**Biological Assessment Report** 

for the

100 and 200 Sinclair Street

Redevelopment Project

City of Perris

# Prepared For:

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#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report documents the findings of an evaluation of biological resources conducted by BLUE for the proposed 100 and 200 Sinclair Street redevelopment Project site (Project site). The proposed Project site includes the redevelopment of approximately 20.2 onsite acres within three parcels and offsite impacts immediately to the east (APN 303-080-018) and south east (APN 303-130-027; totaling 4.9 acres). The onsite three (3) adjacent parcels (APN's 303-080-012, 303-080-013 and 303-080-015) are part of the 'Property' and offsite impacts to the parcel to the east and south/east are proposed to be partially impacted for offsite improvements. The proposed Project site is located within the City of Perris, County of Riverside, California. The Project site is generally bound by industrial development on all sides. To the north and south are narrow strips of undeveloped disturbed land. Access to the properties is on the southern property line, adjacent to Sinclair Street (Figure 1).

The Project site is located within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and is comprised of a total of 20.2 acres onsite and approximately 4.0 acres offsite. The Project site is not located within any MSHCP designated Criteria Areas or Subunits. As such, the Project site is not subject to Cell Criteria compliance under the MSHCP. The Project site footprint does not fall within any Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) or other MSHCP Conserved Lands.

The Biological Study Area (BSA) includes the onsite Project site parcels, the offsite parcel immediately to the east and the offsite parcel to the south east, plus a 100-foot buffer. The BSA is located within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Cabazon Topographic Map. The BSA is located at NE¼ of the SE¼ of Section 9 Township 3 South, Range 1, East San Bernardino Principal Meridian Riverside, California; Long, Lat: -116.88038, 33.92225, in the city of Perris.

The subject property is generally developed and flat-lying. Due to the completed historic grading, the onsite area is now a uniform pad supporting parking, landscaping planters, storage areas, buildings and the maintained undeveloped pad area on the eastern side of the property. Regional topography generally slopes to the south. Elevation on the subject property is approximately 2,111 feet above mean sea level (MSL). Naturally, soil beneath the subject property consists of Greenfield sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (Web Soil Survey; 2022).

The property and larger BSA (to include the potential offsite impacts/improvements) is composed of a mass graded single large pad supporting the buildings paved areas including parking, roads/infrastructure, landscaped areas and an undeveloped graded and maintained pad along the eastern onsite PL. Maintained mature eucalyptus trees are located along the Property Lines (PL) surrounding the central building and entry.

Along the western Property Line (PL) is the planned Barrett Avenue. This area is developed and is generally located offsite within private walled/fenced property to the west. The subject parcel to the east of the paved parking area is a maintained dirt lot (disturbed habitat) supporting a drainage easement in the center running east-west. The drainage easement conveys captured storm water flows in an underground pipe. As developed flood control infrastructure, the area supports no potentially jurisdictional (wetlands) habitat.

The intended use of this document is to disclose and evaluate habitat conditions and determine the potential for occurrence of common and special-status species and their habitats within survey area limits pursuant to the

MSHCP. Special-status species refers to any species that has been afforded special protection by federal, state, or local resource agencies (e.g., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS], California Department of Fish and Game [CDFW]) or resource conservation organizations (e.g., California Native Plant Society [CNPS]). The term "special-status species" excludes those avian species solely identified under Section 10 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) for federal protection. The MBTA species protected by Section 10 are afforded avoidance and minimization measures per state and federal requirements.

## 2.0 METHODS

Prior to beginning the field survey, a literature review was completed to determine locations and types of biological resources having the potential to exist within the region. The Project site is within the Cabazon, California quadrangle but is close enough to the Beaumont, California quadrangle that database searches were conducted for both quadrangles. The MSHCP Transportation and Land Management Agency Geographic Information Services Database and Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Report was also reviewed (County of Riverside, 2012a; County of Riverside, 2012b and 2022).

In addition to utilizing on-line databases and mapping tools, the topographic map was reviewed to determine the locations of any potential special aquatic resource areas (e.g., wetlands or other Waters of the United States or Waters of the State) under regulatory jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), CDFW, and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and Riparian/Riverine habitats prior to beginning field surveys of the BSA.

Additionally, the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) on-line Web Soil Survey tool (NRCS 2015) and Figure 2-4 of the MSHCP were reviewed to determine the types and percent cover of soils within the BSA.

Lands within the BSA that were potentially suspected of being potential special aquatic resource and Riparian/Riverine habitats were then assessed by visual observation during the field survey. No potential special aquatic resource areas and riparian/riverine habitats were not observed and additional further evaluation is not required.

Michael Jefferson, senior qualified BLUE biologist, conducted a pedestrian-based biological survey to observe, document, and evaluate plant and wildlife resources and determine the potential for occurrence of special-status plant and wildlife species. Approximately 100-foot-wide meandering transects were utilized to provide visual coverage of the BSA.

Vegetation community type descriptions were based on observed dominant vegetation composition and derived from the criteria and definitions of vegetation classification systems (Holland, 1986; Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf, 1995; Sawyer et al., 2009). Plants were identified in the field to the lowest taxonomic level sufficient to determine positive identity and status. Plants of uncertain identity were subsequently identified using taxonomic keys, and scientific and common species names were recorded according to Baldwin (2012).

The presence of a wildlife species was based on direct observation or wildlife sign (e.g., tracks, burrows, nests, scat, or vocalization). Field data compiled for wildlife species included scientific name, common name, and evidence of sign when no direct observations were made. Wildlife of uncertain distinctiveness was documented

and subsequently identified from field guides and related literature.

The BSA was also assessed for its potential to support special-status species, based on habitat suitability comparisons with reported occupied habitats.

The following definitions were used to determine the need for subsequent surveys and to assess Project site-related effects to special-status species:

- Absent (A): No habitat occurs within the survey area and no further surveys are necessary
- Habitat Present (HP): Habitat is present within the survey area
- Present (P): The species was observed within the survey area during the survey
- Critical Habitat (CH): The survey area is located within designated critical habitat

## 3.0 RESULTS

BLUE senior qualified biologist Michael Jefferson conducted an onsite biological survey for the Project site on February 2 and July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and a survey of the offsite parcel was completed on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023. On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, the surveys were initiated at 0915 and completed at 1000 and from 1:30pm – 2:15pm on July 6<sup>th</sup>. Weather conditions during the surveys included clear skies, temperatures ranged from 66° to 68° and 77-80 Fahrenheit, and calm winds. Weather conditions during the June 5th, 2023 survey from 8:30 to 9:00am included 90% cloudy skies, temperatures ranged from 64° to 65° with calm winds.

## 3.1 VEGETATION COMMUNITIES/LAND COVER TYPES

The subject property is developed, paved with landscaping/planters and does not support any vegetation types and is considered to be fully developed. The offsite parcel (APN 303-130-027) located to the south/east of the subject property is considered both developed and disturbed. (Table 1; Figure 2).

No natural (un-maintained) ground and/or naturally occurring vegetation was observed within the survey area. The limits of the private property are lined with maintained mature eucalyptus trees. These trees are not protected or regarded as sensitive.

Table 1: On and Off- Site Vegetation

Community Type	Acres (onsite)	Acres (offsite parcel)
Developed	20.2	0.91
Disturbed	0.0	3.99
Total	20.2	4.9

# Communities/Land Cover Types Observed Onsite 3.1.1 DEVELOPED AREA

Developed areas typically contain numerous and varied horticultural plantings located within landscaping,

residential yards, active-use parklands, and golf courses. In the older, urbanized portions of the City, tall exotic plantings, such as pepper and eucalyptus trees (Eucalyptus sp.) with allelopathic toxins that tend to inhibit understory growth, form well developed, and dense woodlands. Occasionally, other planted woodlands such as introduced pines, ash, and elm are present. These urban lands do not typically contain native vegetation or provide essential habitat connectivity; and therefore, tend to have reduced biological value.

Onsite, the paved and developed property does not support native, protected and/or sensitive habitat. The mature maintained eucalyptus trees around the perimeter of the property are landscaping trees on private property. As a result, these trees are not considered protected and/or sensitive.

Offsite, within parcel APN 303-130-027, the paved and developed portion of the parcel (Sinclair Street) is located along the parcels northern Property Line (PL) and along the eastern portion of the site is a connection to the installed infrastructure below the parcel. As such the developed area does not support native, protected and/or sensitive habitat.

## 3.1.2 URBAN/DISTURBED AREA

Disturbed and urban areas typically support bare dirt and/or maintained areas that may contain numerous and varied horticultural plantings typically seen associated with landscaping, residential yards, active-use parklands, and golf courses.

Occasionally, other planted woodlands such as introduced pines, ash, and elm are present. Disturbed areas are typically located adjacent to urbanization and contain a mix of primarily weedy species, including non-native forbs, annuals, and grasses, usually found pioneering on recently disturbed soils. Characteristic weedy species include prickly sow thistle (Sonchus asper), common sow thistle (Sonchus oleraceus), bristly ox-tongue (Picris echioides), Russian thistle (Salsola tragus), giant reed, hottentot-fig (Carpobrotus edulis), wild lettuce (Lactuca serriola), tree tobacco (Nicotiana glauca), castor-bean (Ricinus communis), pampas grass, smooth cat's-ear (Hypochoeris glabra), red-stem filaree (Erodium cicutarium), short-beak filaree (Erodium brachycarpum) and white-stem filaree (Erodium moschatum). These urban lands do not typically contain native vegetation or provide essential habitat connectivity; and therefore, tend to have reduced biological value.

Disturbed habitat was not observed onsite.

The Disturbed/Urban lands are the dominant habitat within the offsite parcel, located to the south of the onsite portion of the paved Sinclair Road. The offsite parcel has been previously graded and appears to have infrastructure running underneath the parcel in line with the water pump structure. The area is currently actively utilized/maintained. The plant community is dominated by bare dirt and typical non-native weedy species, non-native invasive grass grasses, *erodium* spp., mustard, Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*) and prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*); all non-native species.

#### 3.2 PLANT AND WILDLIFE SPECIES

Plant and wildlife species observed within the survey area were typical of developed and disturbed habitats. All plant and wildlife species observed within the survey area are listed in Table 2 and Table 3, respectively.

Table 2: Plant Species Observed within the Survey Area

Common Name	Species Name		
Eucalyptus ssp.*	Eucalyptus spp.		
Russian thistle*	Salsola tragus		
prickly lettuce*	Lactuca serriola		
Erodium*	Erodium spp.		
Black Mustard*	Brassica nigra		
* non-native species			

Table 3: Wildlife Species Observed within the Survey Area

Scientific Name	Common Name		
Birds			
Corvidae	Jays and Crows		
Corvus brachyrhynchos	American crow		

#### 3.2.1 SPECIAL-STATUS PLANTS

The Project site (on and offsite) is not designated as a rare survey area for any species.

As a result of the paved area and ongoing maintenance, the destruction of the appropriate soil structure through grading and composition within the planted areas, there is no potential for the presence of Special Status plant species. Similarly, occurrence of other rare plants on the Project site is low and the Project site does not provide suitable habitat for other Cell Criteria Species as well as Narrow Endemic Plant Species (NEPS) such as Marvin's onion (*Allium marvinii*), Many-stemmed dudleya (*Dudleya multicaulis*).

#### 3.2.2 SPECIAL-STATUS WILDLIFE

No special-status wildlife species were observed.

The site lacks the appropriate hydrology, habitat and being immediately adjacent to the active dirt road to the south and main frontage street (along the eastern PL), is exposed to significant noise impacts. As a result, special-status wildlife species are not expected to occur onsite and are considered to have no potential for occurrence onsite.

Due to a lack of riparian habitat on or adjacent to the site, no bird species associated with riparian areas was observed and none are expected to occur.

## 3.2.3 WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN (MSHCP)

The Project site is located within the Perris Area Plan outside of any MSHCP designated Criteria Cells or Cell Groups

(Table 4) (County of Riverside, 2012a). The Project site is not subject to Cell Criteria compliance under the MSHCP. The Project site does not include any MSHCP Conserved Lands or PQP lands.

The Project site is within the MSHCP habitat assessment area for Western Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) (BUOW).

A burrowing owl assessment was completed on and offsite according to the Burrowing Owl Survey Instructions for the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Area (County of Riverside 2006). Due to the lack of appropriate quality habitat created by the mass grading in the onsite planted area (compacted soils), in addition to a lack of mammal burrows, no burrowing owls or suitable habitat were located during the assessment.

Offsite, within the disturbed/urban area, no appropriate burrows were observed and no sign of burrowing owls was observed. Due to the lack of appropriate quality habitat created by the mass grading and maintenance of the offsite parcel, no mammal burrows, no burrowing owls or suitable habitat were located during the assessment.

The Project site (both on and offsite) does not contain suitable foraging habitat for raptors and/or BUOW.

## 3.2.4 RIPARIAN/RIVERINE

Section 6.1.2 of the MSHCP defines Riparian/Riverine areas as "lands which contain Habitat dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, or emergent mosses and lichens, which occur close to or which depend upon soil moisture from a nearby fresh water source; or areas with fresh water flow during all or a portion of the year." Riparian/Riverine areas as defined by the MSHCP are not present within the survey area and will not be impacted by the Project site.

No riparian/riverine and/or jurisdictional features were observed within the survey area. Due to a lack of riparian habitat on or adjacent to the site, no bird species associated with riparian areas was observed and none are expected to occur.

#### 3.2.5 VERNAL POOL AND FAIRY SHRIMP

Vernal pools, vernal swales, alkali scalds or flats, or other seasonal wet habitats were not identified within the BSA during field surveys conducted in February and July by a qualified biologist.

The BSA lacks suitable habitat for fairy shrimp species (*Branchinecta lynchi* and Riverside fairy shrimp *Streptocephalus woottoni*) or other vernal pool species, including plants. None are expected to occur.

As a result of the inappropriate substrate, hydrological conditions and maintenance of the property, it is not expected that vernal pool fairy shrimp and Riverside fairy shrimp persist onsite. No additional surveys are recommended at this time.

#### 3.3 AQUATIC RESOURCES

Due to the improved and disturbed/maintained nature of the property and offsite parcel, the BSA does not contain any special aquatic resource area such as wetlands or areas under the regulatory jurisdiction of the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB.

#### 3.4 WILDLIFE MOVEMENT CORRIDORS

Wildlife movement corridors are defined as areas that connect suitable wildlife habitat areas in a region otherwise fragmented by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. Natural features such as canyon drainages, ridgelines, or areas with vegetation cover provide corridors for wildlife travel. Wildlife movement corridors are important because they provide access to mates, food, and water; allow the dispersal of individuals away from high population density areas; and facilitate the exchange of genetic traits between populations (Beier and Loe 1992). Wildlife movement corridors are considered sensitive by resource and conservation agencies.

The fenced and historically developed Property is now in a developed and maintained condition and adjacent/within a fully developed area that is not situated between areas of natural habitat.

The Property and offsite parcel is not within a recognized USFWS, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or City wildlife corridor and does not support habitat which would be required. No impacts to a wildlife corridor are possible.

## 3.5 MSHCP URBAN/WILDLIFE INTERFACE GUIDELINES

The Property and offsite parcel is not adjacent or near natural wildlands. As a result, an urban/wildlife interface is not required.

As designed, the development of the property and offsite parcel for the Project site will not conflict with the MSHCP urban/wildlife interface guidelines.

## 3.6 COMPLIANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF AN ADOPTED HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

The Project site is located within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The Project site is not located within any MSHCP designated Criteria Areas or Subunits. As such, the Project site is not subject to Cell Criteria compliance under the MSHCP. The Project site footprint does not fall within any Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) or other MSHCP Conserved Lands. The Property is not within a designated US Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) Critical Habitat area.

As designed, the development of the property and Project site will not conflict with the stated provisions, goals and objectives of any adopted NCCP/HCP.

## 3.7 COMPLIANCE WITH ANY LOCAL POLICIES OR ORDINANCES PROTECTING BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

No sensitive biological resources were observed or expected to occur onsite. As a result, none are expected to be impacted. The as-designed Project site would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSIONS

No sensitive riparian/riverine, upland vegetation and/or special aquatic resource areas were discovered within the BSA and none are expected to be impacted by the potential Project site.

The literature review and field assessment data confirm that no special-status species currently utilize the BSA. The BSA lacks suitable habitat that would typically support special-status species or receive state or federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections. Consequently, there is no reasonable presumption of adverse impact to any special status species or their habitats as a result of Project site implementation.

No Narrow Endemic Plant Species/Criteria Area plant species were observed on site during the habitat assessment. Given the site's exposure to recurring surface disturbances associated with vegetation management, these species are not expected to occur on site. The BSA supports no riparian/riverine/vernal pool habitats or species associated with these habitat types; none were observed on site.

No suitable habitat for burrowing owl was present within the survey area and no direct observations or burrowing owl sign (feathers, pellets, fecal material, prey remains, etc.) were made during the site assessment. No potentially suitable burrows were present on site due to extensive disturbances associated with mass grading activities, which can reduce the site's suitability to support small mammal colonies (e.g. ground squirrel) which may provide potentially suitable burrows for burrowing owl. No ground squirrels (an important indicator species) were observed on site.

Due to a lack of burrows and foraging area, no pre-construction protocol survey for nesting birds and/or burrowing owls is required.

## **5.0 MITIGATION MEASURES**

No potentially significant impacts are proposed. No Mitigation Measures (MM) are required at this time.

#### **6.0 REFERENCES**

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), 2022. RareFind California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) Perris USGS 7.5-Minute Quadrangles. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Fish and Game, Biogeographic Data Branch.
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## 7.0 CERTIFICATION

The following qualified Biologist completed the stated field survey(s) and preparation of this report:

Michael Jefferson – Senior Biologist, BLUE Consulting Group

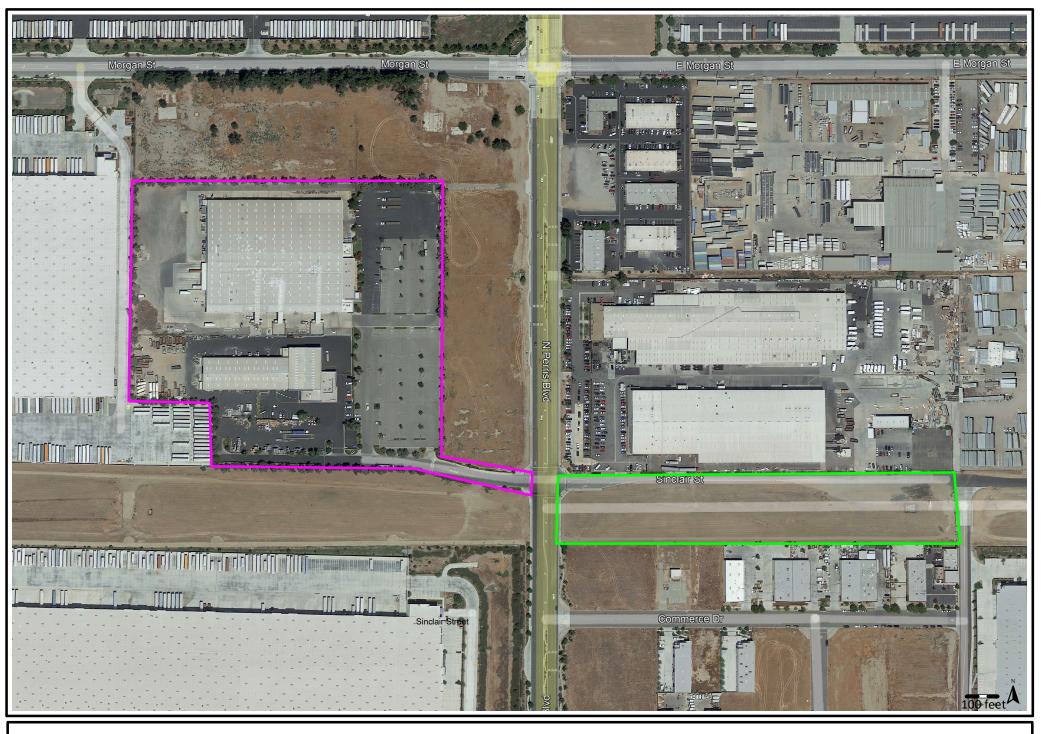
CERTIFICATION: I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached exhibits present data and information required for this biological evaluation, and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed:

Michael K. Jefferson BLUE Consulting Group Senior Biologist

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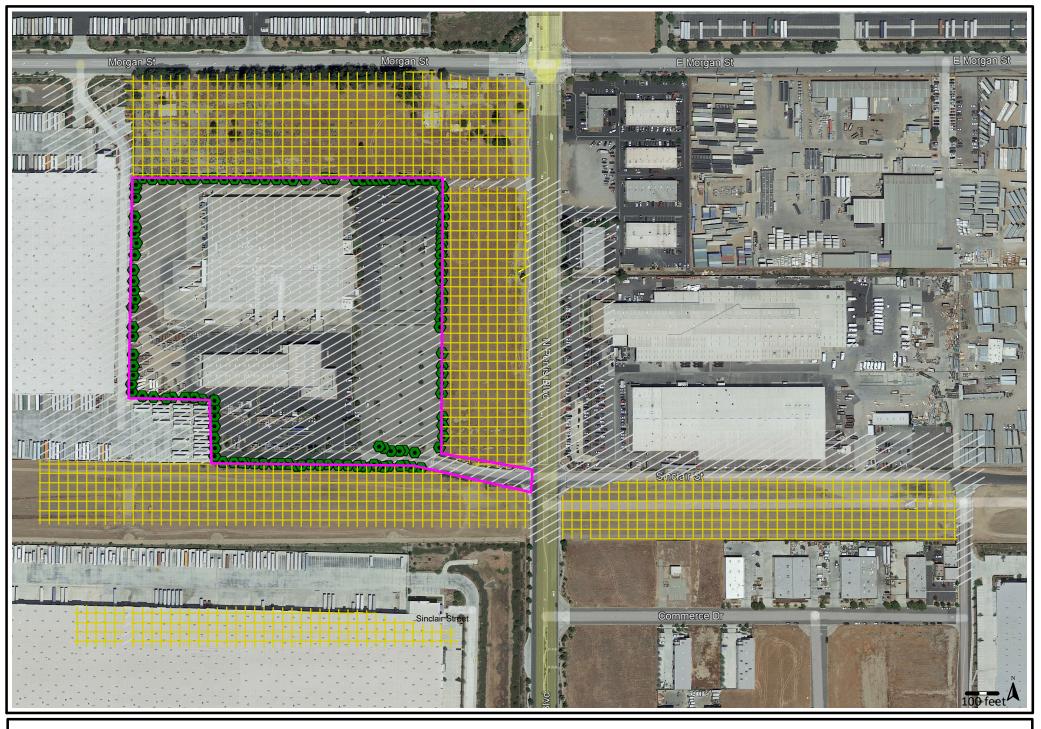
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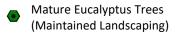


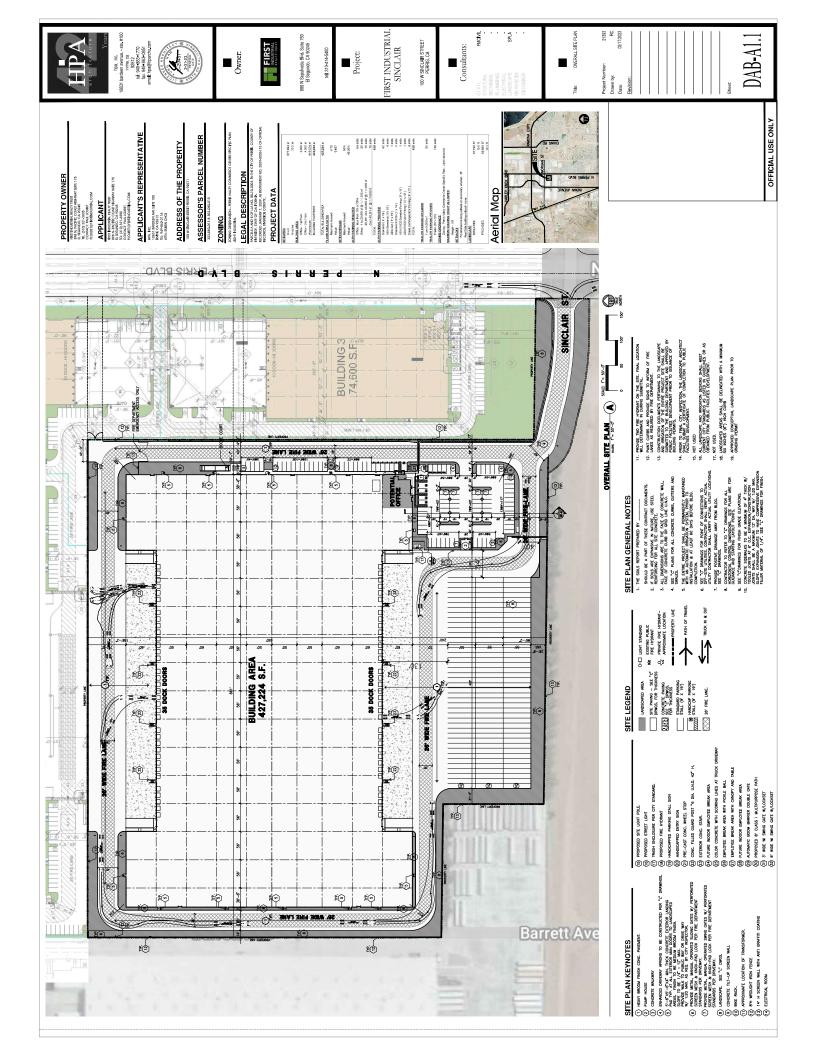










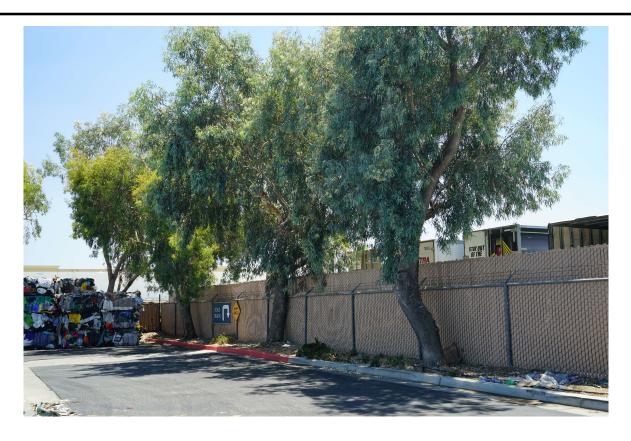




**Photograph 1** Looking South; Northern and Western PL - Developed Area and Maintained Eucalyptus Trees



Photograph 2 Looking North; Southern PL - Developed Area with Landscaping Trees



**Photograph 3** Looking South; South/Western Corner - Developed Area and Maintained Eucalyptus Trees



Photograph 4 Looking West; Western PL - Developed Area with Landscaping Trees Along PL (Barrett Ave.)