

4. Environmental Setting

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section provides a description of the “physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, ... from both a local and a regional perspective”, pursuant to provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15125(a)(1). The environmental setting provides the baseline physical conditions from which the lead agency will determine the significance of environmental impacts resulting from the McKinley Elementary School Campus Master Plan Project (Proposed Project). Subsections of Chapter 5, *Environmental Analysis*, provide more detailed descriptions of the local, regional, state, and federal regulatory and environmental settings for specific topical areas.

4.2 REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

4.2.1 Regional Location

McKinley Elementary School is in the City of Santa Monica, which is in the southwestern portion of Los Angeles County. Santa Monica is a coastal city that is bordered by the Pacific Palisades neighborhood and the Santa Monica Mountains to the north, the neighborhood of Venice to the south, the neighborhood West Los Angeles to the east, and the Pacific Ocean to the west (see Figure 3-1, *Regional Location*).

Regional access is provided by Interstate 10 (I-10) which runs generally east-west through the city, and State Route 1 (SR-1), or Pacific Coast Highway (PCH), which runs along the western border of the city. A light rail line, Metro E line (Expo), with a stop approximately 0.6 mile from the Proposed Project’s Site, provides regional access and connects to other Metro lines (D, A, B lines) in Downtown Los Angeles approximately 11 miles away.

4.2.2 Regional Planning Consideration

4.2.2.1 AIR QUALITY

South Coast Air Basin Air Quality Management Plan

The city is in the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB), which is managed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD). The SoCAB includes all of Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. The South Coast AQMD is the air pollution control agency primarily responsible for preparing the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) in coordination with the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The AQMP is a comprehensive air pollution

4. Environmental Setting

control program for making progress towards and attaining the established state and federal ambient air quality standards (AAQS).

The air pollutants emitted into the ambient air by stationary and mobile sources are regulated by federal and state law. These regulated air pollutants are known as criteria air pollutants and are carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur dioxide, coarse inhalable particulate matter (PM₁₀), fine inhalable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), and lead. VOC and NO_x are criteria pollutant precursors and go on to form secondary criteria pollutants, such as ozone (O₃), through chemical and photochemical reactions in the atmosphere. Air basins are classified as attainment/nonattainment areas for particular pollutants depending on whether they meet AAQS for that pollutant. The SoCAB is designated nonattainment for O₃ and PM_{2.5} under the California and National AAQS, nonattainment for PM₁₀ under the California AAQS, and nonattainment for lead under the National AAQS (US EPA 2022).

The Proposed Project's consistency with the applicable AAQS is discussed in Section 5.2, *Air Quality*.

4.2.2.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Current State of California guidance and goals for reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are generally embodied in Executive Order S-03-05; Executive Order B-30-15; Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), Senate Bill 32 (SB 32), the Global Warming Solutions Act (2008); and Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act.

Executive Order S 03 05, signed June 1, 2005, set the following GHG reduction targets for the State of California:

- 2000 levels by 2010
- 1990 levels by 2020
- 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050

AB 32 was passed by the state legislature on August 31, 2006, to place the state on a course toward reducing its contribution of GHG emissions. AB 32 follows the emissions reduction targets established in Executive Order S-3-05. Based on the GHG emissions inventory conducted for its 2008 Scoping Plan, CARB approved a 2020 emissions limit of 427 million metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions (MMT_{CO₂e}) for the state (CARB 2008). CARB is required to update the Scoping Plan every five years. In 2015, Governor Brown signed Executive Order B-30-15 into law, establishing a GHG reduction target for year 2030, which was later codified under SB 32 (2016). The 2022 update to the Scoping Plan addresses the 2030 target of 40 percent below 1990 levels (CARB 2022).

In 2008, SB 375 was adopted to connect GHG emissions reductions targets for the transportation sector to local land use decisions that affect travel behavior. Its intent is to reduce GHG emissions from light-duty trucks and automobiles by aligning regional long-range transportation plans, investments, and housing allocations with local land use planning to reduce vehicle miles traveled and vehicle trips. SCAG's targets are an 8 percent per capita reduction from 2005 GHG emission levels by 2020 and a 13 percent per capita reduction from 2005 GHG emission levels by 2035. Specifically, SB 375 required CARB to establish GHG emissions reduction

4. Environmental Setting

targets for each of the 17 regions in California managed by a metropolitan planning organization (MPO). In addition, SB 375 requires CARB to update the targets for the MPOs every eight years. The targets set by CARB in 2018 for the SCAG region were an 8 percent per capita reduction from 2005 GHG emission levels by 2020 (unchanged from the 2010 target) and a 19 percent per capita reduction from 2005 GHG emission levels by 2035 (CARB 2018). The 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) projects that the SCAG region will meet its GHG per capita reduction targets of 8 percent by 2020 and 19 percent by 2035. Additionally, it is also projected that implementation of the plan would reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita for year 2045 by 4.1 percent compared to baseline condition for the year (SCAG 2020).

The Proposed Project's consistency with CARB's Scoping Plan is discussed in Section 5.6, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*.

SCAG Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

SCAG is a council of governments representing Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties. SCAG is the federally recognized MPO for this region, which encompasses over 38,000 square miles. SCAG is a regional planning agency and a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SCAG is also the regional clearinghouse for projects requiring environmental documentation under federal and state law. In this role, SCAG reviews proposed development and infrastructure projects to analyze their impacts on regional planning programs. As the southern California region's MPO, SCAG cooperates with South Coast AQMD, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and other agencies in preparing regional planning documents. The South Coast AQMD is an air pollution agency responsible for regulating stationary sources of air pollutions in Southern California. SCAG has developed regional plans to achieve specific regional objectives, as discussed below.

Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

On September 13, 2020, SCAG adopted the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), also known as Connect SoCal. The RTP/SCS is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. The plan is a requirement of the state of California and the federal government and is updated by SCAG every four years as demographic, economic, and policy circumstances change. Connect SoCal embodies a collective vision for the region's future and is developed with input from local governments, county transportation commissions, tribal governments, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and local stakeholders. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS includes growth forecasts that estimate employment, population, and housing growth. These estimates are used by SCAG, transportation agencies, and local agencies to anticipate and plan for growth. Connect SoCal works to address residents' challenges by promoting job accessibility, enabling shorter commutes, making communities safer, and encouraging lower-cost housing developments. One of the key goals is to encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options.

The Proposed Project's consistency with the applicable 2020-2045 RTP/SCS policies is analyzed in detail in Section 5.12, *Transportation*.

4. Environmental Setting

4.3 LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

4.3.1 Project Location

The McKinley Elementary School (ES) campus is at 2401 Santa Monica Boulevard (Assessor's Parcel Map Numbers [APN] 4276-023-900) in the Mid-City neighborhood of Santa Monica, in southwest Los Angeles County (see Figure 3-1). The 6.48-acre rectangular parcel consists of the existing McKinley ES Campus, which is bounded by Santa Monica Boulevard to the southeast, Chelsea Avenue to the northeast, Arizona Avenue to the northwest, and 23rd Court (alley) to the southwest (Figure 3-2, *Aerial Photograph*). The campus is surrounded by residential, commercial, and medical uses.

4.3.2 Surrounding Land Uses

The McKinley ES campus is surrounded by low-density residential neighborhoods to the immediate north, west, and south. Commercial uses are to the southeast and northeast, and medical offices are to the south across Santa Monica Boulevard. Providence Saint John's Health Center consists of midrise buildings one block south of 23rd Court. Residential properties along Chelsea Avenue consist of both one- and two-story residences, residential properties along Arizona Avenue consist primarily of one-story residences, and residential properties along 23rd Court consist of two- and three-story residences. Additionally, commercial properties surrounding the campus along Chelsea Avenue and 23rd Court consist of one-story structures, and the medical offices along Santa Monica Boulevard consist of three- and four-story structures. The campus is surrounded by properties zoned for Low-Density Residential (R2) and Mixed-Use Boulevard Low (MUBL) (Santa Monica 2015).

The surrounding residential neighborhood streets include Chelsea Avenue, Arizona Avenue, and 23rd Court (alley). Santa Monica Boulevard, a regional transportation corridor, is immediately south of the campus. Wilshire Boulevard is one block north of the campus.

4.3.3 McKinley Elementary School Existing Conditions

Originally built in 1922, McKinley ES serves students in preschool, transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades one through five. The campus contains 3 permanent buildings, identified as Buildings A through C; 11 portable classrooms; 1 modular building, Building D; a recreational portable; fields and playgrounds; a student garden; and a parking lot along Chelsea Avenue (see Table 3-1, *Characteristics of Existing Buildings*).

Building C is the main campus building and includes Administration/Classrooms/Multipurpose Auditorium; it is along the southern portion of the campus, set back approximately 105 feet from Santa Monica Boulevard. Kindergarten classrooms are on the ground floor of Building C in the south wing facing the Santa Monica Quad; elementary classrooms occupy the second floor of Building C's south wing and both floors of the north wing. The library occupies a room at the east end of the south wing of the main building, and the auditorium is at the west end (see Figure 3-4, *Existing Site Plan*, and Figure 3-5, *Photographs of the Existing Campus*). These buildings are concentrated in the southern part of the campus nearest Santa Monica Boulevard.

Building C faces Santa Monica Boulevard, and its architecture signals that it is the front of the campus. However, because most children arrive by automobile and are dropped off and picked up, the front of school

4. Environmental Setting

migrated along Chelsea Avenue because of the traffic along Santa Monica Boulevard. The campus frontage facing Santa Monica Boulevard includes a landscaped quad with lawns, mature trees, and several concrete walkways leading to the main school entrance. To the west of the Santa Monica Quad are three portable classrooms near the corner of 23rd Court and Santa Monica Boulevard, and to the east of the Santa Monica Quad the existing Building D and early education and kindergarten play yards are behind six-foot-tall, chain-link fences along Santa Monica Boulevard. The existing surface parking lot includes 90 parking stalls and is accessed via Chelsea Avenue. There are buffer plantings around the perimeter of the parking lot. The northern portion of the campus has open space for school recreation. Much of this space consists of an approximately 123,275-square-foot paved asphalt surface that is used for basketball and athletic courts and contains several shade structures. There is also playground equipment installed on artificial turf and a small learning garden on the northwest corner of the campus.

The permanent buildings A, B, and C were constructed in the Italian Renaissance Revival style of architecture. The following sections include an architectural description of each building.

Building A (Cafeteria)

Building A is along 23rd Court in the southeastern part of the campus. It is a one-story, 4,439-square-foot permanent building, with a height of 23 feet 8 inches, and contains the school's cafeteria. Building A is connected to Building C via the building's arcade. This arcade extends from the eastern corner to create the West Courtyard.

Building B (Classrooms)

Building B is in the central portion of the campus immediately north of Building C. The two-story, 13,425-square-foot building contains classrooms and has a height of 41 feet 4 inches. Two concrete ramps provide entrance to the first story's south façade. An elevator and connected arcade at the northwest corner of the building provide access to the second story. A metal staircase allows emergency exit from the second story along the north façade.

Building C (Administration/Classrooms/Multipurpose Auditorium)

Building C is in the southern part of the campus, immediately south of Building B. Building C consists of a central, two-story, 27,390-square-foot building with a height of 38 feet 6 inches, flanked on both ends by single-story wings. This building contains classrooms, administrative office, and the multipurpose auditorium.

Building D (Preschool)

Building D is in the eastern part of the campus just east of Building C and is a rectangular, one-story, 3,796-square-foot modular building with a height of 11 feet 9 inches. This building contains preschool classrooms. The slightly raised concrete platform is accessible via a ramp.

4. Environmental Setting

Santa Monica Boulevard Quad

Situated south of Building C, the open space is traversed by several concrete walkways that historically provided pedestrian access to the original entrance on Santa Monica Boulevard. The setback is generally consistent and is landscaped with grassy lawns and mature trees of various species.

Main Courtyard

The Main Courtyard is surrounded by Building B to the north and Building C to the east, south, and west. The courtyard is landscaped with grassy lawns, mature trees, and concrete patios interspersed with lunch tables, lampposts, and trash receptacles. The “Storybook Land” sculpture is in the center of the courtyard on a tiered pedestal that is clad in tile.

West Courtyard

The courtyard is paved and includes picnic tables; it is bordered by Building C to the east and south and by Building A to the west.

Athletic Field

The athletic field was originally a larger lawn that has been sectioned over time as various regions of the campus have been incrementally paved. It is in the northwestern part of the campus.

Learning Garden

A 7,500-square-foot learning garden for the students is at the northwest corner of the campus.

4.3.3.1 STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at McKinley ES has decreased since 2016, from a high of approximately 538 students to 375 in the 2021-2022 school year. The enrollment increased to 407 students in the 2022-2023 school year (see Table 4-1, *McKinley Elementary School Student Enrollment by Grade Level*).

Table 4-1 McKinley Elementary School Student Enrollment by Grade Level

Grade	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Transitional Kindergarten	24	48	42	46	21	23	20	18	16	19
Kindergarten	81	54	92	76	69	72	74	50	59	59
1st Grade	83	84	52	90	74	67	73	68	53	63
2nd Grade	85	87	83	58	91	70	62	70	62	54
3rd Grade	63	84	90	82	63	92	67	59	69	76
4th Grade	77	62	88	88	84	62	90	62	57	73
5th Grade	77	80	65	98	86	89	64	81	59	63
Total	490	499	512	538	488	475	450	408	375	407

Source: SMMUSD CBEDS 2006-2022.

4. Environmental Setting

The McKinley ES student capacity is based on California Department of Education standards. The current maximum enrollment capacity at McKinley ES is 814 students. This is a maximum where every space is used as a classroom and is full of students. Based on the classroom maximums negotiated in the current collective bargaining agreement with the Santa Monica Malibu Classroom Teachers Association, the maximum enrollment capacity is 609 students. However, neither of these maximum capacity numbers reflect current instruction methods or is anticipated based on actual enrollment trends. Based on the Districtwide Educational Specifications, the current campus should support up to a maximum of 550 students. The Proposed Project would not increase the capacity of the campus capacity but would be designed to support the District's goals and objectives outlined in the Districtwide Education Specifications (SMMUSD 2019) in the 2019 SMMUSD Education Master Plan.

4.3.3.2 EXISTING MCKINLEY ES CAMPUS USES

The campus encompasses approximately 6.48 acres (see Table 4-2, *Existing Campus Land Use*), with a total existing building area of 63,171 square feet, which includes approximately 54,531 square feet of permanent building area and 8,640 square feet of portable building area.

Table 4-2 Existing Campus Land Use

Area	Acres	Percentage
Building Footprint	1.09	17
Playground and Fields	2.83	44
Unprogrammed Landscape and Open Space	0.99	15
Pedestrian Circulation	0.73	11
Vehicular Circulation and Parking	0.84	13
Total	6.48	100
Source: SMMUSD 2023.		

The existing campus contains 29 classrooms, shown by grade in Table 4-3, *Existing Facilities*. The campus also has classrooms for before-/after-school programs, science, art, and music; a multipurpose auditorium; a multipurpose cafeteria/kitchen; and a library.

4. Environmental Setting

Table 4-3 Existing Facilities

Campus Facilities	Quantity	Classroom Location
Preschool	2	Building D
Transitional Kindergarten	1	Building C
Kindergarten	3	Building C
1st Grade	3	Building B
2nd Grade	3	Portables B4, B6, and B8
3rd Grade	3	Building B and Portables B10 and B11
4th Grade	3	Building B
5th Grade	3	Building C
Special Education	8	Portables B1 and B7, Building C, and Building D
Core Classrooms	29	
SAP Childcare and Learning Annex	3	Portables B2, B3, and B5
Art Classrooms/Flexible Science/Art	1	Building C
STEM Classrooms/Maker Lab	1	Building C
Multipurpose/Music	1	Building B
Multipurposed Auditorium	1	Building C
Multipurpose Culinary/Cafeteria	1	Building A
Library	1	Building C and Portable B9
Specialized/Flexible Rooms	9	

Source: SMMUSD 2023.

In addition, the 6.48-acre campus includes approximately 2.83 acres of athletic fields, courts, and playgrounds, as shown in Table 4-4, *Existing Recreational Facilities*. The existing recreational area includes a natural turf field and perimeter track adjacent to Arizona Avenue; a mixture of hard court and resilient play areas with equipment make up the remainder of the sizable playgrounds, which occupy the north half of campus. Wall ball courts in the northeast corner are hard to surveil across the play yards. Additionally, a preschool and kindergarten play yard made of hard top and resilient surfacing and equipment allows separate play for younger children.

Table 4-4 Existing Recreational Facilities

Area	Acres
Older Children's Track and Field	0.94
Older Children's Playground	1.52
Playground equipment on resilient surface	0.03
Playground equipment on resilient surface	0.04
Playground equipment on resilient surface	0.03
Playground equipment on resilient surface	0.03
Shared Pre-K & Kindergarten playground equipment on resilient surface	0.02
Shared Pre-K & Kindergarten playground equipment on resilient surface	0.06
Shared Pre-K & kindergarten playground area	0.16
Total	2.83

Source: SMMUSD 2023.

4. Environmental Setting

The existing athletic facilities at the school are available for community use through the Civic Center Act and joint use agreement between the District and the City. When the school facilities are not in use and are not scheduled for school-sponsored or District-related events, certain community organizations and members are permitted to use school facilities for their events by obtaining a Civic Center Permit from the SMMUSD. Permitted events may include community and/or city use of the playfields, common areas, and classrooms, as permitted in the 2022 “Master Facility Use Agreements with the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School” (City of Santa Monica 2022a).

Operation of the school facilities for community use typically occur outside normal school operating hours, generally after 3:00 p.m. on weekdays, and after 8:00 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, and all outdoor activities are completed by sunset on both weekdays and weekends. Indoor activities are typically completed by 9:00 p.m. but are permitted until 10:00 p.m.. Parking for Civic Center uses is provided in the school’s on-site surface parking lots. These occasional uses would not change with the Proposed Project.

4.3.4 Campus History

The original campus was constructed in 1905 about one-quarter mile northwest of its present-day location and was rebuilt in 1922 at its current location. The new campus was designed by Los Angeles master architectural firm Allison & Allison in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. In 1933 a magnitude 6.4 earthquake in Long Beach caused extensive damage throughout the region. Following the earthquake, the architectural firm of Parkinson & Parkinson rehabilitated the damaged school from 1935 to 1937.

Although construction ceased during the World War II years (1939 to 1945), development and expansion of the campus resumed shortly thereafter to meet increased student demand. Subsequent construction at the school in the postwar era (1945 to 1968) was not completed as part of long-term planning efforts. In 1951, architect Joe M. Estep designed the cafeteria building to the west of the main building. The cafeteria was connected via two arcades, thereby creating the smaller West Courtyard. In 1973, the architectural firm of Powell, Morgridge, Richards & Coghlan remodeled the campus. This work included alterations to the main entrance and the replacement of windows and doors. In 1973, Building D was constructed as the preschool for the campus (see Figure 3-4).

The existing campus has four permanent buildings as well as athletic facilities, open spaces, and artwork. Building A (Cafeteria) was constructed in 1951 and designed by Joe M. Estep. Building B (Classrooms Building) was constructed in 1923 and designed by Allison & Allison. The building was rehabilitated by Parkinson & Parkinson in 1935 to 1937 and by Powell, Morgridge, Richards & Coghlan in 1973. Building C (Classrooms/Kindergarten) was constructed in 1923 and designed by Allison & Allison. The building was expanded by Allison & Allison in 1929 and 1930. It was rehabilitated by Parkinson & Parkinson in 1935 to 1937 and by Powell, Morgridge, Richards & Coghlan in 1973. An addition was added to the west wing facing the courtyard circa 1958. The building was again altered in 1999. Building D (preschool) was constructed circa 1973.

The Santa Monica Boulevard Quad that is south of Building C along Santa Monica Boulevard dates to the beginnings of the campus (circa 1923) and has been modified over time; the Main Courtyard also dates to the

4. Environmental Setting

early development of the campus (circa 1923). The West Courtyard dates to circa 1951 and was created by the arcade built at that time.

The Main Courtyard of the campus also includes “Storybook Land,” a four-foot-tall, cast stone sculpture that depicts two children reading a book and was created by artist Stefan De Vriedt in 1936. The sculpture was funded by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). In 1937, a bronze plaque was installed by the WPA in Building C after its reconstruction. As shown in Table 3-1, *Characteristics of Existing Buildings*, Buildings B and C were constructed in the 1920s; Building A was constructed in the 1950s; and Building D was constructed in the 1970s.

4.3.4.1 HISTORICAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

In February 2021, the District adopted Board Policy (BP) 7113 and the accompanying Administrative Regulation (AR) 7113, which were developed to identify and clarify treatment of historical resources present on properties within the District’s jurisdiction. The Board Policy and Administrative Regulation require completion of a Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) of a school campus prior to approval of either a master plan or design of a school facilities project at that campus. In 2022, the District commissioned an HRI of the McKinley ES campus. The purpose of the HRI is to review the existing buildings, structures, and features at the school; review previous evaluations of the school through historic survey, environmental review, or other official actions; identify and evaluate any potential historic resources within the school, including their character-defining features; and review the required consideration of historic resources within the school under CEQA. This campus HRI was prepared in conformance with BP and AR 7113 as they relate to McKinley ES.

As part of the HRI, the buildings and features of the McKinley ES campus were considered collectively for their potential eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), and/or listing at the local level as a historic district. Based on visual observation of the campus; research of primary and secondary sources; and an analysis of the eligibility criteria for listing at the federal, state, and local levels, the HRI identified a potential historic district at McKinley ES that is eligible for listing in the CRHR and locally for designation as a City of Santa Monica historic district¹ (Historic Resources Group 2022). The following are identified as contributing elements of the historic district: Buildings B and C, two site features (Santa Monica Boulevard Quad and Main Courtyard), and two additional features (“Storybook Land” Sculpture and WPA Bronze Plaque) with a period of significance from 1923 to 1937 (see Table 4-5, *Features in the Historic District*, and Figure 3-6, *Historic District Boundary*). All other buildings and features on-site were determined ineligible for listing at the federal, state, and local levels (Historic Resources Group 2022). The historic district and the potential for the Proposed Project to result in impacts to historical resources is further discussed in Section 5.3, *Cultural Resources*, of this DEIR. The SMMUSD Board of Education (Board) reviewed the HRI during the February 17, 2022, Board meeting. The Board provided direction to proceed with the campus plan and to proceed with the design and environmental review of the first phase of the Proposed Project (SMMUSD 2023).

¹ As governed by Santa Monica Municipal Code Section 9.56.100, Landmarks and Historic Districts Ordinance.

4. Environmental Setting

Table 4-5 Features in the Historic District

Current Feature Name	Year Built	Integrity	Status	Building Style
Buildings				
Building B	1923	Fair	Contributor	Italian Renaissance Revival
Building C	1923	Fair	Contributor	Italian Renaissance Revival
Site Features				
Santa Monica Boulevard Quad	1923	Good	Contributor	N/A
Main Courtyard	1923	Good	Contributor	N/A
Additional Features				
"Storybook Land" Sculpture	1936	Very Good	Contributor	N/A
WPA Bronze Plaque	1937	Very Good	Contributor	N/A

Source: Historic Resources Group 2022.

4.3.5 General Plan and Zoning

4.3.5.1 CITY OF SANTA MONICA GENERAL PLAN

The Santa Monica General Plan land use designation for the McKinley ES campus is Institutional/Public Lands (see Figure 3-3a, *General Plan Land Use*). As stated in the City's General Plan Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE), the Institutional/Public Lands designation is intended for any public or quasi-public facility, including schools, colleges, municipal offices, museums or performance spaces, corporation yards, utility stations, and similar uses. The Proposed Project's Site is not within the City of Santa Monica's Local Coastal Program's Land Use Plan (LUP). The Proposed Project involves the renovation and modernization of the existing McKinley ES campus and therefore will not require changes to the campus's land use designation.

4.3.5.2 CITY OF SANTA MONICA ZONING CODE

The planning and zoning regulations (Article 9 of the Santa Monica Municipal Code), in conformance with the General Plan, regulate land use development in Santa Monica. In each zoning designation, the regulations specify the permitted and prohibited uses and the development standards, including setbacks, height, parking, and design standards, among others. The Proposed Project's Site is in the Institutional/Public Land Zone, which permits public or semipublic facilities, including municipal offices, schools, libraries, museums or performance spaces, cemeteries, corporation yards, utility stations, and similar uses (see Figure 3-3b, *Zoning Designations*).

A detailed analysis of consistency with the City's General Plan and Santa Monica Municipal Code is provided in Chapter 5.9, *Land Use and Planning*.

4. Environmental Setting

4.3.6 Aesthetics

Scenic vistas and view corridors provide the public with panoramic views of features such as mountains, forests, the ocean, or urban skylines. The city's scenic resources include the Santa Monica State Beach, the Pacific Ocean, Santa Monica Canyon, the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreational Area, Marine Park, and the bluffs overlooking the beach (City of Santa Monica 2015). The LUCE also discusses scenic open space, such as the public landscape along Ocean Avenue and public art, as among the city's visual resources. The city's scenic vistas and view corridors include the hillside areas south of Ocean Park Boulevard, Palisades Park, Hotchkiss Park, and the east-west streets from the beach to Ocean Avenue. The City of Santa Monica has indicated that some of its scenic vistas can be considered scenic resources as well. The closest scenic vista from the campus are the hillside homes south of Ocean Park Boulevard, approximately 1.4 miles away.

The McKinley ES campus and the surrounding areas are developed with urban land uses and development. There is no significant topography on the campus nor in the surrounding areas, as the area is generally flat. The campus contains an existing developed elementary school campus that includes playgrounds, on-site parking, and two 2-story buildings on the central and southwestern portions of the campus. The campus is surrounded by residential uses with one to two stories, commercial uses with up to three stories, and Providence Saint John's Health Center, which is several stories high and approximately 210 feet to the west.

The elementary school campus currently emits light from building interiors, building and security lights, and parking lot lights. There are trees in the landscaped quad along Santa Monica Boulevard as well as in the main courtyard surrounded by Buildings B and C.

As discussed in Section 4.3.3, *Campus History*, in 2022, the District commissioned an HRI of the campus, which identified a historic district at the campus with a period of significance between 1923 to 1937 for listing in the CRHR and for a designation as a City of Santa Monica historic district (HRG 2022).

Please refer to Section 5.1, *Aesthetics*, for additional information concerning regulations governing scenic quality, light and glare, and an analysis of the project-related impacts.

4.3.7 Air Quality and Climate

The City of Santa Monica is within the SoCAB, which is governed by South Coast AQMD. Air basins are classified as attainment/nonattainment areas for particular pollutants depending on whether they meet AAQS for that pollutant. The SoCAB is designated nonattainment for ozone (O₃) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) under the California and National AAQS, nonattainment for particulate matter (PM₁₀) under the California AAQS, and nonattainment for lead under the National AAQS (US EPA 2022). An air quality analysis was performed for the project, and the results are discussed in Section 5.2, *Air Quality*. Additionally, project-related impacts from GHG emissions are discussed in Section 5.6, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*.

The average annual temperature varies little throughout the SoCAB. With a more pronounced oceanic influence, coastal areas show less variability in annual minimum and maximum temperatures than inland areas. The climatological station nearest to the campus that best represents the climatological conditions in the Proposed Project's area is the Santa Monica Pier, California Monitoring Station (047953). The average low is

4. Environmental Setting

reported at 49.2 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) in January, and the average high is 72.1°F in August (WRCC 2023). However, rainfall is highly variable, with almost all rainfall from November through March. Rainfall averages 12.62 inches per year in the vicinity of the campus (WRCC 2023). Periods of heavy fog are frequent, given the location along the coast. Low clouds, often referred to as high fog, are a characteristic climatic feature. Annual average humidity is 70 percent at the coast and 57 percent in the eastern portions of the SoCAB (South Coast AQMD 1993). On-site sensitive receptors include the McKinley Elementary School students. The nearest off-site sensitive receptors are the single- and multifamily residences to the northwest, northeast, and southwest of the Proposed Project's Site, along Arizona Avenue, Chelsea Avenue, and along 23rd Court. The closest of these receptors would be the residents along 23rd Court, who are approximately 20 feet from the campus.

Please refer to Section 5.2, *Air Quality*, for additional information concerning potential air quality impacts of the Proposed Project.

4.3.8 Cultural and Paleontological Resources

The campus is developed with buildings, landscaping, hardscaping, and surface parking in a highly urbanized area of the city, and the campus has already been subjected to ground-disturbing activities associated with existing development. As discussed Section 4.3.3, *Campus History*, the HRI identified a potential historic district at McKinley ES that is eligible for listing in the CRHR and for designation as a City of Santa Monica historic district under Chapter 9.56.100, Landmarks and Historic Districts Ordinance, of the municipal code (HRG 2022).

A cultural records search of the California Historical Resources Information System, Southern Central Coastal Information Center, indicated that no previous cultural resource investigations have been conducted for the Proposed Project's Site. The cultural resources records search indicated that 14 cultural resources studies have been completed within a half-mile radius of the campus. The records search also indicated that five previously recorded cultural resources were recorded within a half-mile radius of the campus. Of these resources, two were recorded within the Proposed Project's Site, consisting of historic built environments. The three cultural resources recorded within a half-mile of the Proposed Project's Site consist of historic archaeological sites and a historic built environment. A search of the Sacred Lands File by the Native American Heritage Commission indicated that sacred lands or resources are known within the same United States Geological Survey (USGS) Beverly Hills quadrangle map (1:24,000), township, range, and section as the campus (Section 32 of Township 1 South, Range 15 West, and Section 5 of Township 2 South, Range 15 West).

Please refer to Section 5.3, *Cultural Resources*, for additional information concerning potential cultural impacts of the Proposed Project.

4.3.9 Geology and Landform

The campus is situated in the southwestern block of the Los Angeles Basin. The Basin, a structural trough, is a northwest-trending, alluviated lowland plain approximately 50 miles long and 20 miles wide. Mountains and hills that generally expose Late Cretaceous to Late Pleistocene-age sedimentary and igneous rocks bound the Basin along the north, northeast, east, and southeast. The Basin is at the northerly terminus of the Peninsular Ranges. The campus is underlain by Quaternary old alluvial fan deposits and infilled with Holocene-age alluvial

4. Environmental Setting

deposits. Artificial fill materials were encountered underlying existing pavements on the campus to a depth of approximately four feet below ground surface (bgs). Fill, as encountered, is characterized as medium reddish brown sandy lean clay and clay. Pleistocene alluvial fan deposits were encountered directly beneath the artificial fill materials and generally consist of reddish brown to dark reddish brown, stiff to hard, silty to sandy lean clay with gravel, with interbeds of medium dense to dense silty sand and varying amounts of Jurassic-age slaty gravels (Leighton 2021).

The campus is underlain by middle to late Pleistocene older alluvium and late Pleistocene to Holocene young alluvium. No fossil localities were found within the Proposed Project's Site. Fossil localities were previously recovered within a ten-mile radius from sediments like those found at the Proposed Project's Site. All fossils were a minimum of 6 to 11 feet deep in deposits mapped as Pleistocene at the surface. Sediments with a Holocene component produced fossils starting at 24 feet deep (Cogstone 2022). See Section 5.5, *Geology and Soils*, for additional information concerning potential geological and paleontological impacts of the Proposed Project.

4.3.10 Hydrology

The city is part of the Santa Monica Groundwater Basin (SMGB) which spans 50.2 square miles. The SMGB is bounded by the Santa Monica Mountains to the north, the Ballona Escarpment to the south, the Newport-Inglewood fault to the east, and the Pacific Ocean to the west (Santa Monica 2021a). Due to the extensive faulting, there are five subbasins in the SMGB—Arcadia Subbasin, Charnock Subbasin, South Santa Monica or Coastal Subbasin, Crestal Subbasin, and Olympic Subbasin (City of Santa Monica 2018). The campus is within the Olympic Subbasin.

The Proposed Project's Site is currently developed with hardscape and impervious surfaces; the pervious areas include landscaping and play fields. Groundwater was not encountered to the maximum depth explored of 51.5 feet bgs. Historical groundwater levels, as interpreted from the USGS Beverly Hills 7.5 Minute Quadrangle, indicate historic high groundwater at approximately 40 feet bgs. Nearby monitoring wells located approximately 600 feet southwest of the campus documented groundwater levels ranging from 110 to 132 feet bgs (Leighton 2021).

The topography in the Proposed Project's area is relatively flat with gentle slopes to the south. Elevation ranges from 155 feet to 170 feet above mean sea level (Leighton 2021). Currently, runoff is collected via swales and storm drain inlets and conveyed by an internal storm drain system that connects to the City's existing storm drains beneath Chelsea Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard.

The campus is not located a 100-year or 500-year flood zone, as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA 2021).

Additional project impacts on hydrology and water quality are discussed in Section 5.8, *Hydrology and Water Quality*.

4. Environmental Setting

4.3.11 Noise

The Proposed Project's Site is in a predominantly urbanized mixed-use residential area in Santa Monica, directly adjacent to Santa Monica Boulevard. Noise within the Proposed Project's Site is associated with the existing school uses, including outdoor student activity, circulation-related noise (during drop off/pick up times), and property maintenance. Noise around the Proposed Project's Site is predominantly characterized by traffic noise along Santa Monica Boulevard and other local roadways. Noise generated by surrounding residential and urbanized uses, including health care facilities (Providence St. John's Health Center) and associated intermittent ambulance noise, also contribute to the overall noise environment in the Proposed Project's vicinity. Additional project-related impacts from noise sources are discussed in Section 5.10, *Noise*.

4.3.12 Recreation

Park services are provided by the City of Santa Monica's Parks and Recreation Department. Nearby parks to the campus include Schader Park, Park Drive Park, Douglas Park, Colorado Center Park, Memorial Park, and Virginia Avenue Park, which are approximately 0.08, 0.09, 0.15, 0.18, 0.63, and 0.80 mile away, respectively. Schader Park and Park Drive Park are small neighborhood parks that include outdoor amenities such as benches. Douglas Park, Colorado Center Park, Memorial Park, and Virginia Avenue Park are larger parks with a larger variety of outdoor amenities, including benches, picnic tables, barbecues, exercise equipment, playgrounds, sports courts and fields, dog parks, splash pads, walking paths, and restrooms. The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, which encompasses a multitude of parks and state parks, is approximately 2.2 miles northwest of the campus. Finally, Santa Monica Beach is approximately 1.75 miles southwest of the campus.

As described above in Section 4.3.2, *Existing Conditions*, the existing athletic facilities on the campus are available for community use through the Civic Center Act and joint use agreement between the District and the City. Athletic facilities on other SMMUSD properties are also available for community use. Currently, the Santa Monica American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO), Region 20, uses various SMMUSD properties for practice and games, including the McKinley ES campus.

Additional project impacts related to recreational resources are discussed in Section 5.11, *Recreation*.

4.3.13 Transportation

Regional vehicle access to the campus is provided via the I-10 and PCH. Primary local access to the campus is from Santa Monica Boulevard, Chelsea Avenue, Arizona Avenue, and 23rd Court (IBI Group 2022). Current drop-off/pick-up (DOPU) operations for the campus occur primarily at three locations.

- **Campus parking lot.** The campus parking lot contains a DOPU counterclockwise drive-through lane system. The parking lot provides access to the parking lot gate and courtyard gates for grades one through five, office/breakfast entrance, and TK/kindergarten gate for TK and kindergarten students.
- **Chelsea Avenue.** Chelsea Avenue runs along the eastern side of the campus. DOPU operations occur along this street via neighborhood on-street parking and provide access to the parking lot gate and

4. Environmental Setting

courtyard gates for grades one through five, the office/breakfast entrance, and the TK/K gate for TK and kindergarten students.

- **Arizona Avenue.** Arizona Avenue borders the northern campus boundary. DOPU operations occur along this street via neighborhood on-street parking and provides access to the Arizona gate for grades one through five.

Additional project impacts related to transportation are discussed in Section 5.12, *Transportation*.

4.4 ASSUMPTIONS REGARDING CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines states that cumulative impacts shall be discussed where they are significant. It further states that this discussion shall reflect the level and severity of the impact and the likelihood of occurrence, but not in as great a level of detail as that necessary for the project alone. Section 15355 of the CEQA Guidelines defines cumulative impacts as “...two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” Cumulative impacts represent the change caused by the incremental impact of a project when added to other proposed or committed projects in the vicinity.

The CEQA Guidelines (§ 15130 [b][1]) state that the information used in an analysis of cumulative impacts should come from one of two sources:

- A. A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency.
- B. A summary of projections contained in an adopted General Plan or related planning document designed to evaluate regional or area-wide conditions.

The cumulative impact analysis in this DEIR uses Method A. A summary of cumulative projects considered in the impact analysis is included in Table 4-6, *Cumulative Projects* (see also Figure 4-1, *Cumulative Projects*). The District performed an assessment of six schools to determine campus updates required to align with the District’s Educational Specifications. The result of this assessment was the development of drafts for six long-range campus plans for six different campuses, including McKinley ES. One of the six projects is within one-half mile of McKinley ES (see Table 4-7, *SMMUSD Projects in the City of Santa Monica*).

4. Environmental Setting

Table 4-6 Cumulative Projects

Project	Location	Project Components	Distance from McKinley ES (mi)
1328 22nd St / Saint John's Health Center Development Agreement Amendment	1328 22nd Street, Santa Monica CA	- Implementation of revised parking program with 1,528 owned and leased parking spaces on- and off-site - Construction of modified entry plaza - Implementation of parking management plan, transportation demand management plan, and neighborhood protection measures	0.04
2121 Santa Monica Blvd / Providence Saint John's Health Center Phase Two Project Master Plan / PSJHC Phase Two on North and South Campuses	2121 Santa Monica Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA	669,150 sq ft above-grade floor area - Maximum height of 105 feet - Wellness/healthcare/research facilities - Subterranean parking - Open space areas - Visitor housing - Minimum of 10 replacement multifamily housing units - New facilities for Providence's existing Santa Monica Cancer Institute and Child and Family Development Center - May be built over a period of 17 years	0.04
2300 Wilshire Blvd Mixed Use	2300 Wilshire Blvd, Santa Monica CA	- Three-story mixed-use building 30 residential units 22,300 sq ft retail area 2,700 sq ft restaurant 227 subterranean parking spaces	0.10
2225 Broadway	2225 Broadway, Santa Monica CA	15,463 sq ft three-story mixed-use building 15 rental units 2,751 sq ft commercial space	0.12
2500 Broadway / Yahoo (Colorado) Center Development Agreement Amendment	2500 Broadway, Santa Monica CA	- Revised base parking ratio to one parking space per 500 sq ft of office floor area - Lease up to 1,053 existing parking spaces - Implementation of transportation demand management measures	0.15
2624 Arizona Ave	2624 Arizona Avenue, Santa Monica CA	Fence and wall height modification	0.18
1242 20th Street Wellness Center DR	1242 20th Street, Santa Monica CA	7,965 sq ft adaptive reuse of existing funeral home and chapel building 59,548 sq ft new wellness center 218 parking spaces	0.26
1681 26th St AA / Pen Factory	1681 26th Street, Santa Monica CA	7,499 sq ft addition to existing building - Adaptive reuse of existing, vacant building - One-story subterranean parking structure	0.27
2800 Wilshire Blvd Fresh and Easy Market	2800 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica CA	12,947 sq ft Fresh and Easy Market 38 parking spaces	0.30
2901 Santa Monica Blvd AA	2901 Santa Monica Boulevard, Santa Monica CA	26,683 sq ft building 60 residential units 5,100 sq ft commercial space	0.36

4. Environmental Setting

Table 4-6 Cumulative Projects

Project	Location	Project Components	Distance from McKinley ES (mi)
Memorial Park Neighborhood Plan	Memorial Park, Colorado Ave from Lincoln to 20th St, 17th St from Wilshire Blvd to Pico Blvd, Santa Monica CA	• Multimodal access to the light rail station • Shared parking on key sites • Neighborhood integration of future improved Memorial Park open space	0.37 mi away at Colorado Ave and 20th St
Pico Wellbeing Project	Pico neighborhood, Santa Monica CA	• Neighborhood plan	0.42
2834 Colorado Ave / Colorado Creative Studios Development Agreement	2834 Colorado Avenue, Santa Monica CA	• 191,982 sq ft four-story creative art/entertainment building • 9,000 sq ft of neighborhood serving uses • Three levels subterranean parking with 640 spaces	0.43
3008 Santa Monica Boulevard / Mixed Use Project	3008 Santa Monica Boulevard, Santa Monica CA	• 24,825 sq ft three-story mixed-use building • 26 residential units • 64 parking spaces • 53 bike spaces	0.44
Safe Streets for 17th St and Michigan Ave Project/Plan	17th St from Pico Blvd to Wilshire Blvd, Michigan Ave from 14th St to 19th St	• Pedestrian improvements and lighting • Protected bike lanes • Curb extensions/ accessible ramps	0.46 mi away at 17th St and Santa Monica Blvd

Sources: Santa Monica 2023, SMMUSD 2023.

Table 4-7 SMMUSD Projects within the City of Santa Monica

Project	Location	Project Components	Distance from McKinley ES (mi)
Franklin Elementary School Campus Plan	2400 Montana Avenue	• 24,685 sq ft increased classrooms and storage • Remove and demolish eight buildings and nine portables, construct three new buildings, and renovate two buildings and outdoor areas	0.50
Grant Elementary School Master Plan Project	2368 Pearl Street	• Removal of 10 modular classrooms, playground restrooms, shade structures • Demolitions of a portion of one permanent building • Renovation of existing library and kindergarten classroom building • Construction of two new buildings • New hardscape • Reconfigured playgrounds and field	1.15
Roosevelt Elementary School Campus Master Plan	801 Montana Avenue	• Comprehensive modernization	1.25
John Adams Middle School Campus Improvement Project	2425 16th Street	• Demolition of one existing building • Renovation of six existing buildings • Upgrades to the existing library and courtyard • Construction of new building • New hardscape	1.25

4. Environmental Setting

Table 4-7 SMMUSD Projects within the City of Santa Monica

Project	Location	Project Components	Distance from McKinley ES (mi)
Will Rogers Learning Community Campus Expansion and Improvement Project	2401 14th Street	- Addition of the property located at 1515 Maple Street - Removal/demolition of 16 portable and permanent buildings - Construction of three new buildings - Renovation of eight existing buildings and outdoor spaces - Reconfiguration of outdoor and parking/transportation areas over an approximate span of 10 to 15 years	1.30
Santa Monica High School Master Plan (Phase 3 Exploration Building and Gold Gym Update)	601 Pico Boulevard	Phase 3A 56,247 square feet of demolition - Addition of new classroom building and library 58,077 square feet of new construction Phase 3B 51,580 square feet of demolition - Addition of a new Gold Gym 54,847 square feet of new construction	1.40

Sources: SMMUSD 2023.

4.5 REFERENCES

- CalRecycle. 2019. Jurisdiction Disposal and Alternative Daily Cover (ADC) Tons by Facility. <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/DisposalReporting/Destination/DisposalByFacility>.
- CARB (California Air Resources Board). 2022, November 16. 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-12/2022-sp.pdf>.
- Cogstone. 2022, September. Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment for the McKinley Elementary Campus Master Plan Project, City of Santa Monica, Los Angeles County, California.
- FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). 2021. FEMA Flood Map Service Center: Search by Address. <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search?AddressQuery=2401%20Santa%20Monica%20Blvd%2C%20Santa%20Monica%2C%20CA%2090404#searchresultsanchor>.
- HRG (Historic Resources Group). 2022. McKinley Elementary School Historic Resources Inventory Report Draft.
- IBI Group. 2022, September 2015. McKinley ES Access and Pedestrian Safety Analysis.

4. Environmental Setting

Leighton (Leighton Consulting, Inc.). 2021, November 19. Geotechnical Exploration Report New Classroom Building McKinley Elementary School 2401 Santa Monica Boulevard Santa Monica, Los Angeles County California.

Santa Monica, City of. 2015, July 24. Santa Monica Land Use and Circulation Element.

———. 2018, December. Sustainable Water Master Plan Update.
https://www.smgov.net/uploadedFiles/Departments/Public_Works/Water/SWMP.pdf.

———. 2021a, June. DEIR 6th Cycle 2021-2029 Housing Element Update.
https://files.ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/265627-4/attachment/UfCaBXcd6MJ_Wm_oDIE-YiOURYjC2tQd8Wm_LVysQ_9d0mkJWZodUSY8xrSO-k-H6IefBX_Uw3YcfBQN0.

———. 2021b, June. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan.
https://santamonica.gov/media/Users/smgov_5Calfredo_2Egonzalez/WRPP/2020_UWMP.pdf.

———. 2023, January 27 (accessed). Plans & Projects. <https://www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Plans-Projects/>.

SCAG (Southern California Association of Governments). 2020, September 3. Connect SoCal.
https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocal-plan_0.pdf?1606001176.

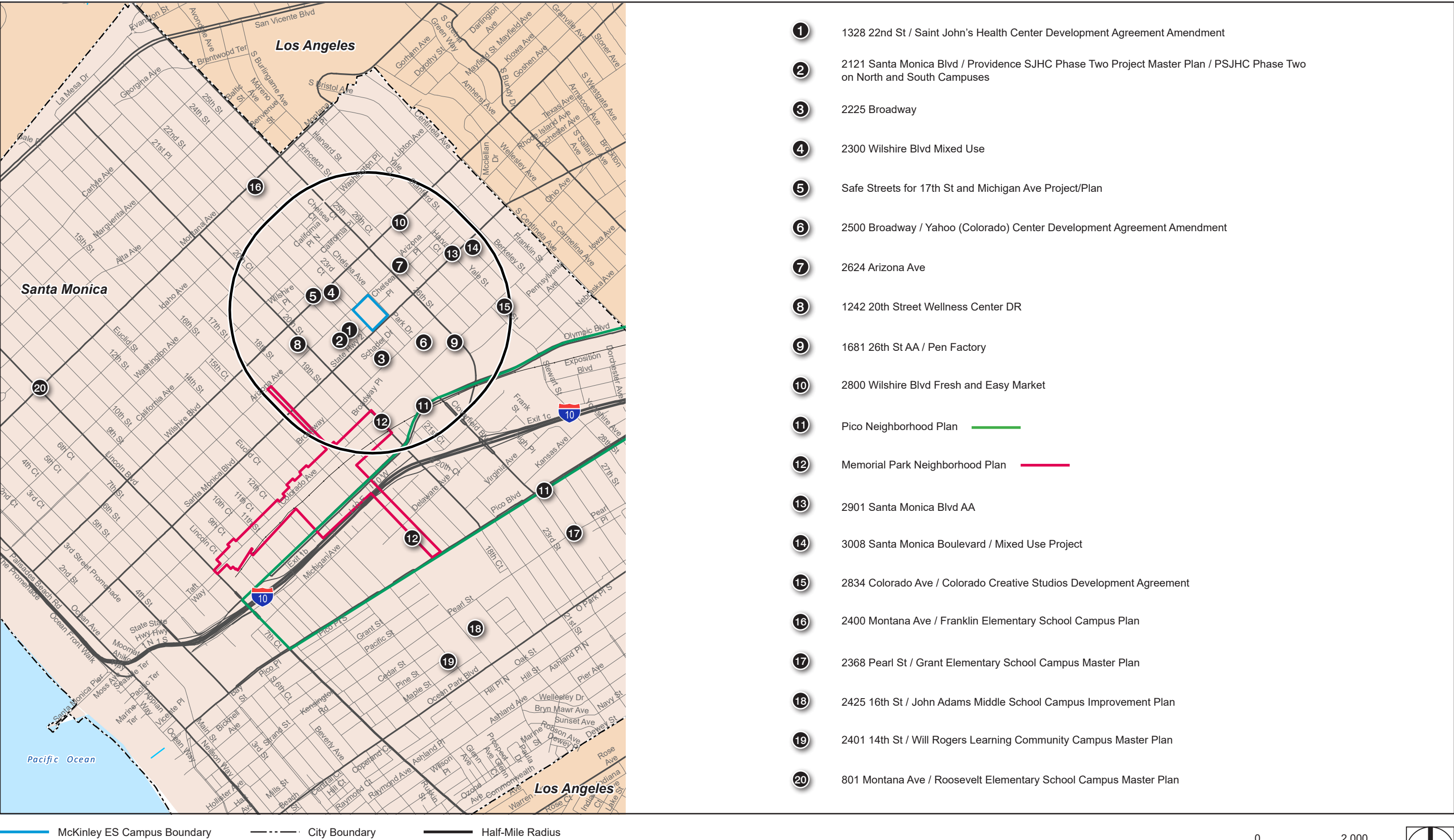
SMMUSD (Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District). 2023, January 27 (accessed). Facility Improvement Projects. <https://www.smmusd.org/domain/4176>.

South Coast AQMD (South Coast Air Quality Management District). 2022, December 2. 2022 Air Quality Management Plan. <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/clean-air-plans/air-quality-management-plans/2022-air-quality-management-plan/final-2022-aqmp/final-2022-aqmp.pdf?sfvrsn=10>.

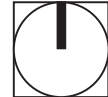
———. 1993. *California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Handbook*.

Western Regional Climate Center (WRCC). 2023. Western U.S. Climate Summaries: Santa Monica Pier, California (ID 047953). Accessed January 9, 2023. <https://wrcc.dri.edu/cgi-bin/cliMAIN.pl?ca7953>.

Figure 4-1 - Cumulative Projects



Source: Generated using ArcMap, 2023.



4. Environmental Setting

This page intentionally left blank.