

4.10 URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

4.10.1 Introduction

This section describes the existing visual setting of the project site and vicinity, identifies associated regulatory requirements, evaluates potential impacts, and identifies mitigation measures related to implementation of the McKinley Village Project (proposed project). The analysis considers whether the project would substantially change the visual character of the project area, adversely affecting sensitive receptors (e.g., adjacent residential land uses), or create new sources of light and glare that would adversely affect scenic views and visual conditions in the area.

A number of comments regarding visual resources were received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) that included concerns about visual impacts of the proposed project, particularly as viewed from Business 80/Capital City Freeway. Comments also included concerns about how the proposed project would incorporate the aesthetic qualities of surrounding communities, particularly density levels and architectural styles. Residents also requested more information as to how open spaces and off-site improvements of the proposed project would benefit and connect with the surrounding community. Additionally, the Save the American River Association would like the EIR to evaluate light pollution impacts on wildlife in the region. A copy of the NOP and comment letters received in response to the NOP is included in Appendix A.

The information presented in this section is based on Dudek's site visits and review of project plans, the City of Sacramento 2030 General Plan and Master EIR (MEIR), aerial photographs, and topographic maps of the project area.

4.10.2 Environmental Setting

Site Conditions

The approximately 48.75-acre project site is bordered by the Business 80/Capital City Freeway (Capital City Freeway or freeway) to the north and west and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks on an elevated berm to the south and east, as shown in Figure 2-2 in Chapter 2, Project Description. The site is located at the northern end of the existing McKinley Park and East Sacramento neighborhoods, which are developed with residential and retail uses. The substantial tree canopy of the McKinley Park and East Sacramento neighborhoods is a distinct visual feature in the background views of the project site. The Cannery Business Park, which supports commercial and industrial uses, is also located to the south, and the Cannery Business Park water tower is visible above the UPRR elevated berm behind the project site.

McKinley Park is located approximately 0.25 mile southwest of the project site. Sutter's Landing Regional Park is located to the north, on the north side of Capital City Freeway. The American River and Cal Expo are located approximately 0.25 and 1.5 miles northeast of the project site, respectively.

As shown in the photographs of the project site provided in Figure 4.10-1, Project Site Photos, the project site is currently undeveloped land that supports four, large freestanding billboards. Vegetation on site includes a mixture of native and non-native species. The majority of the site consists of ruderal habitat (non-native grasses and/or bare dirt) that is mowed or disked annually. The western end of the site also supports small areas of blackberry scrub and willow scrub habitats. Outside of the boundaries of the project site within the UPRR and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) rights-of-way (ROWs), there are valley oak, Fremont's cottonwood, box elder, red alder, and willow trees. The UPRR embankment varies in height from 18–30 feet and acts as a visual barrier along the southern edge of the site.

As shown in the photographs of the surrounding area provided in Figure 4.10-2, Surrounding Neighborhood Photos, the existing development south of the project site includes residential neighborhoods with a substantial tree canopy and the Cannery Park Business Park.

Viewsheds

The project site is primarily visible from two vantage points along Capital City Freeway. Other views of the project site are constrained by topographical barriers.

Views from the south are blocked by the elevated UPRR embankment. The embankment, which ranges from approximately 18–30 feet high, is an existing topographical barrier that separates the project site from the existing McKinley Park and East Sacramento neighborhoods to the south.

The Capital City Freeway (and the cement median) and the steep grade between the freeway and Sutter's Landing Regional Park also provide a topographical barrier that blocks views. These features limit views of the project site from the northerly portions of Sutter's Landing Regional Park, located on the north side of the freeway, and views for motorists traveling westbound on the freeway.

Capital City Freeway motorists traveling eastbound have the best views of the project site. These views consist of undeveloped land with large, freestanding billboards and overhead utility lines in the foreground, and the elevated UPRR tracks in the background. As described above, the vegetation at the project site is dominated by non-native grasses. Scattered trees and shrubs are visible mainly in the western portion of the site.



Photo 1: View through the center of the project site



Photo 2: Northern portion of project site and Capital City Freeway



Photo 3: Southern portion of project site and UPRR embankment



Photo 4: View of southern side of UPRR embankment at the northern end of Alhambra Blvd.

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Photo 5: Surrounding Residential Neighborhood



Photo 6: Surrounding Residential Neighborhood



Photo 7: Surrounding Residential Neighborhood



Photo 8: Existing Cannery Business Park Development



Photo 9: Existing Cannery Business Park Development



Photo 10: Cannery Business Park Water Tower

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Viewshed A – Eastbound Capital City Freeway

Eastbound travelers on Capital City Freeway have a view of the majority of the project site along most of the project site frontage on the freeway. This view comprises Viewshed A. The available view area from four observation points representing the Viewshed are shown on Figure 4.10-3 (Viewshed Map). Viewshed A begins approximately 750 feet east of the existing A Street Bridge (which provides access to the project site), and extends for approximately 0.5 mile to the UPRR bridge at the eastern boundary of the site. The duration of visibility for commuters is dependent upon traffic conditions; however, occupants in a vehicle driving the speed limit have a southeast view of the proposed project site for roughly 30 seconds. These views include the extent of the open grasslands and billboards dominating the project site in the foreground with a dense grouping of Fremont's cottonwood and box elder trees fronting the UPRR embankment in the background. The tree canopy in the adjacent residential neighborhoods and the Cannery Business Park water tower are also visible in the background.

Viewsheds B and C – Westbound Capital City Freeway

Views of the project site from westbound Capital City Freeway are primarily available from the left-most lane, while views from the right-most lane are limited due to topography and the height of the cement median dividing the freeway. As shown in Figure 4.10-3, Viewshed B, views for westbound travelers in the left lane begin approximately 350 feet east of the project site. As viewers cross the American River bridge and approach the UPRR bridge over the freeway, the easternmost portion of the project site becomes visible briefly, with the UPRR embankment a visible horizontal feature in the background. As in Viewshed A, the tree canopy in the adjacent residential neighborhoods and the Cannery Business Park water tower are also visible in the background. Approximately 500 feet after westbound travelers in the left lane pass under the UPRR bridge, the project site is completely obscured due to the height of the existing cement median dividing the freeway. Only the top of the existing billboards on the site are momentarily visible. For viewers in the right lane, views of the project site are only available for a few seconds (if at all) just before and immediately after the UPRR bridge. As the freeway elevation climbs slightly towards the western side of the project site, westbound travelers in all lanes have an additional opportunity for a very brief view of the project site if at all (Viewshed C).

The duration of visibility for westbound travelers is dependent upon traffic conditions, vehicle speed, and lane selection; however, a vehicle driving the speed limit in the left lane would have a southwest view of the proposed project site for roughly 5 seconds from Viewshed B and roughly 5 seconds or less from Viewshed C.

Scenic Resources

Scenic resources are physical features that provide scenic value to a project site and its surroundings. These typically include topographic, geologic, hydrologic, and biological resources

(for example, hills, rock outcroppings, creeks, woodlands or landmark trees) and can also include historic buildings. The photographs of the project site provided in Figure 4.10-1 demonstrate that there are no features on the project site that provide these types of scenic resources.

A scenic vista is generally defined as an expansive view of a highly valued landscape observable from a publicly accessible vantage point or from a designated scenic highway. The project site is not located along a designated scenic highway, within a scenic vista, and no scenic resources are located near the project site. As discussed above, the views of the project site are limited to people traveling on Capital City Freeway, which is a publicly accessible vantage point. However, the views of the site are not expansive and are not of a highly valued landscape. While views of the City of Sacramento downtown skyline are available from within the project site, due to topography and vegetation, these views are not available from viewpoints along the freeway.

Sensitive Receptors

A sensitive receptor is defined as an individual that is especially sensitive to changes in aesthetic qualities, such as changes in lighting, shadows, or surrounding visual character. The adjacent residential and recreational uses near the project site could accommodate sensitive receptors. However, as discussed above, the UPRR embankment and the steep hill on the north side of Capital City Freeway act as visual barriers that impede views of the project site from recreational and residential uses to the north and south. Sutter's Landing Regional Park is located north of the project site on the former 28th Street Landfill. The City proposes to develop a regional park once the landfill monitoring requirements in this area are lifted sometime in 2027–2028. Currently there is no public access to this area. However, due to the topography of the site, once the park is developed, views of the project site would be limited from this area and would not contain any uses that would be considered incompatible with recreational activities.

Light and Glare

Nighttime lighting is necessary to provide and maintain safe, secure, and attractive environments. Light that falls beyond the intended area of illumination is referred to as "light trespass." The most common cause of light trespass is spillover light, which occurs when a lighting source illuminates surfaces beyond the intended area, such as when building security lighting or parking lot lights shine light onto neighboring property. Spillover light can adversely affect light-sensitive uses, such as residential neighborhoods at nighttime. Light intensity can affect the amount of light spillover that might occur, as well as the type of light fixture used. Modern, energy-efficient fixtures that face downward, such as cutoff-type fixtures and shielded light fixtures, are less obtrusive than older light fixtures. Light trespass can also result from automobile headlights shining onto property adjacent to roadways.

EASTBOUND I-80 VIEWSHED



WESTBOUND I-80 VIEWSHEDS



	Project Boundary		Viewshed A
	Viewshed A		Viewshed B
	Viewshed B		Viewshed C
	Viewshed C		



SOURCE: ESRI; County of Sacramento 2012; USGS NED 2013

**FIGURE 4.10-3
Viewshed Map**

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Glare is caused by light reflections from pavement, vehicles, and building materials, such as reflective glass, polished surfaces, or metallic architectural features. During daylight hours, the amount of glare depends on the intensity and direction of sunlight.

The most notable lighting in the vicinity of the project site is from vehicle headlights, which generate artificial lighting during the night. Other forms of artificial lighting in the project area are from billboard lighting on the project site and streetlights in the adjacent residential areas. During the day, the primary sources of glare near the project site are from sunlight reflecting off vehicles and vehicle windows.

4.10.3 Regulatory Background

Federal Regulations

There are no specific federal regulations related to aesthetics, light, and glare that are applicable to the proposed project.

State Regulations

California Scenic Highway Program

The California Scenic Highway Program identifies and seeks to protect and preserve scenic highway corridors. In order for a highway to be designated, the local jurisdiction must adopt a scenic corridor protection program that would regulate development along the corridor. There are no officially designated roadways in the vicinity of the project site.

Local Regulations

The City of Sacramento has adopted Neighborhood Design Guidelines to provide consistent design principles for residential and commercial structures. The Design Guidelines are applied to specific areas within the City of Sacramento, including the central city. However the project site is outside of the boundaries of areas where these guidelines apply. Specifically, the central city is defined as areas south of the UPRR mainline while the project site is north of that line.

City of Sacramento 2030 General Plan

The following goals and policies from the Land Use and Urban Design Element (LU) and the Environmental Resources Element (ER) related to aesthetics, light, and glare from the 2030 General Plan (City of Sacramento 2009) are relevant to the proposed project. Those goals and policies that directly pertain to the project are discussed in the impact analysis below.

Goal L.U. 2.1 City of Neighborhoods. Maintain a city of diverse, distinct, and well-structured neighborhoods that meet the community's needs for complete, sustainable, and high-quality living environments, from the historic downtown core to well-integrated new growth areas.

Policy LU 2.1.2 Protect Established Neighborhoods. The City shall preserve, protect, and enhance established neighborhoods by providing sensitive transitions between these neighborhoods and adjoining areas, and requiring new development, both private and public, to respect and respond to those existing physical characteristics buildings, streetscapes, open spaces, and urban form that contribute to the overall character and livability of the neighborhood.

Goal LU 2.3 City of Trees and Open Spaces. Maintain a multi-functional "green infrastructure" consisting of natural areas, open space, urban forest, and parkland, which serves as a defining physical feature of Sacramento, provides visitors and residents with access to open space and recreation, and is designed for environmental sustainability.

Policy LU 2.3.1 Multi-functional Green Infrastructure. The City shall strive to create a comprehensive and integrated system of parks, open space, and urban forests that frames and complements the city's urbanized areas.

Policy LU 2.3.2 Adjacent Development. The City shall require that development adjacent to parks and open spaces complements and benefits from this proximity by:

- Preserving physical and visual access;
- Requiring development to front, rather than back, onto these areas;
- Using single-loaded streets along the edge to define and accommodate public access;
- Providing pedestrian and multi-use trails;
- Augmenting non-accessible habitat areas with adjoining functional parkland; and
- Extending streets perpendicular to parks and open space and not closing off visual and/or physical access with development.

Goal LU 2.4 City of Distinctive and Memorable Places. Promote community design that produces a distinctive, high-quality built environment whose forms and character reflect Sacramento's unique historic, environmental, and architectural context, and create memorable places that enrich community life.

Policy LU 2.4.1 Unique Sense of Place. The City shall promote quality site, architectural and landscape design that incorporates those qualities and characteristics

that make Sacramento desirable and memorable including walkable blocks, distinctive parks and open spaces, tree-lined streets, and varied architectural styles.

Policy LU 2.4.2 Responsiveness to Context. The City shall promote building design that respects and responds to the local context, including use of local materials, responsiveness to Sacramento's climate, and consideration of cultural and historic context of Sacramento's neighborhoods and centers.

Policy LU 2.4.4 Iconic Buildings. The City shall encourage the development of iconic public and private buildings in key locations to create new landmarks and focal features that contribute to the city's structure and identity.

Goal LU 2.7 City Form and Structure. Require excellence in the design of the city's form and structure through development standards and clear design direction.

Policy LU 2.7.4 Public Safety and Community Design. The City shall promote design of neighborhoods, centers, streets, and public spaces that enhances public safety and discourages crime by providing street-fronting uses ("eyes on the street"), adequate lighting and sight lines, and features that cultivate a sense of community "ownership."

Policy LU 2.7.5 Development Along Freeways. The City shall promote high quality development character of buildings along freeway corridors and protect the public from the adverse effects of vehicle-generated air emissions, noise, and vibration, using such techniques as:

- Requiring extensive landscaping and trees along the freeway fronting elevation;
- Establish a consistent building line, articulating and modulating building elevations and heights to create visual interest; and
- Include design elements that reduce noise and provide for proper filtering, ventilation, and exhaust of vehicle air emissions.

Policy LU 2.7.6 Walkable Blocks. The City shall require new development and redevelopment projects to create walkable, pedestrian-scaled blocks, publicly-accessible mid-block pedestrian routes where appropriate, and sidewalks appropriately-scaled for the anticipated pedestrian use.

Policy LU 2.7.7 Buildings that Engage the Street. The City shall require buildings to be oriented to and actively engage and complete the public realm through such features as building orientation, build-to and setback lines, façade articulation, ground-floor transparency, and location of parking.

Goal LU 4.1 Neighborhoods. Promote the development and preservation of neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing types, densities, and designs and a mix of uses and services that address the diverse needs of Sacramento residents of all ages, socio-economic groups, and abilities.

Policy LU 4.1.8 Neighborhood Street Trees. The City shall encourage the strategic selection of street tree species to enhance neighborhood character and identity and preserve the health and diversity of the urban forest.

Environmental Resources

Goal ER 7.1. Visual Resource Preservation. Maintain and protect significant visual resources and aesthetics that define Sacramento.

Policy ER 7.1.1 Protect Scenic Views. The City shall seek to protect views from public places to the Sacramento and American rivers and adjacent greenways, landmarks, and urban views of the downtown skyline and the State Capitol along Capitol Mall.

Policy ER 7.1.2 Visually Complimentary Development. The City shall require new development be located and designed to visually complement the natural environment/setting when near the Sacramento and American rivers, and along streams.

Policy ER 7.1.3 Minimize Removal of Existing Resources. The City shall require new commercial, industrial, and residential development to minimize the removal of mature trees, and other significant visual resources present on the site.

Policy ER 7.1.4 Standards for New Development. The City shall seek to ensure that new development does not significantly impact Sacramento's natural and urban landscapes.

Policy ER 7.1.5 Lighting. The City shall minimize obtrusive light by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary.

Policy ER 7.1.6 Glare. The City shall require that new development avoid the creation of incompatible glare through development design features.

4.10.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Methods of Analysis

The value attached to changes in visual character is largely subjective. This Draft EIR does not assign a judgment of "good" or "bad" to a proposed change; rather, it identifies any "substantial adverse effect," as defined below, as a significant environmental impact.

A description of the project site and the surrounding area is derived from a site visit and photographs. The City's 2030 General Plan and MEIR were reviewed to determine what visual elements have been deemed valuable by the community. The impact analysis focuses on the manner in which development could alter the visual elements or features that exist in or near the project area.

The determination of when changes to the visual environment become a substantial adverse effect is based on the following primary factors: (a) the existing scenic quality of an area; (b) the level of viewer exposure and concern regarding visual change; and (c) the level of actual visual change caused by the project as seen by a given viewer group. The overall visual sensitivity of each location is first established based on existing visual quality, viewer exposure, and viewer concern. These factors are then considered together with the level of expected visual change or contrast and significance. Visual change is an overall measure of the alteration or change in basic visual attributes such as form, line, color, and texture as a result of the proposed project. Thus, a substantial adverse effect can occur when a project results in high levels of visual change or obstruction of scenic views by sensitive receptors.

The project site does not contain any scenic vistas and development of the project would have no effect on any scenic vistas.

In addition, the site does not provide or support substantial scenic resources, and there are no scenic highways in the vicinity and would have no effect related to damage to scenic resources visible from a state scenic highway.

Potential impacts to wildlife in the area associated with an increase in lighting was not evaluated because the project site is located in an urbanized, developed environment that does not contain any federal or state protected wildlife species, with the exception of the potential presence of Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle. Impacts to biological resources are addressed in Section 4.2, Biological Resources. The common wildlife in the area is adapted to an urban environment and the addition of project lighting would not adversely affect these species.

Project Features

The proposed project currently includes four different housing types, (1) Courtyards, (2) Commons, (3) Cottage Greens, and (4) Park Homes. There are 15 different house plans and 45 base elevations (see Chapter 2, Project Description and Figures 2-4 through 2-19 for examples). The PUD Guidelines provide flexibility in housing types and designs that may be built on the site. For more information on housing types and designs per the PUD Guidelines, see Appendix M.

Thresholds of Significance

The significance criteria used to evaluate the project impacts to aesthetics are based on Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, thresholds of significance adopted by the City in applicable general plans and previous environmental documents, and professional judgment. A significant impact related to aesthetics would occur if the project would:

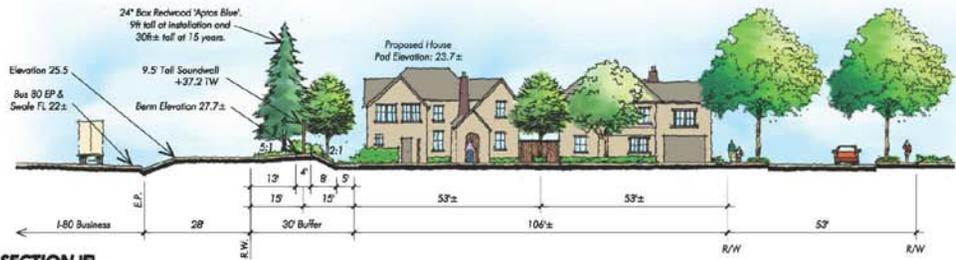
- substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or
- create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

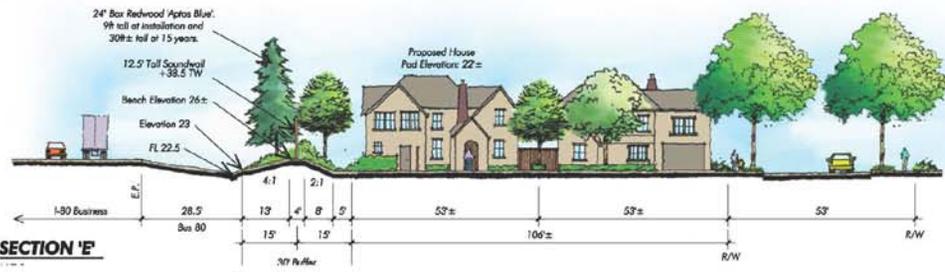
4.10-1: The proposed project could degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Based on the analysis below the impact is *less than significant*.

As discussed above, the site is visually isolated from the existing McKinley Park and East Sacramento neighborhoods located to the south and views from Sutter's Landing Regional Park to the north would be limited due to the existing topography. In addition, the public would not have access to the portion of Sutter's Landing Regional Park immediately north of the freeway (i.e., the "mound") until sometime after 2027/2028 when the land use restrictions are lifted. Changes in the visual quality of the project site would not adversely affect existing residents or users of recreational facilities in the area.

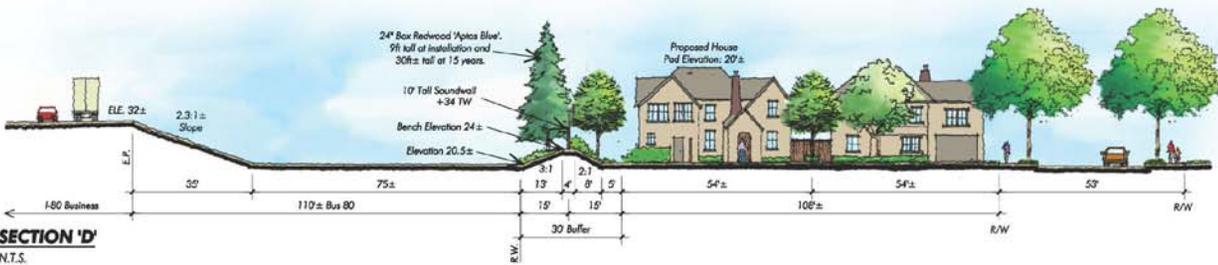
Viewers that would observe the greatest extent of changes in the visual character of the project site are travelers on Capital City Freeway heading eastbound, as the views of the site from Viewshed A are the most extensive. Views of the project site are generally visible for 20–30 seconds in free-flowing traffic. However, the site primarily supports non-native grassland vegetation, freestanding billboards and overhead utility lines. There are few trees on site, and the visual condition of the site generally does not reflect the natural habitat areas associated with the river. Figure 4.10-4 shows a view of the project site from the freeway with the tree maturity shown at 15 years.



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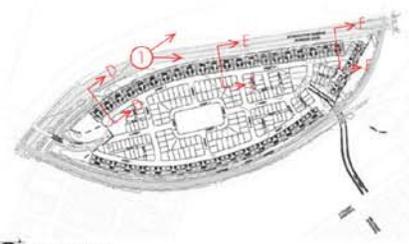
SECTION 'E'
N.T.S.



SECTION 'D'
N.T.S.



View from I-80



KEY MAP

NOT TO SCALE

SOURCE: Woodley Architectural Group 2013

FIGURE 4.10-4
View from Freeway

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MCKINLEY VILLAGE PROJECT EIR

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The views of the project site occur between existing highway overpasses (which support public roads as well as railroad tracks), which isolates the project site from the open space areas to the north. The site's contribution to the open space landscape is further limited by the presence of billboard advertisements, lack of substantial vegetation at the project site, and the UPRR embankment which separates the site from adjacent neighborhoods to the south. As shown in Figure 4.10-1, several billboards are located on both sides of the freeway between the A Street Bridge and the American River, and views on both sides of the freeway are constrained by vegetation and grades. The substantial tree canopy of the McKinley Park and East Sacramento neighborhoods is a distinct visual feature in the background, visible above the UPRR embankment. The Cannery Business Park water tower is also visible. The existing infrastructure and billboards adjacent to and within the project site contribute to the overall character of the project site.

While a large number of people are exposed to views of the project site (primarily vehicle passengers traveling eastbound on the freeway), viewer sensitivity to changes in the visual character of the site is considered moderate. However the scenic value of the project site is constrained and it is isolated from surrounding open space and existing neighborhoods.

Project construction would require mass grading of the site. Because the site does not contain many trees, scenic vegetation, or structures, grading would not significantly change the current topography or visual character of the site. The existing dirt embankment along the freeway ROW at the western end of the site would not be affected by site grading, as shown in Figure 2-3, Conceptual Site Plan, in Chapter 2, Project Description. Thus, with the exception of the installation of a berm along the freeway the project grading would not alter the extent to which the site is visible from the freeway or create any new views of the site.

Construction of the project is expected to occur in three phases over approximately 4 years, with construction activity at the site visible from the freeway during the initial phase until construction of the earthen berm and sound wall adjacent to the freeway is completed. The first phase of the project includes construction of the berm and wall that would block views of the site from the freeway during project construction for subsequent phases. In addition, construction activity is considered consistent with the urban nature of the City of Sacramento and the presence and use of construction equipment at the site would not create a significant change in visual character of the project site.

Development of the proposed project would replace the existing views of an open area containing four large illuminated billboards with views of an urban housing development. While the project would include a 30-foot-wide landscape corridor adjacent to the freeway ROW, it is anticipated that the landscaping would not be sufficient to completely block views of the proposed "Commons" housing product (which is the housing type proposed along the site's

northern boundary). The project is proposing to plant trees that would, once mature, significantly shield views of the site from the freeway. In addition, a sound barrier, consisting of an earthen berm topped with a sound wall, would be located approximately in the middle of the 30-foot landscape corridor. The height of the sound barrier would vary based on the terrain, but would generally be 13–18.5 feet above the proposed building pads. The sound barrier would be set back between approximately 15 feet from the freeway ROW with landscaping provided on both sides of the barrier. The distance to the rear of the residences located adjacent to the freeway would range from 58 feet from edge of pavement on the east up to 140 feet from edge of pavement on the west. Views of the project site from the freeway at all three viewpoints (see Figure 4.10-3) would change from the existing views of a flat, undeveloped parcel of land with little vegetation and trees, but with several large illuminated billboards, to views of trees, landscaping, the sound barrier, and dwelling units.

These changes would be consistent with General Plan Goal LU 2.7.5 Development Along Freeways. This goal states, in part, that the City shall promote high-quality development along freeway corridors. Techniques described in this goal include requiring extensive landscaping and trees along the freeway fronting elevation and design elements that reduce noise.

It is noted that the trees and landscaping would take time to mature; therefore, the sound barrier, dwelling units, and other on-site development would be more visible from the three viewpoints during the first 5–10 years following construction. The change in visual character resulting from the project would continue views of the existing urban development present along the freeway to the south of the site. The developed nature of the site would be consistent with a developed urban environment similar to other developed areas in the project vicinity and consistent with the planned land use for the site under City of Sacramento's 2030 General Plan.

While the project would change the visual character of the site, this change is not considered a substantial degradation in visual character because the site currently includes four illuminated billboards, is isolated from open space areas, is not visible to people in neighboring residences or any sensitive receptors, and has been designed consistent with the intent of the goals and policies contained in the City's General Plan. Further, the project and would include development that is generally consistent with the scale and density of residential uses to the south. Therefore, the project would have a **less-than-significant impact** related to changes in visual character.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.10-2: The proposed project could create a new source of light or glare which could adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Based on the analysis below the impact is *less than significant*.

As discussed previously, the project site is undeveloped. The only existing lighting sources are lights that illuminate the billboards on site. The project site is also exposed to nighttime lighting from car headlights on Capital City Freeway and from trains passing by the site. In addition, limited amounts of nighttime light emanate from the nearby neighborhoods to the south. However the substantial tree canopy in those existing neighborhoods blocks much of the nighttime lighting from being visible at the project site or from the freeway. There are no sources of glare within the project site currently.

New Light Sources On Site – Street and Area Lighting

The proposed project would introduce new sources of light into the area, particularly from street lights and lighting associated with individual dwelling units as well as the outdoor pool, which would include lights. Views into the project site at night would be altered by these sources of artificial light. During project construction there may also be overhead lights provided for security that may alter current views of the site. The project includes the City's standard acorn-style street lighting consistent with residential neighborhoods in East Sacramento. The landscaping and sound wall proposed along the site's northern boundary would provide shielding to ensure that lighting within the project site would not spill onto the freeway and that headlights from cars on the freeway would not shine into the proposed residences. Proposed landscaping along the southern property boundary as well as the physical barrier provided by the UPRR embankment would limit the amount of lighting from the project site that could spill onto nearby residential properties. The City's acorn-style lights are typically 12 feet in height so it is unlikely there would be any spillover onto adjacent properties. Proposed landscaping and project design would be consistent with General Plan Goal ER 7.1.5, which states that the City shall minimize obtrusive light by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary.

Light generated by the project associated with residences and street lighting would be considered a **less-than-significant impact**.

New Light Sources On Site – Vehicle Headlights

The physical topographic barriers between the project site and adjacent land uses would prevent headlights from cars on the proposed new on-site roadways from shining directly into any adjacent residence. No new roads would be placed adjacent to the Capital City Freeway, and the sound barrier and landscaped area between the proposed development and the freeway would prevent headlights from vehicles within the project site from shining onto the

freeway. Therefore, the project would have a **less-than-significant impact** related to vehicle lights within the project site shining into existing residences or roadways.

New Light Sources Off Site – Vehicle Headlights

As shown in Figure 2-16, in Chapter 2, Project Description, Proposed Off-site Improvements, the proposed project would create one new off-site roadway and would make improvements to the extension of A Street. The new roadway is proposed as an extension of 40th Street that would pass under the UPRR tracks. The proposed alignment has not yet been finalized but would be located between 40th Street and Tivoli Way and would create a new “T” intersection with C Street. Headlights from vehicles traveling southbound on the extension of 40th Street could shine onto the garage and side yard of the existing residence at the corner of C Street and 40th Street and onto the garage and side yard of the existing residence at the corner of C Street and Tivoli Way. This is a **less-than-significant impact**.

New Sources of Glare

The project would place two-story dwelling units adjacent to the freeway where sunlight or light from car headlights could reflect off of windows and create glare that could cause safety hazards for travelers. However, the 30-foot-wide landscape buffer and sound barrier between the proposed dwelling units and the freeway would limit the ability for light to reflect towards the highway. In addition, the project does not propose to use highly reflective surfaces, such as mirrored glass, black glass, or metal building materials. The project’s design features would be consistent with General Plan Goal ER 7.1.6 Glare, which states the City shall require that new development avoid the creation of incompatible glare through development design features. Off-site improvements are limited to roadways and pedestrian/bicycle facilities that would not create new sources of glare. Therefore, the project would have **no impacts** related to creating a new source of glare.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

This cumulative impact analyses does not rely on any list of specific pending, reasonably foreseeable development proposals in the general vicinity of the proposed project.

The geographic scope of the cumulative impact analysis for the evaluation of potential cumulative impacts on urban design and visual resources is future development within the City of Sacramento associated with buildout of the 2030 General Plan.

The scope of the cumulative impact analysis for aesthetics includes the area that comprises the viewshed in which the project site is visible, and the views visible from the project site, which includes development in the immediately surrounding areas.

The cumulative context for light would be other development in the surrounding area that could affect the same area as that affected by project-generated light.

4.10-3: The proposed project could contribute to long-term impacts to the visual character of the region in combination with existing and future development in the City of Sacramento. Based on the analysis below the impact is *less than significant*.

The project site is located in the City of Sacramento, adjacent to developed uses but just north and east of the City's central core. The City has envisioned development of this site dating back to the late 1980s.

The majority of this area of the City has been fully developed with a mix of mostly residential and some areas of light industrial and commercial uses, along with open space uses further west. Because this area of the City has been mostly built out there is limited potential for development to occur in the surrounding area. Therefore, the change in the existing visual character from the project and other cumulative development would not be considered a cumulative impact because the area is essentially developed and represents a developed environment.

As discussed under Impact 4.10-1, the proposed project would alter the existing visual character of the project site by developing a residential neighborhood on land that is currently undeveloped. However, the change in visual character in this area of the city is not considered a significant impact. The primary view shed that would be affected by the proposed project is the view of the site and the four illuminated billboards from eastbound Capital City Freeway (Viewshed A). The project site is not a key element in other views within the project region. The project's contribution to cumulative visual changes in the region would not be considerable because the cumulative impact is already less than significant. The impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.10-4: The proposed project could contribute to a cumulative increase in light and glare. Based on the analysis below the impact is *less than significant*.

Current development within the surrounding area has introduced artificial lighting into the area, including building lighting and street lighting from adjacent residential and commercial uses to the east and south, as well as from car headlights along Capital City Freeway. Most of the past and present development has been designed to minimize lighting impacts. Future development would also be required to comply with City requirements that require new projects to minimize obtrusive light by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary (Policy ER 7.1.5). In addition, the City requires that new development avoid the creation of incompatible glare through development design features (Policy ER 7.1.6). The cumulative light and glare impact of the proposed project, together with future buildout of the 2030 General Plan, is less than significant.

As discussed in Impact 4.10-2, development of the proposed project would introduce new sources of light, but would also eliminate the existing illumination for the billboards. The proposed project would contribute to the existing ambient light in the area by introducing exterior building lights, interior-building light emitted through the windows, street lights, and car headlights. However, project light would be blocked by the UPRR embankment on the south side of the project, so there would be no spillover light to the south, east, or west, and on the north project light would be shielded from the freeway by the sound barrier and landscape buffer. Project implementation would not create any glare; therefore, the project would not contribute to an increase in glare. Although the project would change nighttime views of the project site by replacing billboard illumination with some second story interior building lighting, the project's incremental contribution to the increase in light and glare would not be considerable, because the cumulative impact is less than significant. The impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.10.5 Sources Cited

City of Sacramento. 2009. *City of Sacramento 2030 General Plan*. March 2009.

City of Sacramento. 2009. *City of Sacramento 2030 General Plan Master EIR*. Prepared by PBS&J. March 2009.