Agoura Medical Partners, LLC

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

Agoura Hills, CA

Prepared For / Lead Agency:

City of Agoura Hills
Planning and Community Development Department
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November 2009

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MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

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November 12, 2009

SECTION **PAGES**

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APPENDICES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Agoura Medical Partners, the applicant, is seeking approval to develop commercial uses on an approximately 1.8-acre site at the northwest corner of the Chesebro Road and Agoura Road intersection within the City of Agoura Hills. The Agoura Medical Partners, LLC Project (referred to as the proposed project) entails new construction activities that would result in 40,700 square feet of commercial development with parking, as well as ancillary facilities. The project site is currently vacant.

This Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An IS/MND may be used to satisfy the requirements of CEQA when the physical effects of the proposed project are anticipated to have no significant unmitigable effects on the environment. As discussed further in subsequent sections of this document, implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant effects on the environment that could not be reduced to below a level of significance. The remainder of this document is organized into two major sections:

- Project Description. This section identifies/describes the project location, the project site, the physical and operational aspects of the proposed project, approvals required for the proposed project, and related projects (other projects in the area considered in the cumulative impact analysis).
- Environmental Evaluation. This section answers the Initial Study Checklist questions and provides explanations supporting each answer. For each environmental issue area, the evaluation makes a determination on whether the proposed project would result in a potentially significant, significant but mitigable, less-than-significant, or no impact. Mitigation measures required to reduce potentially significant impacts to less-than-significant levels are also identified in this section.
- Response to Comments. This section responds to each of the comments received on the MND during its public review period.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Title

Agoura Medical Partners, LLC Project

Lead Agency and Contact Person

City of Agoura Hills
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, California 91301
Contact: Valerie Darbouze, Associate Planner

Project Ownership

Agoura Medical Partners, LLC
23945 Calabasas Road, #111
Calabasas, California 91302

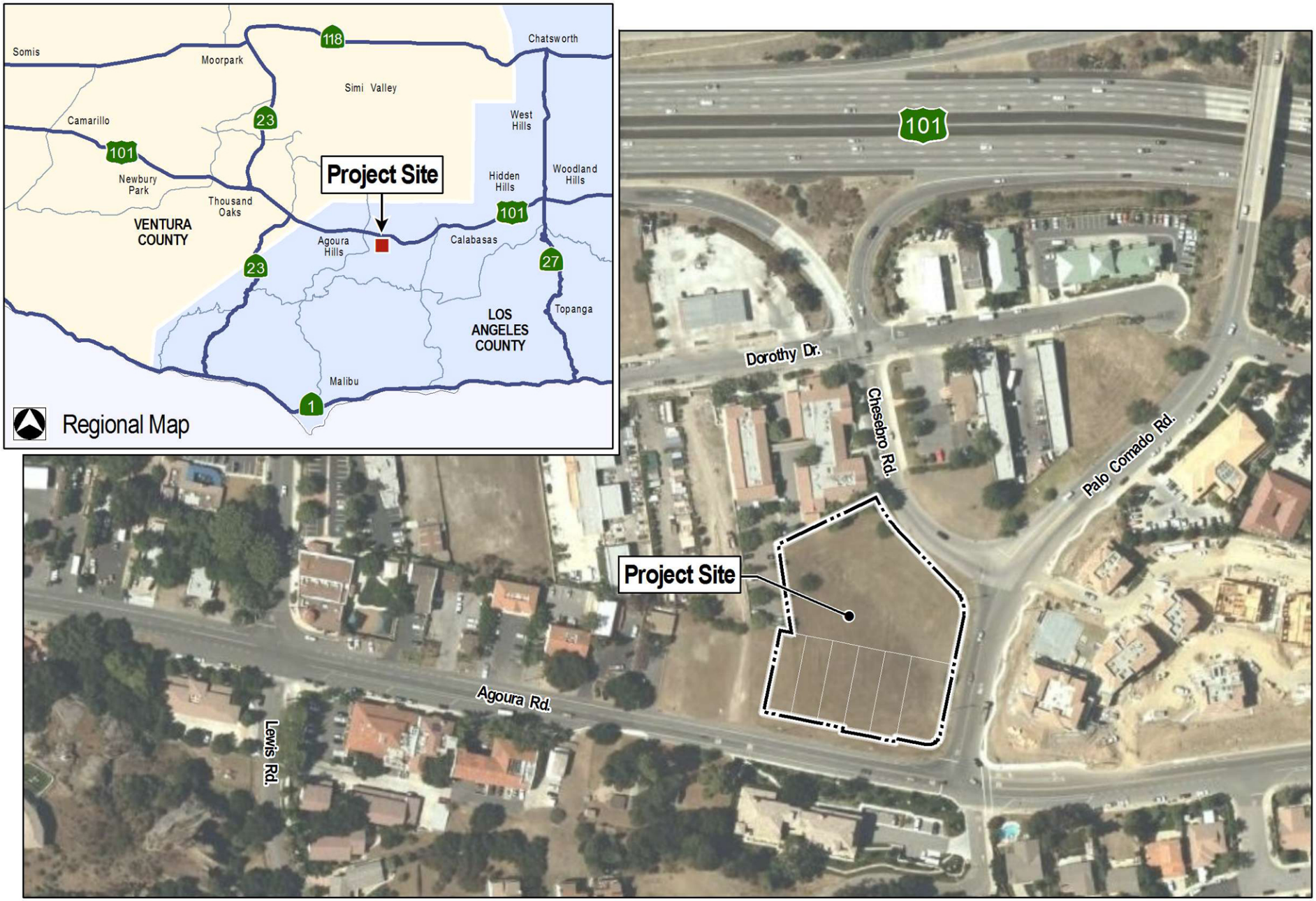
Project Site Location and Existing Uses

The proposed project site is located south of the 101 Freeway within the southeastern portion of the City of Agoura Hills. Specifically, the project site is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Chesebro Road and Agoura Road, in proximity to the Chesebro eastbound off-ramp, as shown in **Figure 1**. The site consists of approximately 1.8 acres (79,194 square feet), inclusive of Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 2061-012-012, 2061-012-014, 2061-012-015, 2061-012-018, 2061-012-047, 2061-012-048, and 2061-012-049. Six of these are smaller lots that front along Agoura Road; the seventh lot comprises the northern portion of the site, as shown in Figure 1.

The project site is currently undeveloped and its topography includes gentle gradient natural slopes that descend from Agoura Road on the south and Chesebro Road on the east (**Figure 2**). A natural drainage swale bisects the site and flows to the northwest, into off-site developed property. The site consists of ruderal/disturbed habitat, which is dominated by invasive plant species. Bedrock underlying the site consists of firm, dense sandstones, siltstone, and shale of the Topanga Formation. The existing City of Agoura Hills General Plan land use designation is Business Park-Office Retail (BP-OR) and the existing City zoning is Business Park-Office Retail-Old Agoura Design Overlay District-Freeway Corridor Overlay District (BP-OR-OA-FC) for the six smaller parcels that front Agoura Road. The existing General Plan land use designation and zoning for the larger northern parcel (APN 2061-012-012) is Commercial Retail/Service (CRS) and Commercial Retail/Service-Freeway Corridor Overlay District-Old Agoura Design Overlay District (CRS-FC-OA), respectively. The project site is surrounded by commercial uses to the north, east and south, vacant land to the west, and a residential community to the southeast.

Proposed Development and Design

The proposed project involves the development of a two-story medical building with a two-tiered underground parking structure, and includes surface parking, a trash enclosure, landscaping, handicap accessible paths, sidewalks, an equestrian trail, drainage improvements, and road improvements along Chesebro Road and Agoura Road. The proposed medical building



Source: Google Earth Image, 2008.

AGOURA MEDICAL PARTNERS, LLC

ENVICOM CORPORATION

Project Location Map

0 100 200 Feet

FIGURE 1

Northeast view showing the descending slopes and ruderal / disturbed habitat of the project site.

East view showing the project site's frontage along Agoura Road.

Northeast view of the project site showing the backdrop of the Palo Comodo hillsides and the existing commercial uses east of the project site.

Site Photographs

consists of two separate office wings (herein referred to as the "North Wing" and "South Wing") that separately connect to a centralized building providing a lobby. The lobby would be accessed from both wings at ground level and via two second-story bridges. The overall site plan including locations of project components is illustrated in **Figure 3** (see **Appendix A** for detailed site plans)**.** The total square footage of the building would be 40,700 square feet. The proposed medical office building would reach a maximum height of 35 feet above the ground surface. Building setbacks and yard distances vary, and include an eight foot set back from the Chesebro Road right of way to an approximately 30 foot set back from the Agoura Road right of way. Existing utilities would be relocated and power poles undergrounded in front of the site.

The building footprint/coverage of the medical office building (including both wings and the lobby) and the larger level of the subterranean parking structure is 44,794 square feet, or approximately 58 percent of the entire site whereas the building footprint is 22,363 square feet or approximately 30 percent of the lot.[1] Approximately 30,314 square feet of landscaping and trees would be provided on-site[2] and represents approximately 32.5 percent of the project site. The proposed landscaping plan is provided in Appendix A. Hardscape materials on-site would cover 15,604 square feet (19.5 percent). The total grading quantities are expected to be 10,591 cubic yards of cut, 2,537 cubic yards of fill, and 8,055 cubic yard of export soil.

See I. Aesthetics (in Section 3.0) for discussion of the project's architectural style and design features.

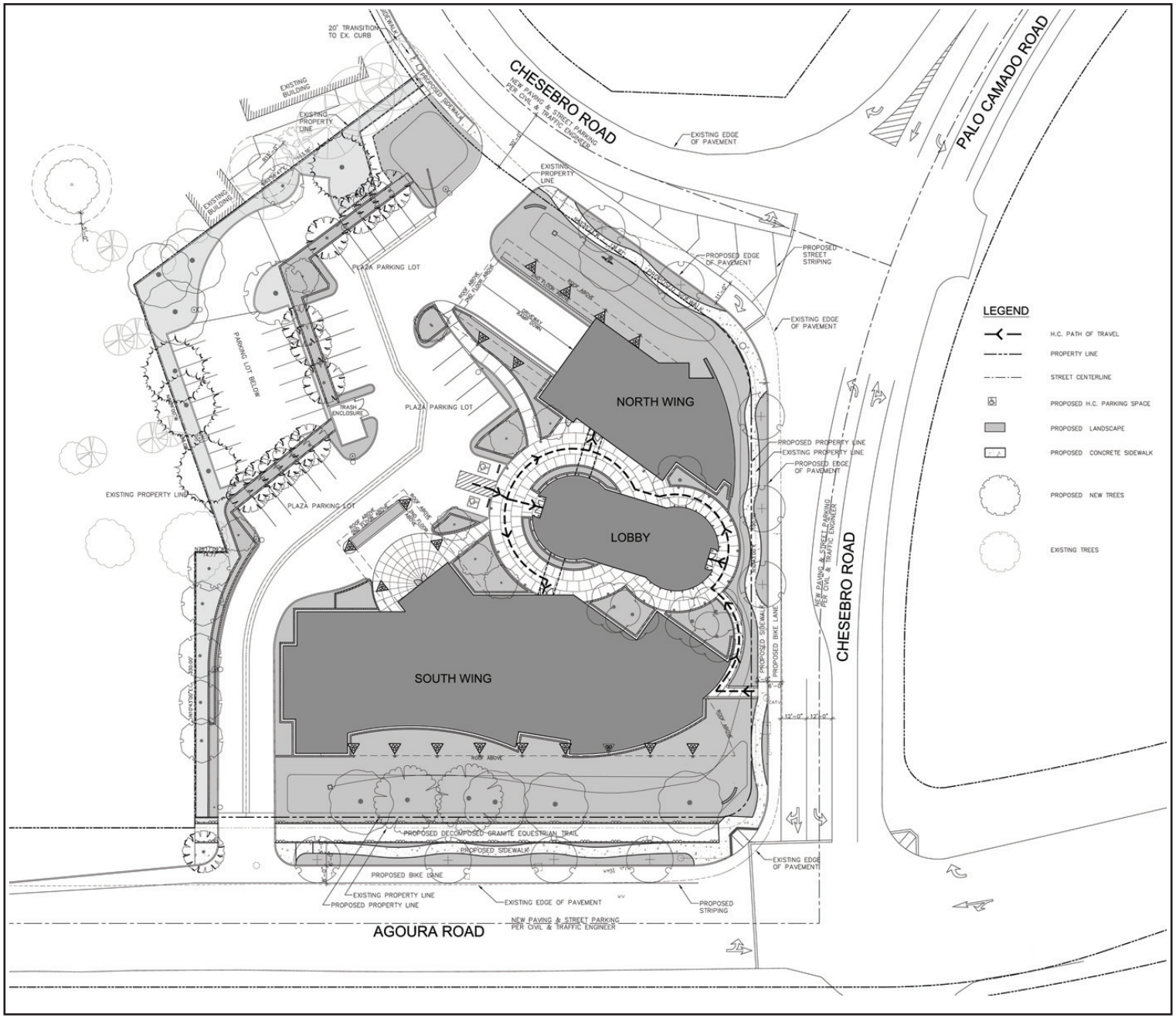
Frontage Improvements, Access, and Parking

The proposed project would include modifications to the Agoura Road and Chesebro Road frontage, as well as the construction of new parking areas, interior circulation routes, and various handicap accessibility elements.

The proposed project consists of a dedicated right of way along Chesebro Road and Agoura Road that would decrease the existing site area from 79,194 to 77,399 square feet. Street improvements include a meandering concrete sidewalk with landscaping along the project frontage and the dedication of an eight-foot wide equestrian trail consisting of decomposed granite along the northern edge of Agoura Road. Frontage improvements also include the widening of the west side of Chesebro Road, which would provide a southbound left-turn lane at the Agoura Road intersection and bike lanes on both sides of Chesebro Road. Additionally, frontage improvements include the reconfiguration of the Chesebro Road and Palo Comado Canyon Road intersection to provide separate left-turn lanes on the northbound and southbound approaches, and the eastbound approach would be improved to provide a left-through lane and a right-turn lane.

Access to the project site is provided by one driveway on Chesebro Road and one driveway on Agoura Road. The driveways provide access to the on-site parking areas and connect to one another in order to provide an on-site Los Angeles County Fire Department vehicular access road. The driveways provide the minimum 26-foot drive aisle required by City of Agoura Hills Municipal Code.[3] The project requires 204 parking spaces and 209 spaces are provided, which

[1] Site coverage calculations are based on a net site area of 77,339 square feet, which excludes right of way dedications.
[2] This amount includes 7,745 square feet of additional landscaping on the parking structure.
[3] Section 9654.3, City of Agoura Municipal Code.



Source: Heathcote & Associates Architects, 2009.

Project Site Plan

FEET 0 35 70

FIGURE 3

includes 8 handicapped spaces.[4] Out of the 209 spaces, 24 spaces would be located at the plaza level, 119 spaces would be on the first underground level, and 66 spaces at the lowest level.

Requested Approvals

The approvals being requested from the City include:

- General Plan Amendment for land use change from CRS to BP-OR;
- Zone change from CRS-FC-OA to BP-OR-OA-FC;
- Tentative Parcel Map to merge 7 parcels;
- Site Plan/Architectural Review to develop the vacant properties;
- City of Agoura Hills Oak Tree Permit; and
- Variance to allow 58 percent site coverage, which exceeds the 50 percent maximum allowed by the Old Agoura Design Overlay District.

[4] The City of Agoura Hills Municipal Code requires a minimum of five spaces for each 1,000 square feet of gross floor area for medical office land use and requires seven handicapped parking spaces for developments providing between 200 and 300 parking spaces (Section 9645.6, Parking Allocation).

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that could be lessened to a level of insignificance through incorporation of mitigation.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Public Services
☐ Agricultural Resources	☐ Hydrology &Water Quality	☐ Recreation
☐ Air Quality	☐ Land Use &Planning	☑ Transportation/Traffic
☑ Biological Resources	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Utilities & Service Systems
☑ Cultural Resources	☑ Noise	☑ Mandatory Findings of Significance
☑ Geology & Soils	☐ Population & Housing	

Determination

On the basis of the attached initial study checklist an evaluation:

_____ I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

__X__ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures have been added to the project. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION WILL BE PREPARED.

_____ I find the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

_____ I find that THERE IS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION for the proposed project with respect to environmental conditions, impacts, mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the prior environmental impact report. Only minor additions or changes will be necessary to make the previous EIR adequately apply to the project in the changed situation and a SUPPLEMENT TO THE EIR will be prepared.

_____ I find that none of the conditions requiring an additional environmental document have occurred.

Approved by: _____ **Date:** 12/9/09.
Valerie Darbouze, Associate Planner

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

I. AESTHETICS

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☑	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☑
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☑	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☑	☐

The project site is previously disturbed, vacant land. Vegetation within the site is sparse and is dominated by non-native, ruderal species (see Figure 2). One oak tree located offsite would be encroached upon by the project development (Refer to Section IV, Biological Resources, for further discussion and mitigation associated with potential impacts to trees). The project site generally slopes downward to the north from Agoura Road and west from Chesebro Road. The range of elevation on-site is approximately 32 feet, and extends from 908 feet mean sea level (msl) in the northwest corner to 940 msl in the southeast corner at the Chesebro Road and Agoura Road intersection.

The proposed project would alter the topography of the land, requiring grading, and the construction of a two-story medical office building and parking facilities. The proposed project would be located adjacent to existing development, would be similar in size and scale to existing surrounding uses, and would utilize grading, and landscaping sensitive to the existing landscape within the area. The proposed building design would consist of smooth stucco with stone veneer. The building would have multiple roof overhangs featuring wood timber columns supporting the roof structure. The building is designed to be a combination of a flat roof and a seam metal barrel roof in a “medium bronze” finish. The City of Agoura’s Architecture Review Panel has approved the proposed project’s architectural style, which includes exterior materials and earth tone colors that compliment the surrounding natural and man-made environment (**Figures 4, 5**, and **6** show visual renderings of the proposed buildings). The building height would be 35 feet or less per the Old Agoura (OA) Design Overlay District. In addition, the proposed building roofline would include a setback of approximately 30 feet from the dedicated Agoura Road right of way and eight feet from the dedicated Chesebro Road right of way.

Source: Heathcote & Associates Architects, 2009.

Northwest Rendering of the Proposed Project Site

FIGURE 4

Source: Heathcote & Associates Architects, 2009.

Southeast Rendering of the Proposed Project Site

FIGURE 5

Source: Heathcote & Associates Architects, 2009.

Southwest Rendering of the Proposed Project Site

a) The City of Agoura Hills General Plan Scenic Highways Element (referred to herein as the "Scenic Highways Element") identifies Agoura Road (which abuts the project site on the south) and Chesebro Road (which abuts the project site on the northeast and east) as Local Scenic Highways. The 101 Freeway, located north of the site, is identified as a Local Scenic Highway, Secondary County Scenic Highway, and eligible for state scenic highway designation.

As described in the Scenic Highways Element, Agoura Road is the scenic corridor through the southern section of the City. The views along Agoura Road are characterized by close-in foothill views to the south, with occasional vistas beyond the City to the north, which include the backdrop of rolling hills and the higher, more distant Simi Hills. The Scenic Highways Element identifies the following needs for this corridor:

- Design guidelines and a specific design for street widening and realignment, including landscaping, pedestrian and equestrian trails, where appropriate, and preservation of existing oaks adjacent to the roadway;
- Naturalistic landscaping at project edges to preserve rural character;
- Open space corridor connections at the Zuma Ridge Trail and Medea Creek;
- Setbacks to preserve rural character following widening;
- Restrict street lighting; and
- Screening of unsightly uses, e.g., contractors' yards and storage yards.

Northeasterly views of hillsides and ridgelines of the Simi Hills are currently observed by travelers heading east along Agoura Road as they approach and pass the project site. The lower portion of these hillsides in this northeasterly view are blocked by existing commercial development at the northeast corner of Agoura Road and Chesebro Road, although the ridgeline remains visible. The proposed project would eliminate northeasterly views of this ridgeline for a distance of approximately 400 feet (0.08 miles) along Agoura Road. To the west of this segment, existing hillside and ridgeline views would remain available from eastbound Agoura Road.

Limited views of distant hillsides and ridgelines are available to travelers heading west along Agoura Road. These features are not as prominent in westbound views as they are in eastbound views. The proposed project would obstruct these views for approximately 300 feet (0.05 miles) along westbound Agoura Road.

The proposed project provides the following design features that conform to the Scenic Highway Element's specified corridor needs for Agoura Road. It includes the widening of Agoura Road along the project's entire frontage pursuant to the improvement plans for Agoura Road (required of all road-fronting properties by the City of Agoura Road) and the provision of pedestrian and equestrian trials, as well as the planting of oak trees adjacent to the roadway. The project also provides for a 30-foot setback from Agoura Road and natural landscaping at the project edges to preserve the area's semi-rural character. In addition, the proposed project would include the undergrounding of all utilities. As discussed in IX. (Land Use) the proposed project would conform to all of the requirements and standards associated with the OA Design Overlay District, the Freeway Corridor (FC) Overlay District, and the site's proposed Business Park-Office Retail (BP-OR) zoning and land use designation.

Although the obstruction of hillside and ridgeline views from Agoura Road is considered adverse, this impact would be **less than significant** due to the limited distance along which views would be affected, the existing quality of the obstructed views (e.g., the eastbound hillside views are currently partially obstructed by commercial development), the consistency of the project with the needs identified in the Scenic Element, and the consistency of the project with other development along Agoura Road.

Travelers heading south on Chesebro Road have an existing south/southwest view of the Santa Monica Mountains along the project site's entire western frontage. A very limited southwest/west view of Ladyface Mountain ridgeline is available near the Chesebro Road and Palo Comado Canyon Road intersection. The lower portions of these mountains are blocked by existing commercial development located along Agoura Road, although ridgelines from these views remain visible. The proposed project would eliminate southwesterly views of mountain ridgelines for a distance of approximately 200 feet (0.04 miles) along Chesebro Road. Limited northwesterly views of distant hillsides and ridgelines are available to travelers heading north along Chesebro Road. The proposed project would obstruct these views for approximately 200 feet (0.04 miles) along Chesebro Road. Although no specific needs are identified in the Scenic Element for this corridor, the proposed project would provide (as discussed above) yard setbacks and natural landscaping that would help preserve the semi-rural character of the area. In addition, the proposed project would conform to all the requirements and standards associated with the site's proposed zoning and land use designation with the exception of a technical requirement (see IX., Land Use and Planning). Although the project's impact on ridgeline views from Chesebro Road is considered adverse, this impact would be **less than significant** due to the limited distance along which views would be affected, the existing quality of the obstructed views, and the consistency of the project with other development in the area.

The project site is visible from the 101 Freeway, although these views are restricted by existing development between the project site and the Freeway. Upon build out, portions of the proposed development may be partially visible from the 101 Freeway. However, it is anticipated that the project would not eliminate any ridgeline views that currently exist from this corridor. Furthermore, the proposed project would be consistent with other development located within the designated freeway corridor. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a **less than significant impact** on views from the 101 Freeway.

b) The 101 Freeway is eligible for designation as a state scenic highway, but has not been officially designated as such. There are no rock outcropping, historic buildings, or other scenic resources on the project site. In addition, the proposed project would not remove any oak trees. Therefore, the project would **not result in an impact** to these scenic resources.

c) The project site is previously disturbed, vacant land. Vegetation within the site is sparse and is dominated by non-native, ruderal species. As previously discussed, the project would be compatible with the uses, scale and design of other office buildings in the immediate area. The building materials would also be similar to those utilized in other buildings in the area, with smooth stucco and stone veneer. The City's Architectural Review Panel has approved the project architectural plans for its architectural style and choice of colors and materials. For these reasons, the proposed project would not substantially degrade the visual character of the site and its surroundings. As such, this impact is considered **less than significant**.

d) The applicant has proposed a photometric site lighting plan that includes installation of light fixtures, including perimeter lighting, parking lot lighting, and pedestrian walkway lighting (see Appendix A). The light poles would be no more than 13 feet tall and oriented to minimize light spill. To the east, north, and south of the project site, night lighting exists for the surrounding commercial development. The vacant parcel to the west, as well as existing residential areas to the southeast and southwest do not have exterior lighting. According to the photometric site plan, light fixtures would abut the western edge of the project site and would also be located south of the proposed medical office building in the southern area of the project site. Building setbacks and landscaping (including trees and shrubs) would serve as a buffer between the light fixtures and the nearby residential areas, as well as the western vacant lot. Although the proposed project would include light fixtures for pedestrian and security, the photometric plan indicates that lighting would be directed and shielded such that most of the light emitted would be contained within the project site. The actual illumination levels of all exterior lighting fixtures would be subject to field review and approval by the Director of Planning and Community Development, and the lighting may be subject to reduce illumination levels if determined to be necessary for compliance with the City Lighting Standards and Guidelines.

The surfacing and roofing of the office building will make use of glass, metal, and aluminum, which could, under some circumstances, create glare effects during the day. As described above, the City's Architectural Review Panel has approved project's architectural plans, which includes the use of earth tone colors. Glass is not as prominent on the south and east elevations that face residential areas. In addition, a wide roof overhang shields the large southerly glass span. Under the OA Design Overlay District, exterior treatments characterized by an overly bright, shiny, reflective, or artificial appearances are not permitted. Proposed road setbacks and landscaping features would help attenuate any possible glare effects. Therefore, the light and glare impacts associated with the proposed project would be **less than significant.**

II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☑
b) Conflict with the existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?	☐	☐	☐	☑
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☑

a) The project site is currently vacant with Commercial Retail/Service (CRS) and Business Park Office Retail (BP-OR) zoning and land use designations. The California Department of Conservation's (CDC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces maps and statistical data for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources. According to 2006 farmland data for Los Angeles County, the proposed project site is considered "urban and built-up land" and it is not known to include any of the soils listed above.[5] Therefore, the proposed project would result in **no impact** related to the conversion of farmland.

b) As discussed above in Response II. a, the project site is zoned CRS and BP-OR, and is currently vacant. It is not zoned for agricultural use and is not under a Williamson Act Contract. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act Contract. As such, **no impact** is anticipated.

c) The project site is not located in the vicinity of any farmland; the City of Agoura Hills, which the project site is located, is an urbanized environment, and business office, residential, and commercial uses, as well as the 101 Freeway, comprise the area surrounding the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use. As such, **no impact** is anticipated.

[5] California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Los Angeles County Important Farmland Data Availability, accessed from: http://redirect.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/county_info_results.asp, on September 23, 2009.

III. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☑	☐
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☑	☐
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	☐	☑	☐
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☑	☐
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	☑

The following air quality analysis is primarily based on the Air Quality Impact Study – Agoura Medical Partners Project, Agoura Hills, California (October 31, 2008) conducted by Rincon Consultants, Inc. and contained in **Appendix B**.

a) The air quality plan applicable to the proposed project is the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). Developments, such as the proposed project, do not directly relate to the AQMP in that there are no specific air quality programs or regulations governing "general" development. Conformity with adopted plans, forecasts and programs relative to population, housing, employment and land use is the primary yardstick by which impact significance of master planned growth is determined. The AQMP growth assumptions are generated by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), which derives its assumptions, in part, based on the General Plan of cities within the SCAG region. If a given project, such as the proposed project, is consistent with the adopted SCAG forecasts or the General Plan of the city in which the project is located, then the regional air quality impact of project-related growth would not be significant regarding AQMP inconsistency.

As discussed in Response XII.a, the proposed project would be within the SCAG growth forecast. The proposed project would require an amendment to the General Plan for land use change from Commercial Retail/Service (CRS), to Business Park-Office Retail (BP-OR).

Although this amendment would not increase the square footage that could occur onsite, it would increase the allowable Floor-to Area (FAR) on the site from 0.55 to 0.75. Nevertheless, the proposed project would remain within the existing 0.55 FAR allowed in the CRS district. Therefore, project-related growth is expected to be within the AQMP growth assumptions. As the proposed project would be consistent with the SCAG growth forecast, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the AQMP and a **less than significant** impact is anticipated.

b) Emission estimates for the 40,700 square-foot office development were calculated using URBEMIS 2007 version 9.2.4, which was developed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to evaluate construction emissions, operational emissions and trip emissions associated with new development. The modeling results are included as an attachment to the Air Quality Impact Analysis in Appendix B.

Construction Impacts

Regional Construction Emissions

Project construction would generate temporary air pollutant emissions. These impacts are associated with fugitive dust, otherwise known as particulates less than 10 and 2.5 microns in diameter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), and exhaust emissions from heavy construction vehicles. In addition, reactive organic gases (ROG) would be released during the drying phase upon application of architectural coatings. Construction would generally consist of site preparation (grading), erection of the proposed office buildings, and paving and architectural coating.

The site preparation phase would involve the greatest amount of heavy equipment and the greatest generation of fugitive dust. As described in Section 2.0 (Project Description), site grading activities associated with the proposed project would involve 10,591 cubic yards of cut and 2,537 cubic yards of fill, resulting in a net export of 8,055 cubic yards of cut. For purposes of modeling, it was conservatively estimated that the project would include 13,057 cubic yards of cut and 2,536 cubic yards of fill, for a total net export of 10,521 cubic yards of cut. In addition, for purposes of modeling a realistic maximum daily emissions scenario analysis, it was presumed that exported cut would be transported to a development within a 10-mile radius. For purposes of analysis, it was presumed that the project would require three months of grading and nine months of building construction. **Table 1** summarizes the maximum daily air pollutant emissions that would be generated by construction activity and compares these emissions to SCAQMD significance thresholds.

Table 1
Construction Period Emissions (pounds/day) [1]

Activity	Reactive Organic Gas (ROG)	Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)	Carbon Monoxide (CO)	PM-10	PM-2.5
Phase I Site Grading[2]	3.83	34.06	17.27	25.29	6.48
Phase II Building Construction[2]	2.47	20.19	9.71	1.01	0.92

Activity	Reactive Organic Gas (ROG)	Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)	Carbon Monoxide (CO)	PM-10	PM-2.5
Phase III – Paving and Architectural Coating	43.64	13.27	9.58	1.19	1.06
Maximum Pounds/Day	**43.64**	**34.06**	**17.27**	**25.29**	**6.48**
SCAQMD Thresholds	75	100	550	150	55
Exceed Significance Threshold?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

Source: URBEMIS2007 Model, Output in Appendix B.
1. Emission calculations are based on greater amounts of grading activity than what is proposed in the project and therefore are considered conservative.
2. Site grading and building construction totals include worker trips, construction vehicle emissions and fugitive dust.

The data provided in Table 1 demonstrates that the proposed project's construction period activities would not exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for criteria pollutants. Therefore, the proposed project is expected to result in a **less than significant impact** associated with regional construction period impacts. However, as the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) is in non-attainment for smog and PM_{10} impacts from all Basin-wide construction activities (including diesel exhaust from construction vehicles), implementation of **Mitigation Measures AQ-1** and **AQ-2** is recommended.

Local Construction Emissions

Localized significance thresholds (LSTs) were established by the SCAQMD in response to the Governing Board's Environmental Justice Enhancement Initiative (1-4), which was prepared to update the SCAQMD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook.

The LSTs were devised in response to public concerns regarding exposure of individuals to criteria pollutants in local communities. The LSTs represent the maximum emissions from a project that will not cause or contribute to an air quality exceedance of the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard at the nearest receptor, taking into consideration ambient concentrations in each source receptor area (SRA), project size, distance to the sensitive receptor, etc. However, the LSTs only apply to emissions within a fixed stationary location, including idling emissions during both project construction and operation, and LSTs have only been developed for NOx, CO, PM10, and PM5 pollutants. Furthermore, LSTs are only applicable for project areas up to five acres in size, with air pollutant dispersion modeling recommended for activity within larger areas. Additionally, it should be noted that LSTs are not applicable to mobile sources such as cars on the roadways. **Table 2** compares the project's total emissions to applicable LSTs for the construction of projects of two acres in size in Source Receptor Area 6 (SRA-6), which is designated by the SCAQMD as the west San Fernando Valley, including the City of Agoura Hills.

Table 2
Total On-Site Construction Criteria Pollutant Emissions for Local Significance Thresholds (pounds/day)

Activity	Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)	Carbon Monoxide (CO)	PM-10	PM-2.5
Site Preparation	45.1	20.8	4.8	2.6
Grading	53.4	25.0	3.6	2.8
Building	26.0	11.0	1.5	1.3
Arch Coating and Paving	36.0	17.6	2.6	2.4
Localized Significance Thresholds	**143**	**887**	**17**	**5**
Exceed Significance Threshold?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

Source: URBEMIS2007 Model, Output in Appendix B.
1. Site grading and building construction totals include worker trips, construction vehicle emissions and fugitive dust.

As shown in Table 2, construction emissions generated by the proposed project would not exceed the established SCAQMD localized thresholds. As such the proposed project's localized air quality impacts would be **less than significant**. However, as mentioned above, because the SCAB is in non-attainment for smog and PM_{10} impacts, Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 are recommended; these measures would further reduce the proposed project's impacts.

Operational Period Impacts

Table 3 shows projected maximum daily emissions associated with operation of the proposed medical office development. Overall emissions would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds for any criteria pollutant. Consequently, the project's regional air quality impacts would be **less than significant**.

Table 3
Project Operational Emissions (pounds/day)

Emission Source	Reactive Organic Gas (ROG)	Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)	Carbon Monoxide (CO)	PM-10	PM-2.5
Vehicles	3.83	34.06	17.27	25.29	6.48
Electricity and Natural Gas Consumption, Landscaping, Consumer Products	2.47	20.19	9.71	1.01	0.92
Total	**10.89**	**15.86**	**137.82**	**23.29**	**4.52**
SCAQMD Thresholds	55	55	550	150	55
Exceed Significance Threshold?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

Source: URBEMIS2007 Model, Output in Appendix B.
1. Site grading and building construction totals include worker trips, construction vehicle emissions and fugitive dust.

CO Hot Spots

Long-term operational impacts would also be significant if project-generated traffic were to cause a significant impact at a local intersection that would result in CO concentrations above the state or federal standards. Areas with high vehicle density, such as congested intersections, have the potential to create high concentrations of CO. These areas are known as CO "hot spots." A project's localized air quality impact is considered significant if CO emissions create a hot spot where either the California one-hour standard of 20 parts per million (ppm) or the federal and state eight-hour standard of 9.0 ppm is exceeded. This typically occurs at intersections having a level of service (LOS) of E or F. The 2007 SCAQMD summary card, which provides data on current conditions, states the maximum CO one-hour concentration for SRA-6 (west San Fernando Valley) as 4.0 ppm, and the maximum eight-hour concentrations as 2.8 ppm. These are the ambient CO concentrations, to which the project would contribute. These ambient concentrations are well below the 20 ppm one-hour standard and 9.0 ppm eight-hour standard.

According to the Caltrans Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol (1997), a detailed CO screening analysis should be conducted when project-generated traffic worsens a signalized intersection from LOS A, B, C or D to E or F. The traffic report that was prepared for the proposed project analyzed six intersections currently operating at LOS B-F during the AM and PM peak hours. The traffic report concluded that project impacts were significant per City criteria at one intersection (Palo Comado Canyon Road/US 101 Northbound Ramps) during the AM peak hour. Cumulative development, as detailed on the City's approved and pending project's list, was included in the future traffic generation scenario. The traffic report concluded that the project would have significant cumulative impacts at two intersections during the AM peak hour and three intersections during the PM peak hour. These would include: U.S. 101 Southbound Ramps/Chesebro Road/Dorothy Drive during the AM and PM peak hours, Palo Comado Canyon road/ U.S. 101 Northbound Ramps during the PM peak hour, and the Chesebro Road/Palo Comado Canyon Road during the AM and PM peak hour. Implementation of the mitigation measures identified in Section XV. would require the proposed project to contribute to its fair share of funding to improve the three impacted intersections to and acceptable LOS C or better. Therefore, based on the recommendations contained in the Caltrans Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol (1997), further CO analysis would not be required and the project's effect on CO concentrations would be less than significant.

Global Climate Change

Temporary Construction Emissions

Based on the maximum daily CO_2 emissions generated by construction of the proposed project (See the URBEMIS modeling results in Appendix B), construction of the proposed project would generate an estimated 460 tons of CO_2 during construction. Unlike the operational emissions that would occur over the life of the project, construction emissions are temporary and are associated with the vehicles that would be used to grade the site and construct the project. Once the project is built, emissions would occur from operation sources such as natural gas, electricity, landscaping equipment, and vehicle trips.

Operational Indirect and Stationary Emissions

The generation of electricity through combustion of fossil fuels typically yields carbon dioxide, and to a smaller extent nitrous oxide and methane. Annual electricity emissions were calculated

using the California Climate Action Registry General Reporting Protocol's spreadsheet model titled Greenhouse Gas Emission Worksheet: Operation Emissions, which is included in Appendix B. The spreadsheet model uses emission factors based on the mix of fossil-fueled generation plants, hydroelectric power generation, nuclear power generation and alternative energy sources associated with office development. **Table 4** shows the estimated operational emissions of GHGs from the proposed office development. Some portion of the energy demand represents a diversion of emissions from other locations, so the emissions shown do not necessarily represent an increase over statewide or global emissions.

Table 4
Estimated Annual Operation Emissions of GHG from Project

Emission Source	Annual Emissions	
	Emissions	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CDE)
Carbon Dioxide (CO_2)[1]	334.44 tons (short, US)	303.4 metric tons
Methane (CH_4)[2]	0.0021 metric tons	0.0 metric tons
Nitrous Oxide (N_20)[2]	0.0011 metric tons	0.3 metric tons
Project Total		**304 metric tons**

Source:
1. Mobile Emissions from URBEMIS 2007 (version 9.2.4).
2. California Climate Action Registry General Reporting Protocol, Reporting Entity-Wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Version 3.0, April 2008, page 30-35.
See Appendix B for GHG emission factor assumptions.

Transportation Emissions

Mobile source GHG emissions were estimated using the California Climate Action Registry General Reporting Protocol's spreadsheet model titled Greenhouse Gas Emissions Worksheet: Mobile Emissions, which is included as an attachment. The spreadsheet model uses the average daily trips estimate from the project traffic report and the total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) estimated in URBEMIS 2007 (v. 9.2.4). The URBEMIS 2007 model estimates that approximately 13,473 daily VMT are associated with the project. **Table 5** shows the estimated mobile emissions of GHGs based on this VMT.

Table 5
Estimated Annual Mobile Emissions of GHG from Project

Emission Source	Annual Emissions	
	Emissions	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CDE)
Carbon Dioxide (CO2)[1]	2,442.8 tons (short, US)	2,216 metric tons
Methane (CH4)[2]	2.1 metric tons	48 metric tons
Nitrous Oxide (N20)[2]	2.3 metric tons	671 metric tons
Project Total		**2,934 metric tons**

Source:
1. Mobile Emissions from URBEMIS 2007 (version 9.2.4).
2. California Climate Action Registry General Reporting Protocol, Reporting Entity-Wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Version 3.0, April 2008, page 30-35.
See Appendix B for GHG emission factor assumptions.

Combined Stationary and Mobile Source Emissions

Table 6 combines the operation and mobile GHG emissions associated with the proposed project, which total approximately 3,238 metric tons per year in CDE units. This total represents roughly 0.00062% of California's total 2004 emissions of 523 million metric tons CDE (CARB, 2007). These emission projections indicate that the majority of the project GHG emissions are associated with vehicular travel (90%). As discussed above, the mobile emissions accounted for in Table 6 are, in part, a redirection of existing travel to other locations, and so are not new or increased emissions by are instead already a part of the total California GHG emissions.

Table 6
Estimated Annual Total Emissions of GHG from Project

Emission Source	Annual Emissions
Operational	304 metric tons CO2e
Mobile	2,934 metric tons CO2e
Project Total	**3,238 metric tons CO2e**
Sources: Operational Emissions from URBEMIS 2007 (version 9.2.4). California Climate Action Registry General Reporting Protocol, Reporting Entity-Wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Version 3.0, April 2008.	

Conclusions Regarding Global Climate Change Impacts

Given the grand scope of global climate change, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would have an individually discernable effect on global climate change, given the scale of the project. However, the GHG emissions resulting from the proposed project would combine with emissions from throughout the Earth to cumulatively contribute to global climate change. The Air Quality Impact Study provides several approaches to consider potential cumulative significance of projects with respect to GHGs and concludes that emissions generated by construction and operation of the proposed project would not exceed SCAQMD significance thresholds or CAPCOA suggested thresholds for GHGs, and the proposed project would be consistent with GHG reduction strategies set forth by the 2006 CAT Report (See Appendix B for more information). Nevertheless, as no CEQA or SCAQMD threshold of significance exists for GHG emission, a determination of significance cannot be made at this time. However, the proposed project would be required to meet Title 24 Energy Efficiency Standards and recommended Mitigation Measure AQ-2 for smog generating activities would also reduce project-generated GHG emissions.

c) Refer to Response III.b, above. This response provides an analysis of the proposed project's air emissions as compared to SCAQMD significance thresholds. These thresholds are applied to individual projects in order to address regional, cumulative air quality impacts. As such, because the proposed project would result in emissions below these thresholds, the proposed project is not anticipated to significantly contribute to cumulative air quality impacts. Thus, the project's impacts are **less than significant.** However, the analysis recognizes the non-attainment status of the air basin for ozone, PM-10 and PM-2.5, and as such recommends the use of best available control measures during construction to reduce the proposed project's contribution to cumulative regional air quality impacts to the maximum extent feasible (see Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2).

d) The project is proposed in an area that contains a mix of urban and rural uses. Surrounding uses include predominantly commercial and residential uses. The site is approximately 500 feet from the 101 Freeway. Development of the proposed medical office project would not expose sensitive receptors to known substantial local pollutant concentrations beyond that typical of the region as a whole. Thus, the impact with respect to exposure of new receptors to substantial pollutants would be **less than significant**.

e) The project site is located in an urbanized area with a mix of uses, including residential and commercial uses. No significant odors currently exist in the immediate area of the project site. Significant odors are typically generated by large-scale food related activities, such as localized areas of food processing and heavy industrial/chemical sources. The proposed project includes the development of a 40,700 square-foot medical office building. The operation of the proposed project, like other commercial projects, would not involve the use of materials or practices that generate odors beyond the project site boundary. Any unforeseen odors would be controlled in accordance with SCAQMD's Rule 402, which prohibits persons from discharging quantities of air contaminants that cause nuisance to any considerable number of persons. Thus, **no impact** is anticipated.

Mitigation Measures

Although the proposed project is not anticipated to have any significant impacts to air quality, Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 would reduce the project's significant impacts to air quality to a less than significant level.

AQ-1 The applicant shall prepare a Construction Management Plan to control PM-10 emissions. At a minimum, the Plan shall include the following dust control measures:

- The simultaneous disturbance site should be minimized as much as possible.
- The proposed project shall comply with SCAQMD established minimum requirements for construction activities to reduce fugitive dust and PM-10 emissions.

  A plan to control fugitive dust through the implementation of best available control measures shall be prepared and submitted to the City for approval prior to the issuance of grading permits. The plan shall specify the dust control measures to be implemented. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:

  a) Application of soil stabilizers to inactive areas;
  b) Preparation of a high wind dust control plan and implement plan elements and terminate soil disturbance when winds exceed 25 mph;
  c) Stabilization of previously disturbed areas if subsequent construction is delayed; and
  d) Covering all stockpiles with tarps.
- The project proponent shall comply with all applicable SCAQMD Rules and Regulations including Rule 403 insuring the clean up of construction-related dirt on approach routes to the site. Rule 403 prohibits the release of fugitive dust emissions from any active operation, open storage pile or disturbed surface area visible beyond the property line of the emission source. Particulate matter on public roadways is also prohibited.

- Adequate watering techniques shall be employed to mitigate the impact of construction-related dust particulates. Portions of the site that are undergoing surface earth moving operations shall be watered such that a crust will be formed on the ground surface, and then watered again at the end of each day. Watering of exposed surfaces and haul roads three times/day is recommended.
- Any vegetative cover to be utilized onsite shall be planted as soon as possible to reduce the disturbed area subject to wind erosion. Irrigation systems required for these plants shall be installed as soon as possible to maintain good ground cover and to minimize wind erosion of the soil.
- Any construction access roads (other than temporary access roads) shall be paved as soon as possible and cleaned after each workday. The maximum vehicle speed on unpaved roads shall be 15 mph.

AQ-2 The applicant shall prepare a Construction Management Plan to control equipment emissions during construction. At a minimum, the Plan shall incorporate the following mitigation measures:

- 90 day Low Nox tune-ups shall be required for off-road equipment.
- Tier 3 rated engines shall be used for all equipment during site grading, if available.
- Equipment whose engines are equipped with diesel oxidation catalysts shall be utilized, if available.
- Construction operations affecting off-site roadways shall be scheduled by implementing traffic hours and shall minimize obstruction of through-traffic lanes.
- Idling trucks or heavy equipment shall turn off their engines if the expected duration of idling exceeds five (5) minutes as required by law.
- On-site heavy equipment used during grading and construction shall be equipped with diesel particulate filters unless it is demonstrated that such equipment is not available or its use is not cost-competitive.
- Low VOC architectural and asphalt coatings shall be used on site and shall comply with AQMD Rule 1113-Architectural Coatings.
- All building construction shall comply with energy use guidelines in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.

III. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modification, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or	☐	☐	☑	☐

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
regulations by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in the City or regional plans, policies, or regulations by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☑
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on Federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☑
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☑	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☑	☐	☐
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or State habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☑

A Biological Resources Assessment was conducted for the project site by Rincon Consultants, Incorporated (Dated April 2, 2008), and is contained in **Appendix C**. The report assesses the potential impacts to biological resources related to the proposed development of the medical office building. The following analysis of biological resources is partially based on the Biological Resources Assessment.