with the surrounding land uses of existing residential and open space. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in land use incompatibility with adjacent existing and planned land uses. The resulting community would be characterized by a mixture of residential homes and private streets interspersed with slopes of native habitats and areas of introduced vegetation, which reflects the residential character of both La Presa and Spring Valley and The Pointe San Diego development that is approved and currently under construction to the east. Impacts on community character resulting from the proposed Project would be less than significant.

Table 4-1. PRE- AND POST-PROJECT SLOPE GRADIENTS

Slope Gradient	Existing		Proposed	
	No. of Acres	Percent of Site	No. of Acres	Percent of Site
0 to 15 percent	25.0	14.2%	51.6	29.2%
16 to 25 percent	56.0	31.7%	30.3	17.2%
Over 25 percent	95.58	54.1%	94.68	53.6%
Total	**176.58**	**100.0%**	**176.58**	**100.0%**

SOURCE: REC Consultants; December, 2004

- ***Would the Project physically divide an established community?***

The land uses proposed by Highlands Ranch are generally compatible with the surrounding land uses and would not physically divide an established community. The proposed Project's development area would be located at the higher elevations of topographic features (Dictionary Hill and Little Dictionary Hill) that provide a natural barrier between existing communities. The proposed Project would be compatible with surrounding residential and open space uses in the immediate area, and impacts would be less than significant.

- ***Would the Project conflict with adopted land use regulations, including: a) the State Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) program, the County Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP), or the County of San Diego Resource Protection Ordinance; b) the California Regional Water Quality Control Board San Diego Region Stormwater Permit or the County Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance; c) the County Wildland/Urban Interface Standards, Ordinance No. 9669; or d) the Air Pollution Control District's Air Quality Management Plan?***

State NCCP and County MSCP: The Project would not conflict with the State NCCP program because the County of San Diego has taken jurisdiction of the NCCP Program from the state, and implements the program through conformance with the MSCP Subarea Plan. The Highlands Ranch project site falls within the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul segment of the MSCP Subarea Plan and is subject to requirements of the Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO). As discussed in detail in Section

2.3, *Biological Resources*, the project site supports a high number of sensitive species and site soils are primarily of metavolcanic origin (San Miguel-Exchequer). As a result, the proposed project site falls within the definition of a biological resource core area (BRCA). With application of mitigation measures identified in Section 2.3, the Project would be compliant with the MSCP and BMO.

County Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO): The project site is exempt from the requirements of the County's RPO. The RPO exemption, which applies to the Highlands Ranch property, is described in Chapter 1.0 of this SEIR. A summary of the reasons for the exemption include the fact that the Project is within the Urban Limit Line, is subject to a Revitalization Action Plan, and was approved as a Specific Plan project prior to August 10, 1988, the date when the RPO was first adopted. Additional details regarding the exemption from RPO are provided in Chapter 1.0. No significant impacts related to RPO have been identified.

California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region, National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit: In 2001, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), San Diego Region, issued formal waste discharge requirements. As a consequence of these waste discharge requirements, the County of San Diego gained the authority to enforce elements of the new Municipal NPDES Permit. Project compliance with the NPDES is mandatory, and inconsistencies are not identified.

County Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance: One of the requirements of the RWQCB was for the County to develop local policies for the protection of watersheds in its jurisdiction. The County subsequently developed the San Diego Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance. All new and existing developments must comply with the requirements of the ordinance to minimize the impacts of region-wide pollutants to the watershed. According to maps provided in the Appendices to the Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance, the project site is located in the Sweetwater River Watershed and there are no impaired water bodies on the property (County of San Diego 2003c). Project compliance with the Ordinance is mandatory, and inconsistencies are not identified.

County Fire Code Ordinance (No. 9669) relating to Wildlife/Urban Interface Standards The County Fire Code address access, water supply, structural requirements, and the clearance of brush or vegetative growth from around structures in wildland/urban interface areas. As discussed above in Section 4.1.1, the Project would comply with Ordinance No. 9669, and no inconsistencies are identified.

Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP): The San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) establishes what could be thought of as an "emissions budget" for the San Diego Air Basin. To determine whether the proposed Project is consistent with the RAQS requires a comparison of net emissions from the proposed development to the emissions associated with previously approved and accounted for plans (commonly known as the *Consistency Criterion* of the RAQS). Because the proposed Highlands Ranch project is consistent with the proposed SANDAG projections for growth within the area, the Project, by default, satisfies the *Consistency Criterion* of the RAQS and would also be consistent with State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the criteria pollutants under examination. No inconsistencies were found.

4.1.2.4 Cumulative Impact Analysis

No cumulative impacts related to land use or policy issues have been identified. The proposed Project would be consistent in density and intensity of use with surrounding land uses, would not conflict with adjacent community character, nor would the Project conflict with the policies of the San Diego County General Plan, the Spring Valley Community Plan, or the Spring Valley Design Guidelines, or the other plans and policies cited above.

4.1.2.5 Conclusions

The proposed Project would be consistent with all applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations. The proposed Project would be consistent with surrounding land uses and community character, and would not physically divide an established community. Therefore, the proposed Project would not have a significant impact on land use or land use policies.

4.1.3 Public Services

Sources of information for the analysis in this section were provided through oral and written communication with the San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District (SMCFPD), the County Sheriff's Department, the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District (LMSVSD), the Grossmont Union High School District (GUHSD) and the County Library System. Copies of all written communication are provided in Appendix M of this SEIR. Utility information was obtained in part from the San Diego Regional Energy Office's web site (http://www.sdenergy.org/) and the California Energy Commission web page (http://www.energy.ca.gov/).

4.1.3.1 Existing Conditions

A. Fire Protection Services

SMCFPD provides fire protection services to the project site. The SMCFPD, which encompasses approximately 53 square miles, provides a full range of fire services within the communities of Casa de Oro, Grossmont/Mount Helix, La Presa, Rancho San Diego, Spring Valley, unincorporated areas of El Cajon and La Mesa, and the City of Lemon Grove. SMCFPD facilities located within vicinity of the proposed project site are listed in *Table 4-2, Fire Stations Servicing Highlands Ranch*, and shown on *Figure 4-1, Public Facilities Location Map*. As shown, the proposed project site is serviced by Stations 15, 14 and 16, with Station 15 providing primary service to the site. Station 15 is located approximately three (3) miles east of the project site, and has an estimated maximum 5-minute response time to the proposed project site.

B. Sheriff Services

The San Diego County Sheriff's Department provides community policing for the project area. The San Diego County Sheriff's Department is the chief law enforcement agency in the County of San Diego. The department is comprised of approximately 4,000 employees, consisting of both sworn officers and professional support staff. The department provides general law enforcement and jail functions for the people of San Diego County in a service area of approximately 4,200 square miles.

In addition, the department provides specialized regional services to the entire county, including both incorporated cities within the county and the unincorporated areas not serviced by a city law enforcement agency.

Table 4-2. FIRE STATIONS SERVICING HIGHLANDS RANCH

Fire Station	Number of Personnel	Equipment
Station 15 2850 Via Orange Way, Spring Valley	7 (9)*	Battalion Vehicle, Brush Rig, Paramedic Ambulance, Engine Company Truck
Station 14 3255 Helix Street, Spring Valley	3	Engine Company Truck
Station 16 905 Gillespie Drive, Spring Valley	3	Engine Company Truck

*Values in parentheses include 2 Paramedics stationed with the ambulance company.
SOURCE: SMCFPD, 2005

The Highlands Ranch project site is located within beat #629 of the Sheriff's service area. *Figure 4-1, Public Facilities Location Map*, shows the location of the Lemon Grove Sheriff's Station, which is located at 3240 Main Street in Lemon Grove, in relation to the proposed project site. The Lemon Grove Sheriff's Station currently serves a population of about 130,000 residents, with approximately 60 deputies assigned to patrol duty. The current staffing level for the Lemon Grove Sheriff's Station is 0.72 deputies per 1,000 population. This represents an existing deficiency in the level of service for the area, as the San Diego County Sheriff's Department's goal for service on a County-wide basis is one (1) deputy per 1,000 population.

Response times within beat #629 vary depending on the type of call, however the average response time for emergency calls is 2.8 minutes, and the average response time for all calls is 27.1 minutes. The unincorporated portion of the Lemon Grove Station Command generated 52,449 calls for service in 2004, which represents one of the highest crime rates in San Diego County.

C. Public Schools

The project site is located within the service boundaries of the LMSVSD and the GUHSD. *Figure 4-1, Public Facilities Location Map*, shows the location of the project site in relationship to existing schools. The three existing schools that primarily serve the project area student population are Sweetwater Springs Elementary School (K-5); Spring Valley Middle School (6-8); and Monte Vista High School (9-12). Sweetwater Springs Elementary School is located at 10129 Austin Drive and Spring Valley Middle School is located at 3900 Conrad Drive. Both Sweetwater Springs Elementary and Spring Valley Middle School are located in the Spring Valley community. Monte Vista High School, also located within Spring Valley, is located at 3230 Sweetwater Springs Boulevard. The existing enrollment and capacity information for these schools are provided in *Table 4-3, School Enrollment, Capacity, and Student Generation.*

D. Public Libraries

The San Diego County Library system covers a service area of over 3,818 square miles, including the unincorporated area and 11 incorporated cities. In 2006, there were approximately 550,925 library cardholders in the County Library's service area. The County Library currently operates 32 branch libraries, a Governmental Reference Library located in the City of San Diego, 2 bookmobiles and a Library Administrative Headquarters and circulates over 4.08 million books, magazines, and audio-visual materials annually. According to the County General Plan, the desired level of service for library facilities is about 2 books per capita and .35 square feet of floor area per capita.

The project site is located within the vicinity of several library facilities, as depicted on *Figure 4-1, Public Facilities Location Map*. Of these, the Spring Valley, Casa de Oro, and Rancho San Diego branches would be the most likely facilities that would serve the project site. The Spring Valley Branch is located at 936 Kempton Street. The Casa de Oro Branch is located at 9805 Campo Road, #145. The Rancho San Diego Branch, which was recently constructed in early 2002, is located at 11555 Via Rancho San Diego.

E. Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

Seven different waste haulers serve the Spring Valley area. Regardless as to which waste management company is chosen to serve the Project, collected refuse would be delivered to one of two active landfills: the Sycamore Landfill or the Miramar Landfill. It is likely that the franchised haulers would use the Sycamore Landfill because it is nearest the proposed project site.

Sycamore Landfill: The Sycamore Landfill is located at 8514 Mast Boulevard in the community of Santee within unincorporated San Diego County, roughly 13 miles north of the proposed project site. The landfill is owned and operated by San Diego Landfill Systems, a subsidiary of Allied Waste. The Sycamore Landfill is currently permitted to operate through the year 2017; however the ultimate life expectancy of this landfill is predicted to be about 50 years. The capacity of the Sycamore Landfill is approximately 25 million cubic yards, of which 20 million cubic yards of capacity remains (approximately 1 million tons). The current daily disposal capacity is approximately 3,000 tons.

Miramar Landfill: The Miramar Landfill, owned and operated by the City of San Diego, is located approximately 15 miles north of the proposed project site at 5180 Convoy Street in the City of San Diego. The Miramar Landfill consists of a 476-acre landfill on a 807-acre site. As of June 30, 2004, the remaining capacity at this landfill was 27.4%, and the landfill is estimated to take in approximately 1.4 million tons of waste per year. It is anticipated that the Miramar Landfill will reach its maximum capacity around 2012.

F. Energy

The project site is within the service boundaries of San Diego Gas & Electric for electricity and natural gas services. The project site is primarily vacant, but electric lines are located on the property. No gas service is currently available on the project site.

4.1.3.2 Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The Project would have a significant adverse impact on the issue of public services if any of the following would occur as a result of a Project-related component. Would the Project:

- Result in the need to construct new government facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the following public service providers: fire protection, police protection, schools, or other public services.

4.1.3.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination as to Significance

- ***Would the proposed Project result in the need to construct new government facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the following public service providers: fire protection, police protection, schools, or other public services?***

A. Fire Protection Services

The proposed Project would result in the construction of residential homes, two private parks, and supporting infrastructure on a portion of the site. Implementation of the Project would place additional demand on the SMCFPD. Fire Station 15, located at 2850 Via Orange Way in Spring Valley, has an estimated response time of five minutes to the project site which is within the SMCFPD's five minutes or less response time goal. SMCFPD considers geographic distance from a fire station rather than the size of population served when determining the need for new fire station facilities. Because the proposed Project is within an area that can be serviced with acceptable response times, no new fire stations would be needed. SMCFPD has indicated an ability to serve the Project with existing staff and facilities without degradation in the level of service for the region.

B. Sheriff Services

The proposed Project would result in the construction of 211 residential homes, two private parks, and supporting infrastructure on a portion of the site. According to the US Census Bureau, the average number of persons per household in San Diego County in 2000 was 2.73. Therefore, the proposed Project would result in approximately 576 new residents in Beat #629. The proposed Project would contribute incrementally to population growth in the region, which could result in an incremental increase in criminal activity such as burglaries, thefts, auto thefts, vandalism, etc.

According to the Sheriff's Department, 1 deputy per 1,000 persons is the standard used for Beat #629 when determining adequate levels of service. The proposed Project's 576 residents would therefore result in the need for less than 1 new sheriff's deputy in order to provide adequate protection to the project site (576 residents x 1 / 1,000 = 0.57 deputies). The need for less than one (1) new deputy in Beat #629 would not result in the need for new or physically altered sheriff facilities.

C. Public Schools

The proposed Project would result in the construction of 211 residential homes, two private parks, and supporting infrastructure on a portion of the site. Residential development would increase the

demand on existing public educational facilities and services by generating additional students to be served by the LMSVSD and the GUHSD. By applying student generation rates supplied by the school districts, the implementation of the Highlands Ranch project would generate approximately 37 elementary students, 19 middle school students, and 26 high school students, as shown in *Table 4-3, School Enrollment, Capacity, and Student Generation.*

According to enrollment numbers supplied by LMSVSD and GUHSD, the proposed Project would generate students in excess of the current capacity at Monte Vista High School, while existing capacities at Sweetwater Springs Elementary School and Spring Valley Middle School are adequate to support the proposed Project.

Currently, state law requires mitigation of school impacts by paying the state-mandated fee or in lieu of the statutory fee paying the Level II school fee authorized by Senate Bill 50 and Proposition 1A provided a School District has made the necessary findings to justify the Level II fee. The school facilities fees at the time this SEIR was prepared were $0.95 per square foot of residential development for the GUHSD and $1.27 per square foot of residential development for the LMSVSD. Mitigation agreements between the developer and the school districts can take the place of standard fee payment. With mandatory compliance of fee payment, no significant impacts would result from implementation of the Project.

Table 4-3. SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, CAPACITY, AND STUDENT GENERATION

School Name	Grades Served	Permanent Capacity	Enrollment (2004-05)	Remaining Capacity	Student Generation Rate	DUs	No. of Students
LA MESA-SPRING VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT (LMSVSD)							
Sweetwater Springs Elementary	K-5	664	567	97	0.176/unit	211	37
Spring Valley Middle School	6-8	1,474	1,247	229	0.088/unit	211	19
LMSVSD SUBTOTAL							**56**
GROSSMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT (GUHSD)							
Monte Vista High School	9-12	1,960	1,960	0	0.121/unit	211	26
GUHSD SUBTOTAL							**26**
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS GENERATED BY HIGHLANDS RANCH							**82**

SOURCE: Grossmont Union High School District and La Mesa-Spring Valley School District, February 2005.

D. Public Libraries

The proposed Project would result in the construction of 211 residential homes, two private parks, and supporting infrastructure on a portion of the site. According to the US Census Bureau, the average number of persons per household in San Diego County in 2000 was 2.73. Accordingly, the construction of 211 residential dwelling units within the Highlands Ranch project would generate approximately 576 persons. A summary of library demands is provided in *Table 4-4, Project Library Demand*, and is based upon standards provided by the San Diego County General Plan. The location

of the project site within the vicinity of several existing branch library facilities indicates that new library facilities would not be required as a result of the Project.

Table 4-4. PROJECT LIBRARY DEMAND

	Standard	Project Population	Project Demand
Books per Capita	2 books	576	1,152 books
Floor Area per Capita	0.35 SF[1]	576	202 SF[1]

[1]SF: Square Feet

E. Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

Buildout of the Project, as well as the construction phase of the proposed Project, would increase the amount of solid waste generated in the area; in turn, shortening the life span of the affected landfills. *Table 4-5, Estimated Solid Waste Generation*, provides an estimate of the amount of solid waste which would be generated by the Project at build-out. Waste generation factors used for the analysis were obtained from the California Integrated Waste Management Board.

Table 4-5. ESTIMATED SOLID WASTE GENERATION

Land Use	Development Intensity[1]	Generation Rate[2]	Generation	
			Tons/Yr	Tons/Day
Residential	211 du (576 persons)	0.41 tons per capita per year	86.51	0.23

[1]Assumes 2.73 persons per household (Source: US Census Bureau, http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06073.html)
[2]*Source: California Integrated Waste Management Board;* http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/WasteChar/WasteGenRates/default.htm

The proposed Project would result in the increase of approximately 86.51 tons of solid waste per year, or roughly 0.23 tons per day. This would represent approximately 0.009% of the total daily disposal capacity of the Sycamore Landfill, or 0.007% for the Miramar Landfill. To lower this amount, the Project's waste hauler is required to implement recycling and waste reduction programs in accordance with the Integrated Waste Management Act. The amount of waste generated by the Project would make an insignificant contribution to both the long-term and short-term need for the establishment of new waste disposal facilities. Because current and planned landfill capacity would not be exceeded by the proposed Project, and because no Federal, State, or Local regulations or ordinances pertaining to solid waste facilities would be violated, impacts to solid waste facilities resulting from the proposed Project would not be significant.

F. Energy

The Project would create a demand for electricity and natural gas service. Buildout of the Project is estimated to require approximately 2,293,992 kilowatt hours per year (kWh/yr) using a generation rate of 10,872 kWh/yr per residential unit (U.S. Energy Information Administration, http://www.eia.doe.gov/). The Project would not result in the need to construct new electrical generation facilities. No adverse impacts as the result of the proposed Project would occur. The

proposed Project would be required to implement all relevant energy conservation measures as outlined in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.

The primary use of natural gas by the Project would be for combustion to produce space heating, water heating, and other miscellaneous heating and air conditioning uses. Using a generation rate of 438 terms per year for each residential unit (California Energy Commission), the Project would create a demand for 92,418 therms per year. The Project would not result in the need to construct new natural gas facilities. No adverse impacts as the result of the proposed Project would occur.

4.1.3.4 Cumulative Impact Analysis

A. Fire Protection Services

Implementation of the Project in combination with cumulative development in the service area of the SMCFPD would place additional demand on the SMCFPD facilities and personnel. However, SMCFPD considers geographic distance from a fire station rather than the size of population served when determining the need for new fire station facilities. Because the Project is located within a five minute response time radius of Station 15, the Project would not result in the a contribution to the cumulative demand for a new fire station. No significant cumulative impacts are identified.

B. Sheriff Services

The proposed Project's 576 residents would result in the need for less than 1 new sheriff's deputy in order to provide adequate protection to the project site. When considered in combination with other cumulative development in Beat #629, it is calculated that as many as 3 additional deputies may be necessary. The need for additional deputies in Beat #629 would not result in the need for new or physically altered sheriff facilities. No significant cumulative impacts are identified.

C. Public Schools

Implementation of the Highlands Ranch project would generate approximately 37 elementary students, 19 middle school students, and 26 high school students. The Project would generate students in excess of the current capacity at Monte Vista High School. When combined with other cumulative development in the Monte Vista High School attendance boundary, the Project would result in a cumulative contribution to potential overcrowding. According to information provided by LMSVSD, there are approximately 128 single-family homes and 172 multiple family homes currently planned or under construction within the District. Capacity is available at the Sweetwater Springs Elementary School and Spring Valley Middle School; however, the facilities would be operating near maximum capacity.

Currently, state law requires mitigation of school impacts by paying the state-mandated fees authorized by Senate Bill 50. With mandatory compliance of fee payment by the Project and all cumulative development, no significant cumulative impacts would result. The GUHSD and LMSVSD have no plans to construct new school facilities at this time. Overcrowding is relieved through attendance boundary shifts and the use of portable classroom at existing school campuses.

D. Public Libraries

The proposed Project's 576 residents would result in the need for 1,152 additional library books and 202 square feet of library space. When considered in combination with other cumulative development in the library service area, it is not expected that a new or physically altered library would be required.

E. Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

The proposed Project's solid waste would represent approximately 0.009% of the total daily disposal capacity of the Sycamore Landfill, or 0.007% for the Miramar Landfill. When combined with other cumulative development, the Project plus cumulative development in the area would make an insignificant contribution to both the long-term and short-term need for the establishment of new waste disposal facilities. No significant adverse cumulative impact is identified.

F. Energy

In the late 1990's the State of California experienced electrical shortages caused by periods in which demand was in excess of available supplies; however, the shortages involved economic factors related to utility deregulation and were not due to inadequate power supplies. The State of California has aggressively pursued solutions to this short-term economic situation through Congressional action, applications for rulings to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and gathering evidence for potential legal action against the wholesale providers for unfair business practices under the California Business and Professions code. The State has also accelerated permitting for new generation facilities, stepped up a public awareness program, and entered into long-term supply contracts. As a result of these actions, there is now abundant electrical supplies in the State. When considered in combination with cumulative development, the Project would not contribute to the need to construct new or physically altered energy systems.

4.1.3.5 Conclusions

The Project would not result in significant direct or cumulative impacts on fire, sheriff, public school or public library services. The Project is required to pay the state-mandated school fees authorized by Senate Bill 50, participate in the governing waste hauler's recycling program, and implement all relevant energy conservation measures as outlined in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.

4.1.4 Recreation

Information in this section was obtained from SanGIS (http://sanweb.sangis.org) and the San Diego County Parks and Recreation Department (http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/parks/).

4.1.4.1 Existing Conditions

The Spring Valley community is served by several recreational facilities that offer a wide range of activities for public use. These facilities Sweetwater Springs Regional Park (3218 Summit Meadow Road), the Spring Valley Community Center (8735 Jamacha Blvd.), and a number of local parks

listed below on *Table 4-6, Local Parks. Figure 4-2, Regional Recreation Opportunities*, shows the location of regional parks, local parks, and community centers that serve the local area.

Sweetwater Regional Park is a large regional park that surrounds the Sweetwater Springs Reservoir. Sweetwater Regional Park is located approximately 1.25 miles from the proposed project site, though portions of the park are as much as 3 miles from the project site. Activities offered at the park include camping, horseback riding, hiking, and mountain biking. The Spring Valley Community Center, located approximately 1.0 mile south of the project site offers preschool day camps, gymnastics programs, dance classes, and senior lunches. The center also offers a number of special events.

Table 4-6. LOCAL PARKS

Park Name	Location and Distance from Project Site
Sweetwater Lane Park	0.5-mile Southwest
Del Parque	1.5 miles Northeast
Lamar Street Park	1.5 miles North
Bancroft Park	1.75 miles North
Lomita Park	2.0 miles Southwest
Skyline Park	2.25 miles Southwest
Sweetwater Park	3.75 miles Southwest

San Diego County Ordinance No. 8607 regulates the administration of and collection of fees for the acquisition and maintenance of parks within the County and/or land dedicated in lieu of fees. Ordinance No. 8607 uses at its base the San Diego County General Plan Recreation Element standard of 15 acres of local parkland per 1,000. According to Ordinance No. 8607:

> *"It is intended that one-fifth [of the 15 acres/1,000 population standard, or 3 acres per 1,000 population] be provided by new development…unless the amount of existing neighborhood and community park acreage (developed or undeveloped) in the unincorporated areas of the County exceeds this standard, in which case a standard of 5 acres per 1,000 population shall be used…"*

According to the information posted on the San Diego County Parks and Recreation Department website in March 2005, the County currently manages 80 facilities covering more than 43,000 acres. According to 2000 Census data, the unincorporated population of San Diego County is approximately 2,813,833 persons. Using these figures, park acreage within the County is as follows:

$$\frac{\text{43,000 acres of parkland}}{\text{(2,813,833/1,000)persons}} = \text{15.28 acres of parkland/1,000 persons}$$

Because the County of San Diego currently meets the General Plan's standard of 15 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons, projects within the County would be required to provide public parkland, or fees in lieu of dedication, at a ratio of no less than 5.0 acres per 1,000 persons.

Ordinance No. 8607 also provides credits for parkland that would be developed and maintained as a private park facility, as follows:

> *"Where private area for park and recreational purposes is provided in a development and such area is for active recreational uses and is to be privately owned and maintained by the future owner(s) of the development, such area, upon recommendation by the Parks and Recreation Department may be credited against up to 50% of the requirements of land dedication or fees payment, if the Director…determines that it is in the public interest to do so…"*

Ordinance No. 8607 also provides a definition of parkland that is acceptable in lieu of payment of fees, as follows:

> "'Neighborhood and Community Park or Recreational Purposes' shall mean local parks…including mini parks (play lots and vest pocket parks), neighborhood parks, and community parks; and shall also mean the types of facilities common to local parks when they occur in a regional park and are available to serve the recreational needs of resident…"

4.1.4.2 Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The Project would have a significant adverse effect on the issue of recreation if any of the following would occur as a result of a Project-related component. Would the Project:

- Result in an increase in the use or existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreation facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.

- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

4.1.4.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination as to Significance

- ***Would the Project result in an increase in the use or existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreation facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?***

The Highlands Ranch SPA and TM propose to provide 211 residential lots and two private parks onsite. It is expected that in addition to using the onsite private park facilities, that the residents of Highlands Ranch also would use other public recreational facilities in the area. Such use, however, is not expected to result in a significant physical deterioration of facilities. The project proposes a trails plan (see Figure 1-6), which will connect to the County's trail system. The provision of trail connections would likely result in increased use of trails in the local area. Increased trail use is not expected to result in physical deterioration of the trails. In fact, increased use helps to keep trails clear and free of vegetation overgrowth.

- ***Would the Project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?***

According to County Ordinance No. 8607, the proposed Project would be required to dedicate 613.76 square feet of parkland for each dwelling unit or lot, whichever is greater, pursuant to the requirement of 5.0 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons. This standard is also consistent with the State Quimby Act standards for the provision of parkland. As an alternative to the dedication of parkland, the Project proponent may pay a fee of $500 per dwelling unit or lot, whichever is greater.

The proposed Project would consist of 211 residential lots for the development of 211 residential dwelling units. Using the parkland requirements of 613.76 square feet of parkland per dwelling unit or lot, Ordinance No. 8607 would require the Project proponent to dedicate approximately 129,503 square feet, or 2.97 acres, of local parkland.

The Highlands Ranch SPA and TM propose to provide two private parks onsite. The project also proposes a trails plan (see Figure 1-6), which will connect to the County's trail system. The physical effects on the environment resulting from construction of the two private parks and the on-site trails are disclosed throughout this SEIR as components of the proposed Project.

The proposed private parks meet the definition of "*Neighborhood and Community Park for Recreational Purposes*," as defined by Ordinance No. 8607. Parkland proposed by the Project would include one 1.03-acre park located in the southeast portion of the proposed development footprint, and another 0.35-acre park located adjacent to OWD water tank in the western portion of the project site (see *Figure 4-3* and *Figure 4-4* for illustrations of the two proposed park sites). Because the proposed Project would consist of a private, gated community, both parks would be considered "private" under the definitions provided by Ordinance No. 8607, and would be credited at a rate of 50% of the gross acreage dedicated for parkland. The Highlands Ranch project would therefore provide an equivalent of 0.69-acre of parkland in lieu of payment, provided that the two private parks meet the requirements of Ordinance No. 8607. The Project proponent would therefore be required to pay park fees equal to that required for 2.28 acres of parkland, or 76.7% of the fees required by Ordinance No. 8607 if no land was dedicated.

Ordinance No. 8607 requires the payment of $800 per dwelling unit or lot, whichever is greater. The 211 residential lots proposed by the Project would require the payment of $168,800 in lieu of parkland dedication. As discussed above, the proposed Project would provide 23.3% of the dedicated parkland required by Ordinance No. 8607. Therefore, in addition to the provision of 1.38 acres of local parkland (with a 50% credit per Ordinance No. 8607, the Project proponent would be required to pay a fee of $129,470.00.

4.1.4.4 Cumulative Impact Analysis

Cumulative impacts due to overuse of recreation facilities resulting in physical deterioration of facilities may occur due to the implementation of numerous new development projects within the same region. On a general level, cumulative impacts would be offset by the requirement of each project to comply with County Ordinance No. 8607. As long as each project complies with the

mandatory provisions of Ordinance No. 8607 to provide parkland or to pay fees to the County in lieu of parkland dedication, cumulative impacts would be below a level of significance.

4.1.4.5 Conclusions

The Project is required to comply with the mandatory provisions of County Ordinance No. 8607, which would reduce impacts on parks and recreational resources to below a level of significance.

4.1.5 Utilities and Service Systems

4.1.5.1 Existing Conditions

A. Water Services

Public water service within the project area is provided by Otay Water District which provides water encompassing 129 square miles in southwestern San Diego County. The Otay Water District imports most of its water supply from the San Diego County Water Authority pipeline number 3 of the Second San Diego Aqueduct. The annual domestic water flow for the Otay Water District is approximately 35,000 acre-feet. The annual amount of available domestic water varies depending on the operational limits of the Otay Water District and weather conditions throughout the State of California (Source: Otay Water District, 2004).

The project site is currently vacant. The Otay Water District operates and maintains a 12-inch water distribution pipeline and a 36-inch water transmission pipeline along Jamacha Boulevard, southwest of the project site. The 18-inch La Mesa/Sweetwater extension under Jamacha Boulevard is currently used by Otay Water District for potable water distribution. Eventually, its use will revert back to a raw water supply for the Sweetwater Reservoir. Additionally, the District operates and maintains the La Presa Pump Station which is near the intersection of Jamacha Boulevard and Sweetwater Springs Boulevard, southeast of the proposed project site.

The District has prepared a subarea plan to provide the new infrastructure for the Pointe San Diego and the Highlands Ranch areas. The document, titled "Sub-Area Water Master Plan for Highlands Ranch/The Pointe," dated October 1998, is herein incorporated by reference and is available for public review at the Otay Water District office, located at 2554 Sweetwater Springs Blvd., Spring Valley, CA 91978-2096, during regular business hours. In 2002, an update to the Master Plan was published, titled "Update to the Subarea Water Master Plan for Highlands Ranch/The Pointe," dated October 3, 2002. The update also is available for public review at the Otay Water District office. The Highlands Ranch project site is within the service area of Improvement District No. 25 of the Otay Water District.

The project site previously contained a 0.39 mg water storage reservoir that was owned and operated by the Otay Water District. The district has since constructed a new 1.26 mgd reservoir on the Highlands Ranch property that replaced the existing reservoir to meet the water obligation of existing properties and infill development within their service area. Construction of the new reservoir was the responsibility of Otay Water District and occurred independently of the proposed Highlands Ranch SPA.

B. Sewer Services

The project site is located within the boundaries of the Spring Valley Sanitation District (SVSD). The Spring Valley Sanitation District was formed in 1952 and operates and maintains the public sewer system in the community of Spring Valley and surrounding areas. It consists of approximately 9,386 acres and serves an estimated population of 43,000. The SVSD owns 1,088,743 linear feet of sewer mains and has 16,137 service connections. It operates three pump stations and one meter station. Under a joint powers agreement with the City of San Diego, the effluent from this area enters into the San Diego Metropolitan Sewer System for treatment.

The facility that treats wastewater from the SVSD is the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant (PLWTP), located at 1902 Gatchell Road, approximately 20 miles west of the proposed project site within the City of San Diego. This treatment facility currently has a daily capacity to treat up to 240 million gallons per day (mgd), and the facility currently treats about 190 mgd.

4.1.5.2 Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The Project would have a significant adverse effect on the issue of utilities and service systems if any of the following would occur as a result of a Project-related component. Would the Project:

- Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed.

- Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves the project that it has an inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

- Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.

4.1.5.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination as to Significance

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

Public water service within the project area is provided by Otay Water District. In 1998, the Otay Water District prepared a subarea plan to provide the new infrastructure for the Pointe San Diego and the Highlands Ranch areas, titled "Sub-Area Water Master Plan for Highlands Ranch/The Pointe." Section 3.2 of that report evaluated the water demand for proposed development of the project site. At that time the Master Plan was prepared, a greater development intensity was assumed for the site than is currently proposed; therefore, the water demand analysis contained in the Sub-Area Water Master Plan is overstated.

The Project proposes 211 single-family residential homes. Using a unit demand factor of 650 gallons per day, the Project would demand a total of 137,150 gallons per day [0.13 million gallons per day (mgd)]. Applying a peaking factor of 2.7, the maximum peak demand would be 0.35 mgd. The Sub-Area Master Water Plan identifies supply sources for the site, including water provided from San Diego County Water Authority's Pipeline No. 4. All of the potable water delivered by Otay Water District is purchased from the San Diego County Water Authority, which in turn, purchases it from the region's water importer, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). Adequate water supplies are available from MWD as documented in report published by MWD on February 11, 2002, titled "Report on Metropolitan's Water Supplies." Adequate water supplies are available to service the proposed Project and no adverse impacts are identified.

- ***Would the Project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves the project that it has an inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?***

The project site is located within the boundaries of the SVSD for sewer collection and treatment service. The average wastewater generation rate for single family dwelling units is approximately 80 gallons per dwelling unit per day. This would equate to approximately 16,880 gallons of wastewater generated daily as a result of the Project's 211 proposed residential homes. This amount of wastewater would represent 0.03% of the 70 million gallons per day of treatment capacity that is available at the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Facility. Adequate wastewater treatment capacity is available and no adverse impacts are identified.

- ***Would the Project require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts?***

On-site water and sewer improvements would be located within the proposed disturbance area evaluated throughout this SEIR. No off-site water or sewer improvements are necessary beyond those already constructed or planned for construction by Otay Water District. No significant impacts would occur as a result of the proposed Project.

A Sub-Area Water Master Plan was approved for the Highlands Ranch and The Pointe San Diego by Otay Water District in 1998. The Sub-Area Master Plan describes improvements that are programmed by Otay Water District to service the area, including the proposed Project. An EIR was certified for the Otay Water Resources Master Plan (WRMP), with Otay Water District serving as lead agency in 1996 (SCH No. 1995101047). In 2002, another EIR (SCH No. 2004011020) was prepared for the Otay Water District's updated (August 2002) WRMP. The purpose of the WRMP is to develop proposed potable and recycled water capital improvement facility systems and associated probable costs estimates for the required pump stations, storage reservoirs, and transmission mains to meet the projected potable and recycled water market demands of existing and future customers within the jurisdiction of the Otay Water District.

4.1.5.4 Cumulative Impact Analysis

No cumulative impacts have been identified related to water or sewer services. The Otay Water District and the Spring Valley Sanitation district have adequate supplies and capacities to service the proposed Project and cumulative development within their service areas as documented in their Master Plans.

4.1.5.5 Conclusions

The Project is required to comply with OWD's implementation of the Sub-Area Master Plan for Highlands Ranch and The Pointe San Diego. With the provision of water and sewer facilities to the site concurrent with development, no significant impacts would occur.

4.2 Effects Found Not Significant During Initial Study

The following issues were determined not to be potentially significant during the Initial Study process: agriculture, cultural resources, geology and soils, minerals, and population and housing. A copy of the Environmental Initial Study, dated August 12, 2004, is found in Appendix A of the SEIR and specifies why these issues were not addressed in detail in the SEIR.

4.2.1 Agriculture

The project site has not been actively farmed and does not contain prime agricultural soils. Implementation of the Project would not have an adverse affect on agricultural resources.

4.2.2 Cultural Resources

A cultural resource survey was conducted on the project site in July 2003 by Affinis. The survey did not identify any historic or archaeological resources on the property, and concluded that the Project would not have an impact on cultural resources. Previous research also did not identify the existence of any cultural resources on the property. Therefore, the County did not require that cultural resources be further analyzed in this SEIR. A copy of the Cultural Resource Survey technical report that outlines the methods used for the study, and the results, is included as Appendix H of this SEIR.

4.2.3 Geology and Soils

There are no fault zones, landslides, or other geologic hazards features located on the project site. The Project would be constructed in accordance with the San Diego Code of Regulations and the Uniform Building Code which specify structural requirements for new development. Although the Project may experience groundshaking during a seismic event, construction in compliance with the Uniform Building Code would ensure that no significant impacts would occur as a result of Project implementation.

4.2.4 Minerals

The project site has not been actively mined and does not contain resources desirable for mining. No known mineral resources are present on the site. Implementation of the Project would not have an adverse affect on mineral resources.

4.2.5 Population and Housing

The project site is vacant and implementation of the Project would not displace an established population. The proposed Highlands Ranch SPA would supercede the previously approved Panorama Ridge SPA, which is approved to allow development on the site. The site has been entitled for development since 1977, but development has not yet occurred.

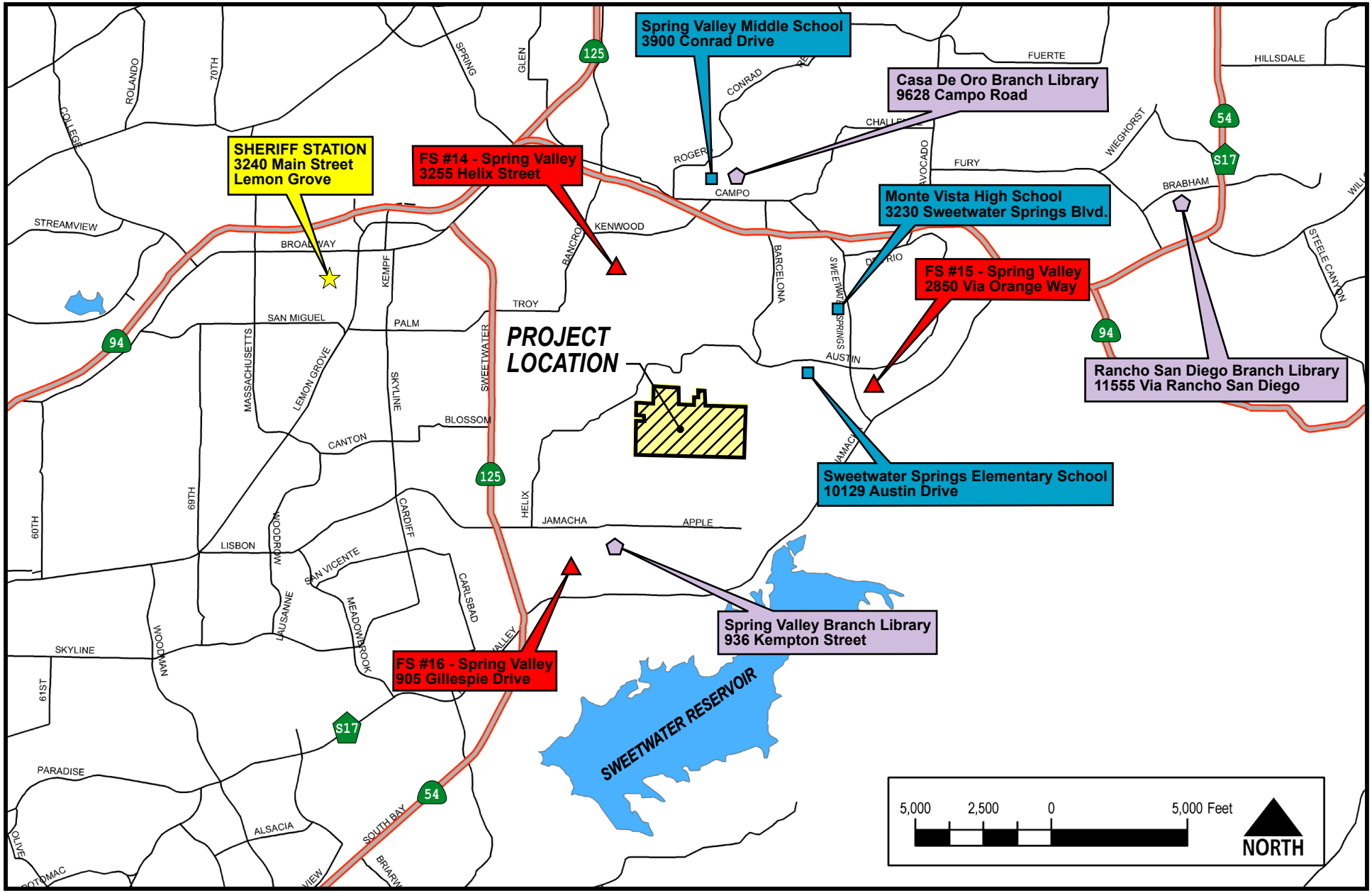


Figure 4-1
PUBLIC FACILITIES LOCATION MAP

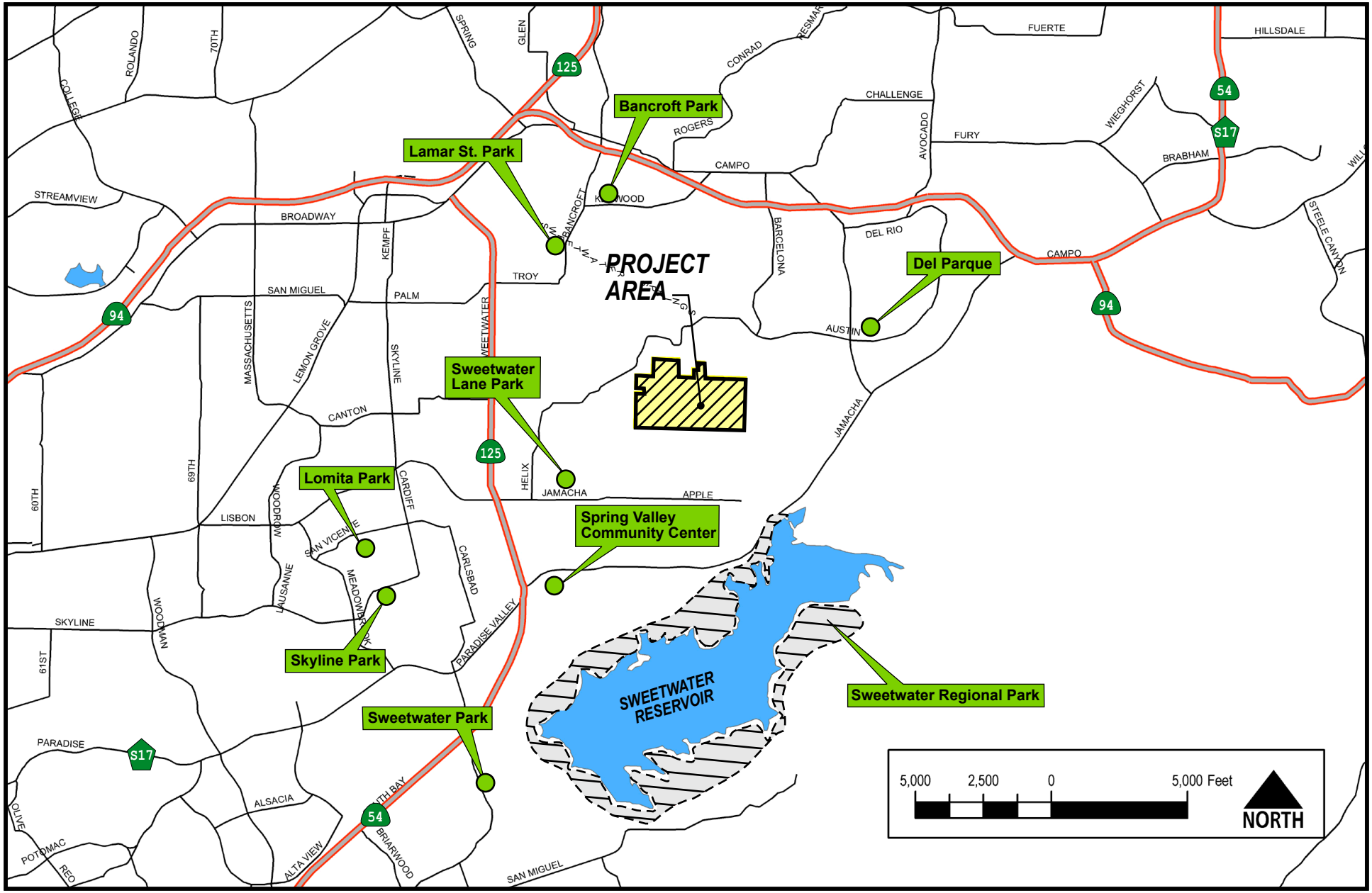
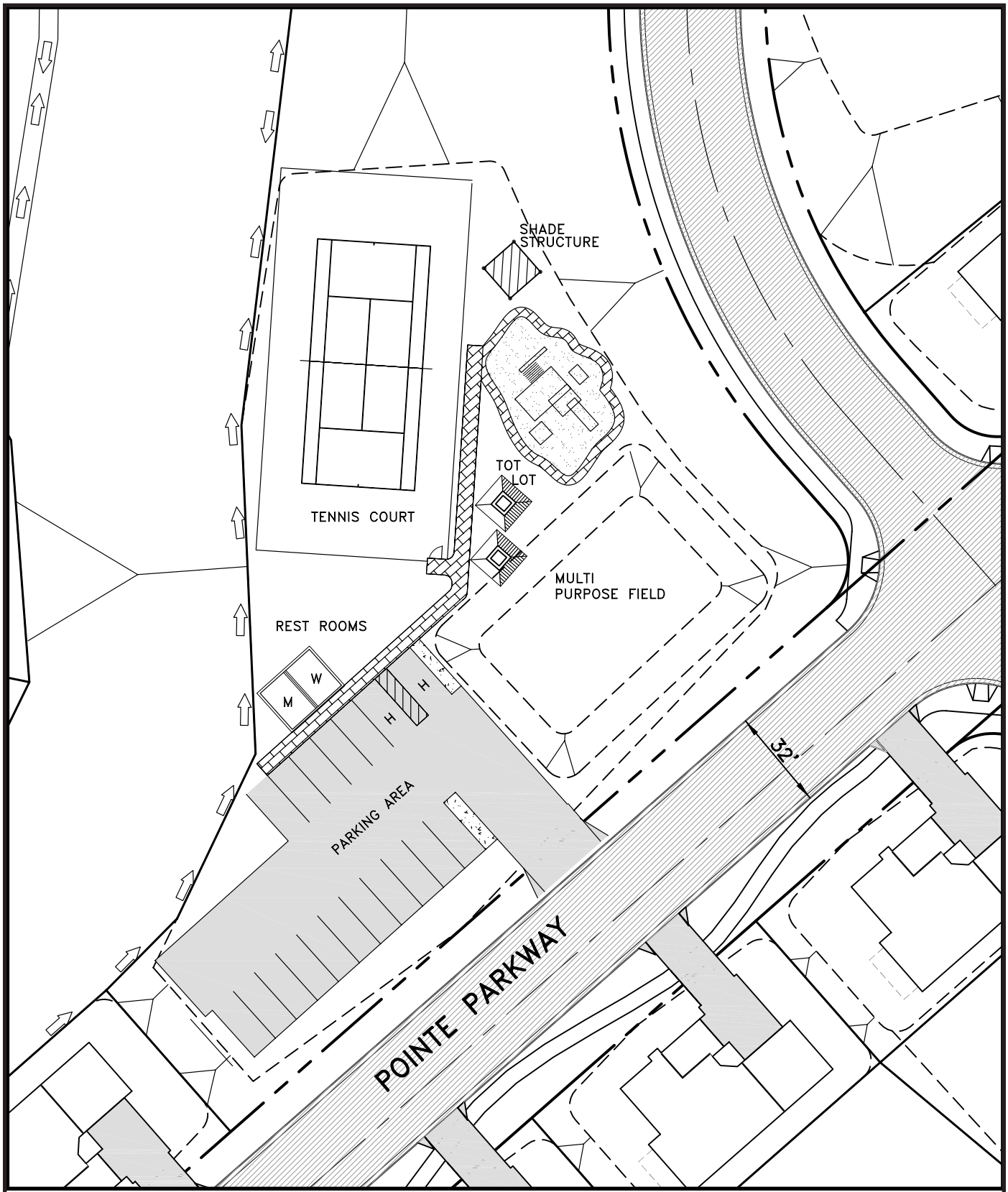


Figure 4-2
REGIONAL RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES



EAST PARK AREA
SCALE 1"=40'

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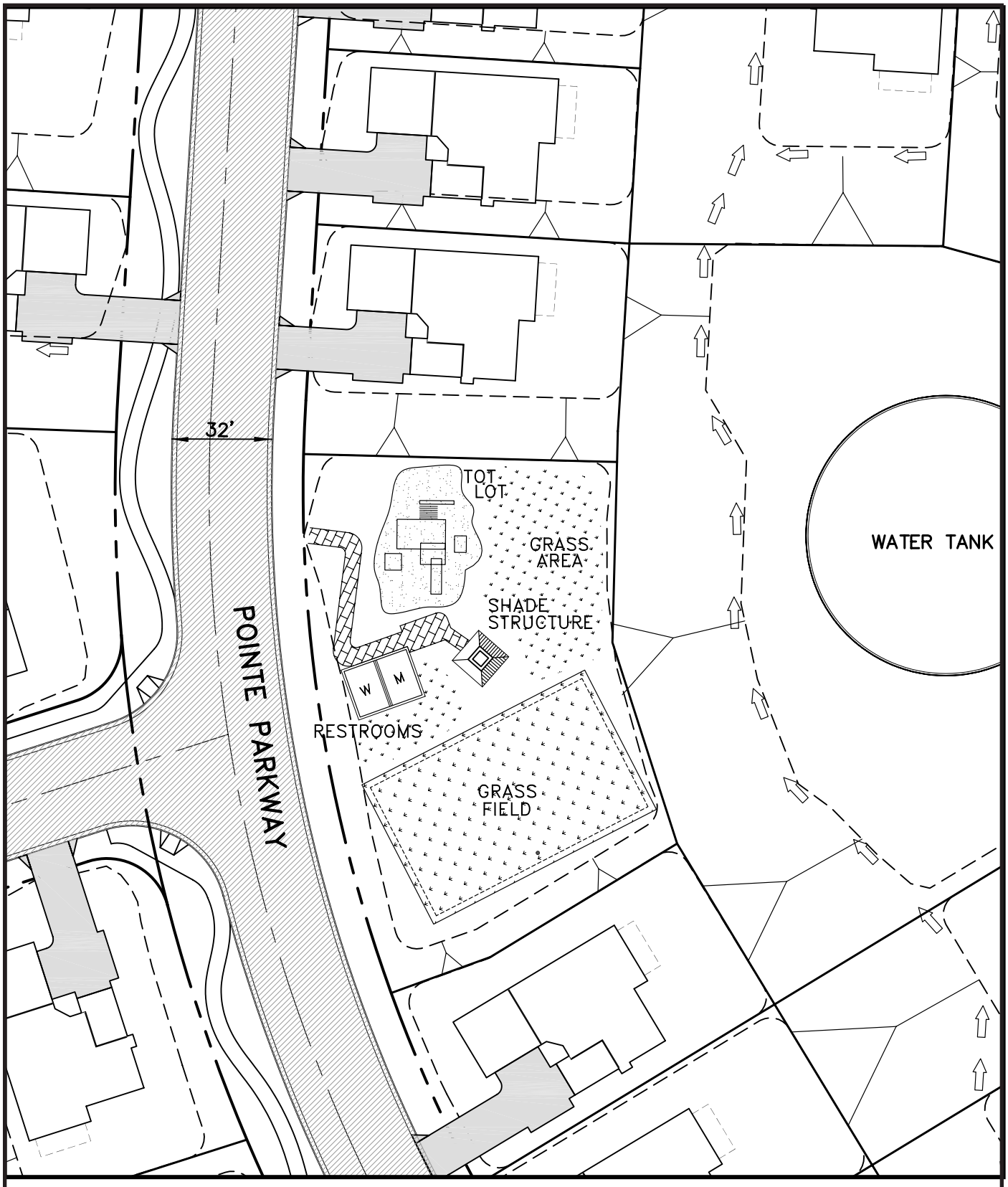
Figure 4-3
PROPOSED 1.03-ACRE PRIVATE PARK



WEST PARK AREA
SCALE 1"=40'

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