8.0 Effects Found Not To Be Significant
8.0 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The City of Lancaster conducted an Initial Study in July 2007 to determine significant effects of the proposed project. In the course of this evaluation, certain impacts of the project were found to be less than significant because a project of this scope could not create such impacts, or the project has no characteristics producing effects of this type. The effects determined not to be significant are not required to be included in primary analysis sections of the Draft EIR. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15128, the following section provides a brief description of potential impacts found to be less than significant. A copy of the Initial Study is located in Appendix A, Initial Study and Notice of Preparation.

AESTHETICS. Would the proposal:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Lancaster General Plan MEA/EIR does not identify the project area as within or a part of a scenic vista. Scenic resources in the City of Lancaster consist of desert environment as well as long-range views of the San Gabriel, Sierra Pelona, and Tehachapi Mountains. The project area is currently urbanized with a mix of land uses. Development of the project would involve residential, retail/service, office, civic and public uses at a greater intensity than currently exist. However, project implementation would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the Lancaster General Plan MEA/EIR, no officially designated scenic routes or highways occur within the project area. Mature trees that exist in the area are not designated as scenic resources. No rock outcroppings occur in the project area. Also, there are no historic buildings located within a State scenic highway. As previously stated, the project area is currently urbanized with a mix of uses. Impacts to scenic resources would be less than significant.

AGRICULTURE 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:

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?
**No Impact.** The project area is not designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Thus, project implementation would not result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

b) *Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

**No Impact.** Implementation of the project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. The project area is currently zoned for commercial, office, industrial, public and residential uses. Although the project would involve rezoning the project area to Downtown Lancaster Specific Plan, it would not involve rezoning from an agricultural use.

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?*

**No Impact.** The proposed project does not involve changes in the existing environment that could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural uses. The project area is urbanized and there are no farmland uses currently occurring within the area.

**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:

e) *Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?*

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Construction activity associated with the project may generate detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust. However, this impact would be short-term in nature and cease upon project completion. In addition, the proposed land uses are not anticipated to create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

**BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.** Would the project:

a) *Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

**No Impact.** The project area is predominately urbanized and built-out. The project proposes infill development, rehabilitation and expansion of existing structures. No special status plant or animals species exist in the local vicinity due to the level of past disturbance and non-native plant species in the area.

b) *Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

**No Impact.** As previously stated, the project area is predominately urbanized and surrounded with similar urban development. No riparian habitat or natural communities
exist on-site. The Lancaster General Plan MEA/EIR identifies the project area as consisting of “disturbed lands”, which are urbanized.

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?**

**No Impact.** No federally protected wetlands occur on-site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in any impacts in that regard.

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?**

**No Impact.** No wildlife corridors or native wildlife nurseries exist in the project area. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in any impacts in that regard.

e) **Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as tree preservation policy or ordinance.**

**No Impact.** The project site is urbanized and contains only non-native vegetation. Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances that protect biological resources.

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?**

**No Impact.** The project area does not have an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan or other habitat conservation plan. Therefore, the project would not result in impacts in this regard.

**CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:**

d) **Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site is predominately urbanized with land area having been previously disturbed. No known human remains exist on-site, and due to the level of past disturbance, it is not anticipated that human remains exist within the project site. In the event human remains are encountered during earth removal or disturbance activities, all activities would cease immediately and a qualified archaeologist and Native American monitor would be immediately contacted. The Coroner would be contacted pursuant to Sections 5097.98 and 5097.99 of the Public Resources Code relative to Native American remains. Should the Coroner determine the human remains to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission would be contacted pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.
GEOLGY AND SOILS. Would the project:

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

1) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

**Less Than Significant Impact.** According to the City’s General Plan MEA/EIR, Lancaster is located in a seismically active area of the Mojave Desert. The San Andreas Fault is located nine miles south of the City and the Garlock Fault is located twenty miles to the northwest of the City. No active faults are known to traverse the area and the project is not located within, or immediately adjacent to an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Therefore, rupture of a known earthquake fault would not occur within the project area. Adherence to standard engineering practices and design criteria relative to seismic and geologic hazards in accordance with the Uniform Building Code (UBC) is required.

2) Strong seismic ground shaking?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** According to the City’s General Plan MEA/EIR, the project area is located in Zone 1 for seismic shaking. Zone 1 represents an area that would be exposed to the most intense seismic ground shaking. No known faults exist within the project boundary. The San Andreas Fault is located nine miles south of the City and the Garlock Fault is located twenty miles to the northwest of the City. The project area would experience ground shaking from earthquakes generated along active faults located off-site. The intensity of ground shaking would depend upon the magnitude of the earthquake, distance to the epicenter and the geology of the area between the epicenter and the project area. Adherence to standard engineering practices and design criteria relative to seismic and geologic hazards in accordance with the UBC would reduce the significance of potential impacts to less than significant.

3) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** In February 2005, the California Geologic Survey completed the update of the Seismic Hazards Zones Maps for the Lancaster area. These maps indicate potential liquefaction zones along the length of Little Rock Wash, in the eastern portion of the City, and in the vicinity of Amargosa Creek, extending from the area north of Quartz Hill to the northeast across the City to the Los Angeles-Kern County line. The project area is not within an area identified as being potentially subject to liquefaction. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to result in, or expose people to potential impacts related to seismic ground failure or liquefaction.

4) Landslides?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site is located in an existing urban area. The property is flat and surrounding properties are flat, with no unusual geographic features, and therefore, does not have the potential to slide, or experience sliding from
adjacent areas. Project implementation would not expose people or structures to landslides, therefore a less than impact would occur in this regard.

b) *Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?*

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The City’s General Plan MEA/EIR identifies the project area as being located in an area consisting of desert soils of the Hesperia-Rosamond-Cajon and Pond-Tray-Oband Association. These soils, stable and well drained, are most conducive for development and minimize potential impacts of soil erosion and loss of topsoil.

Clearing and grading for construction may expose soils to short-term wind and water erosion. However, implementation of erosion control measures as required by the City and adherence to all requirements set forth in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for construction activities would be required for all new construction in the DLSP area. Due to soil characteristics in the vicinity of the project and compliance to measures required by the City and Federal government, potential impacts would result in less than significant.

c) *Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in an on-site or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?*

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Refer to responses (a)(3) and (4), above. The project site has not been identified as a geologic unit that is unstable, and based upon available references, would not become unstable as a result of project implementation. Most of the City of Lancaster is characterized by soils of low shrink-swell potential, as delineated by the Soil Conservation Service. The DLSP area is located in a location where no data is available; however, it is surrounded by low shrink-swell potential and likely contains similar characteristics. A low potential does not represent a problem for foundation construction. Additionally, all development would be designed in compliance with applicable building codes, reducing impacts to a less than significant level.

d) *Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?*

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The City’s General Plan MEA/EIR identifies the project area as being located in an area consisting of desert soils of the Hesperia-Rosamond-Cajon and Pond-Tray-Oband Association. These soils are stable, well drained and most conducive for development. Less than significant impacts are anticipated in this regard.

e) *Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?*

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would include improvements/modifications to on-site sewer systems. It would not be necessary to install septic tanks or other alternative types of wastewater disposal systems. Less than significant impacts are anticipated in this regard.
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment from the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Small amounts of hazardous materials may be found in solvents and chemicals used for cleaning, building maintenance and landscaping. The materials would be similar to those found in common household products, such as cleaning products or pesticides. Hazardous materials used in construction and operation of the proposed project would be subject to City, State and Federal regulations, reducing impacts to a less than significant level.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Schools are located within the project and surrounding area. However, hazardous emissions or the handling of hazardous materials, substances and waste are not anticipated to be part of the proposed project, therefore impacts would be less than significant.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

**No Impact.** The project area is not located within two miles of an airport. The nearest airport is General William J. Fox Airfield, approximately six miles northwest of the project area. Private planes primarily use Fox Field and there is no commercial passenger capability. Given the distance from Fox Field, a less than significant safety hazard for the people residing or working in the project area.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

**No Impact.** Refer to Response (e), above.

g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** According to the City’s General Plan MEA/EIR, 10th Street West and Sierra Highway are designated evacuation routes that pass through the DLSP area. These roads may be subject to temporary closures during construction within the DLSP project area. However, construction activities, which may result in temporary road closures, would not significantly impair implementation of, or physically interfere with an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, as additional roadways would be available for emergency response and evacuation. Additionally, any street closures proposed by the project would be reviewed by the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD), and would be subject to all emergency access standards and requirements, further reducing impacts to a less than significant level.
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

No Impact. The project area and surrounding areas are urbanized. Future development as a result of project implementation would introduce additional ornamental landscaping, which is not anticipated to create hazardous fire conditions. No impacts would occur in this regard.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the Project:

b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

Less Than Significant Impact. The DLSP project and surrounding area are currently developed with a variety of uses. Implementation of the proposed project would cause a slight increase in the amount of impervious areas on site. However, this change in imperviousness would not interfere with groundwater recharge since direct rainfall from the Lancaster area makes an inconsequential contribution to overall groundwater recharge of aquifers of the Valley. Refer to Utilities and Service Systems Response (b) for a discussion of water resources.

g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

No Impact. According to the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the DLSP area is located in Zone B, which is defined by FEMA as an area outside of the 100-year floodplain. No impacts are anticipated.

h) Place within a 100-year flow hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows.

No Impact. Refer to Hydrology and Water Quality Response (g).

i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

No Impact. Refer to Hydrology and Water Quality Response (g). Additionally there are no levees or dams located in the vicinity of the project. No impact would occur in this regard.

j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

No Impact. No significant water features have been identified in the project area. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated in this regard.
LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

Less Than Significant Impact. The DLSP area contains a mix of civic, cultural, commercial, office and residential uses. Implementation of the DLSP would involve increased development of the Downtown with retail/service, public, office, civic and residential uses at a greater intensity than currently exists. The proposed project would involve development on currently developed sites, as well as infill development on vacant and/or underutilized parcels. The DLSP project would not physically divide an established community, as proposed uses would be consistent with existing uses in the area. Development of the DLSP would serve to enhance the Downtown by increasing development and activity in the area. Impacts would be less than significant.

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?

No Impact. As stated in Response 4.4(f), the project does not conflict with habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans.

MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact. According to the City’s General Plan MEA/EIR, the project area does not contain any mineral deposits or other mineral resources. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated in this regard.

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

No Impact. The City’s General Plan MEA/EIR does not identify the project area as an important mineral resource recovery site. No significant impacts are anticipated in this regard.

NOISE. Would the project result in:

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. Refer to Hazards and Hazardous Materials Response (e). The project area is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. Therefore, project implementation would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.
f)  *For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?*

**No Impact.** The nearest private airstrip is General William J. Fox Airfield located approximately six miles from the project area. Exposure of people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels is not anticipated as a result of project implementation.

**POPULATION AND HOUSING.** *Would the project:*

b)  *Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

**No Impact.** Project implementation would not result in the displacement of existing residents, as removal of existing housing within the DLSP area would not occur. The project proposes the development of new housing in addition to the existing housing that occurs within the area. Therefore, no impacts would occur in this regard.

c)  *Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

**No Impact.** Refer to Response (b), above.

**TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC.** *Would the project:*

c)  *Result in change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?*

**No Impact.** Due to the nature and scope of the proposed land uses, project implementation would not affect air traffic patterns and would not result in safety risks. No impact would occur in this regard.

e)  *Result in inadequate emergency access?*

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Refer to Hazards and Hazardous Materials Response (g).

g)  *Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?*

**No Impact.** No conflicts with any adopted policies supporting alternative transportation are anticipated to occur. The City would impose standard conditions regarding transportation facilities, which may include bus turnouts, bicycle racks and bicycle lanes.