

Section 3.1

Aesthetics and Visual Resources

3.1.1 Introduction

This section analyzes the proposed project's impacts related to aesthetics and visual resources, including impacts from both construction and operational activities. As part of this analysis, the section describes the general approach and methodology, regulatory framework, environmental setting, and significance criteria used to evaluate the proposed project's effects related to aesthetics and visual resources.

Comments received in response to the NOP included certain comments related to aesthetics. Specifically, the City of San Diego Planning Department commented that the Draft EIR should address how the proposed structures would impact view corridors. One member of the public also inquired during the February 1, 2017 public scoping meeting as to the anticipated heights of the new buildings. All written and oral comments received during the NOP process are provided in Appendix R-A.

3.1.2 General Approach and Methodology

The purpose of this section is to describe the existing aesthetic conditions of the project area and analyze the potential project impacts on its aesthetic character and the aesthetic character of the surrounding area. This analysis is based on a review of the regulatory documents governing the project area and the areas adjacent to it. Additionally, the analysis includes: (1) site reconnaissance of the project area and the surrounding communities; (2) identification and documentation of key views; and (3) review of the project description and preliminary design. More specifically, in regard to views, several long- and short-range views were selected for the visual assessment based on representative viewer groups, public viewing locations, and public policies, such as policies related to view corridors identified in regulatory/planning documents.

Light and glare also influence the existing visual character of an area. The provision of adequate and appropriate lighting and limiting glare and the potential for glare are fundamental safety requirements in the design of any large facility, especially an airport and its associated roadways. The analysis in this aesthetics and visual resources section addresses the potential for the proposed project to alter lighting so as to create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. The potential light emissions and glare impacts of the proposed project were determined by observing the existing airport light and glare sources, and assessing future lighting and glare effects based on the proposed project components.

3.1.3 Regulatory Framework

3.1.3.1 State

3.1.3.1.1 California Coastal Act

Under the provisions of the California Coastal Act (CCA),¹ development projects located in the coastal zone must receive an additional level of review for potential impacts to coastal resources. As discussed in more detail in Section 3.11, Land Use and Planning, prior to the formation of SDCRAA, SDIA was governed by and considered part of the Port of San Diego and was included in the Port's certified Port Master Plan (PMP). Since January 1, 2003, however, the Port's PMP no longer serves as the coastal planning document for SDIA. Section 170060(c) of the SDCRAA Act states:

The authority [SDCRAA] shall be responsible for making any necessary application to the California Coastal Commission pursuant to the California Coastal Act of 1976 [Division 20 (commencing with Section 30000) of the Public Resources Code] and to other agencies in accordance with other applicable laws in effect on the effective date of the act that added this section for improvements upon coastal lands under the control of the authority [SDCRAA] through a lease.

Since the SDCRAA inception, SDCRAA staff has initiated all coastal permitting with the California Coastal Commission (CCC). Because SDIA is no longer part of the Port, the standard of review for all development projects is Chapter 3, Coastal Resources Planning and Management Policies, of the CCA and the policies of the PMP and Chapter 8, Ports, of the Act are no longer applicable.

Section 30251, Scenic and Visual Quality, of the CCA is the section that is applicable for considering and reviewing the aesthetic impacts of the proposed project. Section 30251 of the CCA states:

The scenic and visual qualities of the coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development [in the Coastal Zone] shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas.

3.1.3.2 Local

There are several planning areas located near or adjacent to SDIA that set policies within their own areas specific to aesthetic views of San Diego Bay and the downtown area. Policies in the community plans that relate to aesthetics, including urban design guidelines and view corridor preservation, are discussed below.

3.1.3.2.1 Port Master Plan (PMP)

As discussed further in Section 3.11, Land Use and Planning, the PMP is the land use document governing land and water development within the Port District's jurisdiction. It should be noted that these planning goals of the PMP apply only to the lands under the District's jurisdiction and do

¹ Public Resources Code, Section 30000, et. seq.

not apply to SDCRAA or SDIA. Although the PMP does not provide mandatory planning goals for SDIA/SDCRAA, SDCRAA reviews and considers, where possible and practicable, these planning goals.

The PMP was originally adopted by the Board of Port Commissioners in 1980 and was certified by the CCC on January 21, 1981. The PMP is regularly updated, with the last update occurring in June 2016.² The PMP divides the tidelands under Port District jurisdiction into ten (10) Planning Districts, or precise plans. Each Planning District is further divided into Planning Subareas, which group together tideland properties into functional units, thereby facilitating planning efforts. The planning district most affected by the proposed project is Planning District 2 (Harbor Island/Lindbergh Field).³ This planning district identifies two areas with scenic vistas that include:

- Views from Spanish Landing south/southwest towards San Diego Bay.
- Views from West and East Harbor Island south towards San Diego Bay.

Both of these designated view areas are located to the south of SDIA, and the scenic vistas are to the south/southwest towards San Diego Bay, in the opposite direction of SDIA.

Section II, Planning Goals, of the PMP identifies general goals that are to be attained by implementing the policies set forth in the PMP. The most relevant goals that address aesthetic issues include the following:

- Goal II: The Port District, as trustee for the people of the state of California, will administer the tidelands so as to provide the greatest economic, social, and aesthetic benefits to present and future generations.
- Goal VIII: The Port District will enhance and maintain the bay and tidelands as an attractive physical and biological entity.
 - Views should be enhanced through view corridors, the preservation of panoramas, accentuation of vistas, and shielding of the incongruous and inconsistent.
 - Establish guidelines and standards facilitating the retention and development of an aesthetically pleasing tideland environment free of noxious odors, excessive noise, and hazards to the health and welfare of the people of California.
- Goal IX: The Port District will insure physical access to the bay except as necessary to provide for the safety and security, or to avoid interference with waterfront activities.
 - Provide ‘windows to the water’ at frequent and convenient locations around the entire periphery of the bay with public right-of-way, automobile parking and other appropriate facilities.

² Port of San Diego, Port Master Plan. August 2017 [print date].

³ Although the airport property is still depicted in the certified PMP as being within Planning District 2 (Harbor Island/Lindbergh Field), the PMP and its associated land use designations/design guidelines are no longer applicable to SDIA pursuant to the SDCRAA Act.

The Port of San Diego is currently in the process of updating the PMP (referred to as the Port Master Plan Update or “PMPU”). The Port District released a Discussion Draft of the PMPU for a 90-day public review period ending in July 2019. The Discussion Draft includes and addresses allowable uses and activities, future development, and management of water and land within the Port's jurisdiction on and around San Diego Bay.

The stated intent of the PMPU Discussion Draft is:

...to protect and promote coastal-dependent and coastal-related uses, allow for and encourage a diverse range of uses around San Diego Bay (Bay), and provide and ensure coastal access to explore and enjoy areas within the San Diego Unified Port District's (District) jurisdiction.⁴

The PMPU Discussion Draft includes goals and policies to guide activities on the Port's tidelands in the areas of ecology, economics, environmental justice, safety and resiliency, mobility, and water and land use. Since the PMPU is still being vetted through a public review process prior to Port Commissioners' acceptance, the PMPU goals and policies related to aesthetics and visual resources were not addressed in the impacts analyses below.

3.1.3.2.2 City of San Diego Community Plans and Policies

This section describes the following City of San Diego Plans related to the aesthetic and visual resources of the SDIA project site and the surrounding areas. Additional discussion of each of the following City of San Diego community plans is provided in Section 3.11, Land Use and Planning; Figure 3.11-4 in Section 3.11 shows the planning area boundaries of the community planning areas.

San Diego Downtown Community Plan

Downtown/Centre City encompasses eight neighborhoods within the metropolitan core of the City of San Diego, located southeast of SDIA. The northern end of the Centre City area extends to Laurel Street, immediately south of SDIA. This area is known as the Little Italy neighborhood, which is organized around the India Street business district (shopping, dining, and gathering). Land uses within the Little Italy neighborhood consist of restaurants/markets, commercial/office, mid-rise residential, industrial (Solar Turbines), the San Diego County Administration Center, and recreation/open space (Waterfront Park).

The aesthetic resources objectives for the San Diego Downtown Community Plan area are best expressed by the following statement from the San Diego Downtown Community Plan:⁵ “Downtown has a magnificent setting, occupying a strategic location between the sparkling San Diego Bay and the green expanse of Balboa Park. The Community Plan capitalizes on these unique assets, creating an outdoor-focused, Mediterranean ambiance that emphasizes vitality and street life, and gathering places that reflect San Diego's natural setting.” More specifically, policies regarding aesthetic resources for the San Diego Downtown area bordering SDIA include:

⁴ Port of San Diego. Port Master Plan - Discussion Draft. April 2019. Available: <https://www.portofsandiego.org/waterfront-development/integrated-planning-port-master-plan-update>.

⁵ Centre City Development Corporation. San Diego Downtown Community Plan – Rising on the Pacific. Adopted April 2006, last amended 2016. Available: <http://civicsd.com/departments/planning/planning-regulatory-documents/>.

- Restrict building heights throughout downtown, consistent with policies and regulations for airport operations established by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), and the Airport Approach Overlay Zone.
- Work with the Port and the County to ensure a diversity of land uses along Harbor Drive.
- Foster physical and visual linkages between downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, working together with adjacent communities.
- Use airport-related development constraints as opportunities for unique land use and development patterns.

The Urban Design chapter of the San Diego Downtown Community Plan states that views and vistas of San Diego Bay, Balboa Park, parks, and landmark buildings are significant downtown assets. Distant views and a sense of expansiveness are especially critical to balance the planned high development intensities. The San Diego Downtown Community Plan designates view corridors and outlines design criteria to preserve and reinforce existing views—of the water, such as can be had from Broadway and Market Street, or of landmark buildings, like the County Administration Center building at the foot of Cedar Street—and capture new views as redevelopment on some of the larger waterfront parcels occurs. View policies focus on streets and public spaces, rather than on private views from buildings. The Community Plan also has more specific policies directed towards view preservation that include the following:

- Protect public views of the water, and re-establish water views, in the corridors shown in designated view corridors.⁶
- Work with the Port to maintain open view corridors to the water – that is, free of structures and landscaping that would restrict the views. Encourage the Port to create view corridors extending southward along Pacific Highway and Kettner Boulevard at such time that redevelopment of the Seaport Village site is undertaken.
- Preserve and create views by requiring all buildings to comply with view corridor setbacks along existing streets and future view corridors to maintain visual and physical access to the Bay.

The view corridors identified in the San Diego Downtown Community Plan are along public streets on the west side of the Community Planning Area looking west and south towards San Diego Bay; SDIA is located north of, and not within, these designated view corridors towards San Diego Bay. The one exception is the view corridor along Laurel Street (west of Kettner Street) towards San Diego Bay. Views of SDIA from elevated portions of Laurel Street at Kettner Street are screened from view by existing development (elevated trolley tracks and commercial buildings). SDIA is visible from the unelevated portion of Laurel Street between Pacific Highway and North Harbor

⁶ Designated view corridors from within the Downtown Community Planning Area are shown on Figure 5-1, View Corridors, of the San Diego Downtown Community Plan – Rising on the Pacific. Available: <http://civicsd.com/departments/planning/planning-regulatory-documents/>.

Drive; however, the Airport is not within, nor does it block/disrupt, the view west towards San Diego Bay to the south of North Harbor Drive.

Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan

The Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area is located north and east of the project site. The Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan⁷ designates the area immediately adjacent to SDIA for industrial and commercial uses. The Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area contains areas (along Pacific Highway and adjacent to the San Diego River) that are within the State Coastal Zone as defined by the CCC. As such, as part of the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan development process, it was required that a Local Coastal Program be developed and approved by the CCC. The Local Coastal Program for the Coastal Zone areas in the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area is integrated into the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan.⁸ Aesthetic/visual quality policies within the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan that are most relevant to SDIA include:

- UD-6.20 - Discourage the installation of ground-mounted or pole-mounted business signs within the Coastal Zone along Pacific Highway.
- LU-4.82 - Provide and emphasize physical access to San Diego Bay via Sassafras, Palm, and Laurel Streets, and maintain bay views from the public right-of-way at Kettner Boulevard and Redwood, Palm, and Olive Streets as feasible.
- LU-4.84 - Support the development of an Intermodal Transit Center as a major transportation hub for the region.

E. Provide view opportunities to San Diego Bay where feasible.

- LU-4.85 - Coordinate planning efforts with the San Diego Unified Port District and the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority.

A. Encourage buildings and streetscape improvements that enhance the visual character along Pacific Highway.

The Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan does not include a map or figure which identifies designated view corridors. Views of San Diego Bay from public right-of-way at Kettner Boulevard and Redwood, Palm, and Olive Streets are somewhat screened from view by existing development between Kettner Boulevard and Pacific Highway.

⁷ City of San Diego. Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan. September 17, 2018. Available: <https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/profiles>.

⁸ The City of San Diego Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan was certified by the CCC on March 7, 2019 [LCP-6-CCP-18-0094-4].

Uptown Community Plan

The Uptown Community Planning Area is located north and east of SDIA. The Uptown Community Plan⁹ designates most of the area in the vicinity of SDIA for residential uses (Mission Hills and Middletown) with some commercial uses bordering I-5 (within Middletown).

The Urban Design and Conservation elements of the Uptown Community Plan contain policies to preserve and enhance scenic resources. Types of scenic resources considered in the Uptown Community Plan include:

- Viewsheds: generally unobstructed panoramic view from a public vantage point.
- View Corridors: view along public rights-of-way framed by permitted development.

Due to its topography, Uptown has prominent public viewsheds and view corridors that offer views to the north/northwest (Mission Valley, Mission Bay), east (Balboa Park), and west (San Diego Bay/Harbor). Figure 4-3 of the Uptown Community Plan identifies designated public viewsheds and view corridors. There are a number of public viewsheds on the western slopes of the Uptown Community Planning Area that provide views to the west, overlooking SDIA towards San Diego Bay/Harbor. The only designated public view corridor is along the western edge of Balboa Park towards the east (i.e., in the opposite direction of SDIA). Specific policies contained in the Urban Design and Conservation elements of the Uptown Community Plan regarding the protection of public viewsheds are as follows:

- UD-1.2 – Preserve and enhance viewsheds and view corridors from public streets and vantage points as shown on Figure 4-3 Canyons and Views.
- CE-2.15 – Public views from identified vantage points, to and from community landmarks and scenic vistas shall be retained and enhanced as a public resource.

Peninsula Community Plan

The Peninsula Community Planning Area is located west of SDIA and south of the Midway community. The Urban Design Element of the Peninsula Community Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan (Peninsula Community Plan)¹⁰ describes the Peninsula Community as:

- [a] highly urbanized residential area surrounded by water and recreational resources. The Peninsula community is unique due to a number of physical factors. Elements which contribute to the Peninsula's appearance include:
 - A coastline consisting of bluffs, rocky and sandy beaches, and the bay.
 - Numerous hillsides and canyons which act as natural boundaries forming distinctive neighborhoods.

⁹ City of San Diego. Uptown Community Plan. November 14, 2016, as amended June 12, 2018. Available: <https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/profiles>.

¹⁰ City of San Diego. Peninsula Community Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan. July 14, 1987, last amended 2011. Available: <https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/profiles>.

- Extensive areas of large trees and natural vegetation.
- Well-defined neighborhoods with a variety of well-preserved architectural styles and housing types.
- A number of historically significant buildings and resources.

A number of view corridors exist throughout the Peninsula planning area, providing views of San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, downtown, the Navy Boat Channel, Coronado, Mission Bay, and Pacific Beach. The Peninsula Community Plan identifies “Preserv[ation] and enhance[ment] of significant views of the [San Diego] bay and ocean” as an objective. The Plan goes on to state, “[s]tructures should be designed to protect views of Peninsula’s natural scenic amenities, especially the ocean shoreline, and San Diego Bay.”

Coastal views/vistas identified in the Peninsula Community Plan occur primarily from existing roadways. Coastal views identified that overlook SDIA are identified along the eastern edge of Liberty Station (the former Naval Training Center [NTC]) along the Navy Boat Channel looking towards the east/southeast. Designated coastal views from the elevated areas on the eastern side of the Peninsula do not overlook SDIA.

NTC Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program

The former NTC operated as a military base for almost 80 years and was concerned with security and secrecy. The history of NTC is of an enclave separated from the communities of Point Loma and Loma Portal. The design concept for the former NTC site (now Liberty Station mixed-use development) in the NTC Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program¹¹ emphasizes the physical integration of the NTC into the surrounding community. Integration, however, must not diminish the explicit design elements and special character of NTC, which give it a distinct character. Those design elements include the street configuration, signage, lighting, and an architecture dominated by the simple strong lines of historic buildings and arcades.

One of the primary considerations outlined in the Plan is the preservation of views to the waterfront and downtown skyline by regulating building design in order to establish or maintain public view corridors. This would be achieved by “...appropriate zoning, setbacks and design standards, including clustering of tall buildings, slender buildings, proper building orientation and floor area restriction and heights limits where necessary.”

The NTC Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program identifies several view corridors from within the former NTC property and from public streets directly to the west of the NTC property. Specifically, these views are to the east/southeast towards the Navy Boat Channel, San Diego Bay, and the downtown skyline.

¹¹ Rick Planning Group et al. NTC Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program. September 2001. Available: <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy//planning/community/profiles/peninsula/pdf/ntcpreciseplanaug01.pdf>.

3.1.3.2.3 City of San Diego Municipal Code

The San Diego Municipal Code, Chapter 14, Article 2, General Development Regulations, Division 7: Off-Site Development Impact Regulations, provides standards with the intent of minimizing negative impacts from development to surrounding property. Regulations specific to glare include the following: a maximum of 50 percent of the exterior of a building may be comprised of reflective material that has a light reflectivity factor of greater than 30 percent; and, reflective building materials shall not be permitted where the City Manager determines that their use would contribute to potential traffic hazards, diminished quality of a riparian habitat, or reduced enjoyment of public open space. Outdoor lighting regulations require that outdoor lighting fixtures be directed or shielded so that light does not fall onto surrounding properties or create glare hazards. The City's outdoor lighting regulations further specify that all outdoor lighting shall be turned off between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. except for, in the case of SDIA, outdoor lighting used for security purposes/public safety.

3.1.4 Environmental Setting

SDIA is located in a fully urbanized area that is surrounded by existing commercial, industrial, military, residential, and recreational uses, and San Diego Bay. This section describes both the environmental setting on-site at SDIA and in the surrounding area.

SDIA is relatively flat and sits within the landforms of the Point Loma peninsula on the west and the hillsides of Uptown (Middletown and Mission Hills) on the east. The average elevation of SDIA is between 10 to 15 feet above mean sea level (msl). The topography at the site slopes gradually to the south and west towards San Diego Bay.

The Airport terminal complex, located on the south side of the Airport facing North Harbor Drive, comprises three buildings: Terminal 1 (T1), Terminal 2-East (T2-East), and Terminal 2-West (T2-West). The ground transportation system located south of the terminals provides access roads, vehicle curbs, and surface parking. A three-level, 66 foot-high parking plaza south of T2 and north of North Harbor Drive (the T2 Parking Plaza) was completed in May 2018.

T2-West is the newest terminal facility at the Airport, first having opened in 1998 and then expanded in 2013 as part of the Green Build. The existing 880,000 square-foot T2-West has three levels, is contemporary in design, and is approximately 90 feet in height.

T2-East is immediately west of T1. As discussed further in Section 3.6, Cultural Resources, T2-East was constructed in 1979 as a Brutalist-style¹² airport terminal with Futurist influences on the primary (south) façade of the main terminal area and International influences on the north, west, and east façades. The architectural design was intended to complement the appearance of T1. T2-East has two levels, with approximately 350,000 square feet, and is approximately 90 feet in height.

T1, the oldest terminal facility at the Airport, is located at the east end of the primary terminal area. As discussed further in Section 3.6, Cultural Resources, T1 was constructed in 1967 as a Brutalist-

¹² Brutalist-style" buildings are primarily constructed of concrete and have a design that is strikingly blockish, geometric, and contain design elements with repetitive shapes. See Appendix R-F for additional description of the Brutalist-style.

style airport terminal with Futurist influences on the primary (south) façade and International influences on the north, west, and east façades. The existing T1 has two levels, with approximately 336,000 square feet, and is approximately 48 feet in height.

East of T1 is the former Commuter Terminal, where SDCRAA administrative offices are currently located. As discussed further in Section 3.6, Cultural Resources, this building was originally constructed as a Brutalist-style administrative and maintenance facility in 1968. The building was repurposed into the Airport's commuter terminal in 1996. Modifications made to the building significantly impacted the majority of the character-defining features of Brutalism, which the building previously possessed. Currently, the building only possesses monumental massing and an exposed concrete finish. The 132,000 square-foot former Commuter Terminal is approximately 65 feet in height.

Elevated airport access roadways are located adjacent to T2 and parallel to and along portions of North Harbor Drive.

Maintenance buildings and freight forwarding cargo facilities are also located on the south side of the Airport between T1 and the former Commuter Terminal, with additional maintenance buildings east of the former Commuter Terminal.

On the north side of the Airport (north of Runway 9-27) are employee parking, apron area for air cargo loading and one general aviation Fixed Base Operator, the Airport Traffic Control Tower (152 feet in height), an aircraft rescue and fire-fighting facility, a fuel farm, and the Rental Car Center. The 4-level, 1.9 million square-foot Rental Car Center, which was completed in January 2016, has a contemporary design and is approximately 52-feet in height.

3.1.4.1 Visual Resources

Existing visual resources within the SDIA project area consist of natural and human-made features. Natural visual features include San Diego Bay, the Navy Boat Channel, the Pacific Ocean and distant views of the Point Loma peninsula. The human-made features include the downtown skyline.

3.1.4.1.1 Visual Character/Views

Immediately surrounding the SDIA project area are government training/laboratory facilities, hotels, mixed-use, and residential neighborhoods to the west, military use to the north, tourist-recreational uses to the south, and industrial and airport-related uses to the east and residential uses farther east across I-5. The following provides a more detailed description of the visual character on each side of the SDIA project area.

Several long- and short-range views were selected for the visual assessment based on representative viewer groups, public viewing locations, and public policies, such as policies related to view corridors identified in regulatory/planning documents (see Section 3.1.3 above). These key public view locations represent typical viewpoints of the proposed project's facilities locations. A total of 13 key view locations were identified. These viewpoints are located at recreational facilities and public roadways, including I-5. Figure 3.1-1 identifies the location of these key views. Each of these key views is depicted, along with a brief description, in Figures 3.1-2 through 3.1-14.



Source: CDM Smith and SDCRAA, 2019. Aerial source: NAIP, 2016.

Before



After



Location

North Harbor Drive and Harbor Island Drive

Viewer Group

Users of North Harbor Drive and Harbor Island Drive; users of pedestrian/bicycle path on south side of North Harbor Drive

Existing View Description

This view is looking north towards the main airport entryway. There are no existing scenic resources included in this view. Features within view from this location are airport facilities, including airport signage and landscaping, elevated portions of the airport access roadway system, airfield fencing, portions of T1 and the associated pedestrian skybridge (left side of photo), and surface parking.

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-2

Before



After



Location

North Harbor Drive east of Winship Lane

Viewer Group

Users of North Harbor Drive; users of pedestrian/bicycle path on south side of North Harbor Drive

Existing View Description

This view is looking northwest towards the Airport. There are no existing scenic resources included in this view. Features within view from this location are airport facilities, including the former Commuter Terminal (current airport administration building), aviation maintenance buildings and the former (now vacant) administrative offices/trailers to the west of the former Commuter Terminal (left side of photo); surface parking/lighting, security fencing, landscaping, and airport signage. MCRD San Diego facilities and Mission Hills (residential) are also visible in the background (right side of photo).

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-3



Location

North Harbor Drive and Liberator Way

Viewer Group

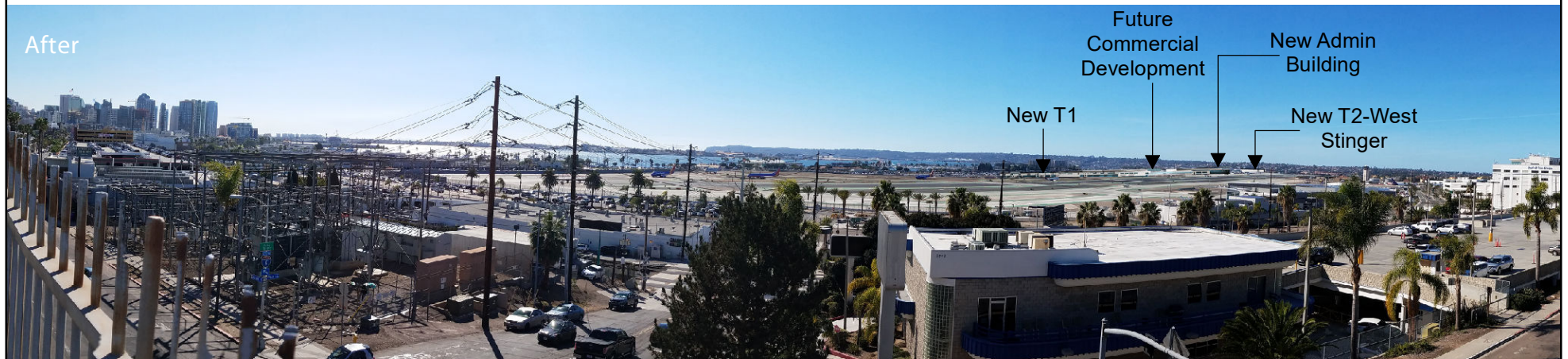
Users of North Harbor Drive; users of pedestrian/bicycle path on south side of North Harbor Drive

Existing View Description

This view is looking north/northwest towards the Airport. There are no existing scenic resources included in this view. Features within view from this location are airport facilities, including airport maintenance offices/shops and shipping/receiving (right side of photo), the former Commuter Terminal (current airport administration building), aviation maintenance buildings and the former (now vacant) administrative offices/trailers (left side of photo), surface parking/lighting, security fencing, landscaping, and airport signage.

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-4



Location

I-5 Pedestrian Overpass at Palm Street

Viewer Group

Pedestrians and users of public streets/I-5

Existing View Description

This view is looking west/southwest towards the Airport. Scenic resources in view include relatively unobstructed views of the downtown skyline, San Diego Bay, the Point Loma peninsula, and the Pacific Ocean. Other features within view from this location are utility facilities/lines, commercial buildings, the Port of San Diego administration building (right side of photo), and airport operations/facilities (including distant views of the former Commuter Terminal (current airport administration building), T1, and T2 beyond the airfield). Multi-story hotels on Harbor Island and portions of Naval Air Station North Island and Coronado are also visible in the background farther south of the Airport.

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-5



Location

Columbia Street and Quince Street

Viewer Group

Users of public streets and sidewalks

Existing View Description

This view is looking west/southwest towards the Airport. Scenic resources in view include unobstructed views of San Diego Bay, the Point Loma peninsula, and the Pacific Ocean. Other features within view from this location are utility lines, I-5 and connector ramps, the Port of San Diego administration building, and airport operations/facilities, including general aviation facilities on the north side of the Airport. The former Commuter Terminal (current airport administration building), T1, and T2 are visible in the distance beyond the airfield. Multi-story hotels on Harbor Island and a portion of Naval Air Station North Island are also visible in the background farther south of the Airport.

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-6



Location

West Upas Street and Union Street

Viewer Group

Users of public streets and sidewalks

Existing View Description

This view is looking west/southwest towards the Airport. Scenic resources in view include relatively unobstructed views of San Diego Bay and the Point Loma peninsula. Other features within view from this location are utility lines, mature residential landscaping, and airport operations/facilities, including views of the former Commuter Terminal (current airport administration building), maintenance and cargo facilities and a portion of T1. Multi-story hotels on Harbor Island and a portion of Naval Air Station North Island are also visible in the background farther south of the Airport.

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-7



Location

Andrews Street and Puterbaugh Street

Viewer Group

Users of public streets and sidewalks

Existing View Description

This view is looking south/southwest towards the Airport. Scenic resources in view include relatively unobstructed views of San Diego Bay, the Point Loma peninsula, and the Pacific Ocean. Other features within view from this location are utility lines, I-5 and Washington Street, commercial buildings, residences, and airport operations/facilities. The former Commuter Terminal (current airport administration building), T1, and T2 are visible in the distance beyond the airfield. Multi-story hotels on Harbor Island and a portion of Naval Air Station North Island are also visible in the background farther south of the Airport. Portions of MCRD San Diego to the north of the Airport are also visible (center-right of photo).

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-8



Location
Henry Street and Linwood Street

Viewer Group
Users of public streets and sidewalks

Existing View Description

This view is looking south towards the Airport. Scenic resources in view include relatively unobstructed views of San Diego Bay, the Point Loma peninsula, and the Pacific Ocean. Other features within view from this location are utility lines, MCRD San Diego facilities (center of photo), and airport operations/facilities, including T1 and T2 in the distance beyond the airfield. Multi-story hotels on Harbor Island and a portion of Naval Air Station North Island are also visible in the background farther south of the Airport.

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-9

Before



After



Location

Liberty Station NTC Park – North

Viewer Group

Park users

Existing View Description

This view is looking southeast across the Navy Boat Channel towards the Airport. Scenic resources in view include the Navy Boat Channel and partially obstructed distant views of the downtown skyline. Other features within view from this location are T2-West and boat/recreational vehicle (RV) storage on MCRD San Diego property.

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-10

Before



After



Location

North Harbor Drive at Cancer Survivors Park

Viewer Group

Users of North Harbor Drive; users of Cancer Survivors Park and the pedestrian/bicycle path on south side of North Harbor Drive

Existing View Description

This view is looking north towards T1. There are no existing scenic resources included in this view. Features within view from this location are airport facilities, including airport signage and landscaping, lighting, elevated portions of the airport access roadway system, and the top portions of the T1 pedestrian skybridge and associated circulation core structures (elevators and escalators).

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-11

Before



After



Location

North Harbor Drive and McCain Road

Existing View Description

This view is looking north/northeast towards the Airport. There are no existing scenic resources included in this view. Features within view from this location are construction facilities/equipment associated with the City of San Diego's Sewer Pump Station No. 2 Power Reliability & Surge Protection Project (right side of photo), and the U.S. Border Patrol facility and T2 surface parking lot/solar panel arrays (center of the photo).

Viewer Group

Users of North Harbor Drive and Spanish Landing Park

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-12



Location

North Harbor Drive and Spanish Landing Way

Viewer Group

Users of North Harbor Drive and Spanish Landing Park

Existing View Description

This view is looking northeast towards the Airport. There are no existing scenic resources included in this view. The main feature within view from this location is the newly-constructed 4-story hotel along the frontage of North Harbor Drive.

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-13

Before



After

New Administration
Building



Location

Liberty Station NTC Park – South

Viewer Group

Park users

Existing View Description

This view is looking east/southeast across the Navy Boat Channel towards the Airport. The scenic resource in view is the Navy Boat Channel. Features within view from this location are buildings within the City of San Diego Police and Fire-Rescue Training Facility (left side of photo), the City of San Diego Public Services Department laboratory facilities and the San Diego State University Coastal and Marine Institute Laboratory (center of photo), and two newly-constructed multi-story hotels (center-right and right side of photo).

Source: CDM Smith and AECOM, 2019

Figure 3.1-14

South/Southwest of SDIA

Immediately south of SDIA runs North Harbor Drive. Along the south side of North Harbor Drive are the U.S. Coast Guard Station, Harbor Police Station, and Spanish Landing Park. Spanish Landing Park extends along the north bank of the Harbor Island West Basin, and includes picnic tables, restrooms, parking, extensive landscaping, and a bicycle and pedestrian path along the shore of San Diego Bay. Cancer Survivors Park is also located south of SDIA adjacent to Spanish Landing Park and includes a bronze sculpture and walkway. Farther to the south is Harbor Island, a man-made peninsula south of North Harbor Drive that includes multi-story hotels, restaurants, marinas, and Harbor Island Park. All of these uses south of North Harbor Drive have relatively uninterrupted views of San Diego Bay, downtown San Diego, and the Pacific Ocean. Views of these visual resources from Spanish Landing Park and Harbor Island are to the south, in the opposite direction of the Airport.

Uses south/southwest of the Airport property and north of North Harbor Drive include the City of San Diego Sewer Pump Station No. 2 (discussed further in Section 3.15, Utilities), the Naval Information Warfare Training Command San Diego facility, and two newly constructed hotels (one 4-story and one 5-story).

A number of key views from the south/southwest towards the proposed facilities were identified (Key Views 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, and 12). Views of existing facilities at SDIA from these public key views are shown and described on Figures 3.1-2, 3.1-3, 3.1-4, 3.1-11, 3.1-12, and 3.1-13, respectively. There are no existing scenic resources included in these views.

East/Northeast of SDIA

Immediately east of the SDIA project area, between Pacific Highway and I-5, is a panhandle shaped area within the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan Area. This area consists primarily of light industrial and airport-related commercial uses, such as long- and short-term parking and car rentals, the Port of San Diego District offices, and the Washington Street and Middletown Trolley Stations. East of the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan area is I-5, a major transportation corridor that leads south to the border of Mexico and north to Los Angeles. Currently, motorists have views from the southbound lanes of I-5, which are elevated above the SDIA project area, and include San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, the Point Loma peninsula, and the downtown skyline (see Figure 3.1-5 - Key View 4). The views of scenic resources from I-5 are partially obstructed by freeway railings, utility lines, and by buildings and private fences near the freeway.

East of I-5 are the Middletown and Mission Hills neighborhoods within the City of San Diego's Uptown Planning area. Middletown, located adjacent to I-5, includes single- and multi-family residences, commercial uses, as well as large-scale light industrial buildings. East of Middletown is Mission Hills, a residentially-focused neighborhood consisting of predominantly single-family homes. Middletown and Missions Hills are some of the oldest and most distinct neighborhoods in San Diego, exhibiting a variety of historic architectural types, established landscaping, and active neighborhood and commercial districts.

Middletown and the western portion of Mission Hills are located on hillsides rising up from I-5 and have distant views of San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, SDIA, and the Point Loma peninsula. These neighborhoods also have nighttime views of the same area, including views of the lighting

associated with SDIA (i.e., runway lights, terminal/other Airport building lighting, and security/parking facility lighting). A number of key views to the east/northeast of SDIA from public streets within Middletown (Key View 5) and Mission Hills (Key Views 6, 7, and 8) towards the proposed facilities were identified. Views of existing facilities at SDIA from these public key views are shown and described on Figures 3.1-6, 3.1-7, 3.1-8, and 3.1-9, respectively.

North of SDIA

The U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) San Diego comprises 388 acres of land immediately north of and adjacent to the project site. MCRD San Diego includes numerous historic buildings built in the Spanish Colonial Revival-style that are used to house and train Marine recruits. Outdoor-use areas on MCRD San Diego adjacent to SDIA include the outdoor combat skills training areas. Although there are views to the downtown skyline from portions of MCRD San Diego, as these views are not public, key views were not identified at locations within MCRD San Diego.

West of SDIA

Liberty Station is a mixed-use development comprising approximately 360 acres, located adjacent to SDIA on its west side along and across from the Navy Boat Channel. Liberty Station is at the site of the former NTC, which was redeveloped in the late 2000s. Uses on the east side of Liberty Station, east of the Navy Boat Channel and adjacent to SDIA, include former military housing, the City of San Diego Police and Fire-Rescue Training Facility, City of San Diego Public Services Department laboratory facilities, and the San Diego State University Coastal and Marine Institute Laboratory. Uses in Liberty Station west of the Navy Boat Channel include residential, commercial, office, recreational, educational, and civic uses. As part of the redevelopment, many of the historic NTC buildings west of the Navy Boat Channel were renovated, but still maintain their original Spanish Colonial Revival-style architecture. Farther west of Liberty Station are east-facing residences within Point Loma/Loma Portal (Peninsula Community Planning Area) that have distant views to San Diego Bay, the downtown skyline, and the Pacific Ocean.

Views of the proposed facilities locations at SDIA from the west are most visible within NTC Park on the east side of Liberty Station, along the Navy Boat Channel (a scenic resource). The 46-acre NTC Park includes pedestrian walkways, the 52 Boats Memorial (black granite markers along a promenade memorializing the names of the 52 submarines and over 3,000 crew members lost at sea in World War II), children's playground areas, multi-purpose fields, and passive picnic and special event fields. As shown in Figure 3.1-10, scenic resources in view from Key View 9 from NTC Park towards SDIA include partially obstructed distant views of the downtown skyline.

3.1.4.1.2 Light and Glare

As discussed in Section 3.11, Land Use and Planning, SDIA is located in a dense urbanized area that supports a diverse array of land uses, including military training and headquarters areas, mixed-use residential, civic developments, port operations, parks, recreation and boating, single-family residential, commercial, and industrial areas. These uses have numerous light sources that generate varying degrees of light emissions.

Primary sources of light at SDIA include light emanating from buildings (i.e., terminals, cargo and maintenance facilities, administrative buildings, the Rental Car Center, and other airport facilities), light from exterior sources (i.e., airfield lighting, parking, security lighting, street lighting,

wayfinding, and landscaping lighting), and from private vehicles, buses, and shuttles. Existing SDIA facilities produce light common in highly urbanized areas, and specifically provides for the safety and security of people, property, and the air transportation network located at SDIA. Certain airport facilities are visible from the airport periphery and emit light intensities that are noticeably above average ambient light conditions; however existing lighting does not interfere with the nighttime visibility of control tower operators or incoming pilots. Existing daytime sources of glare on the project site are associated with the reflective glass or mirror-like materials comprising the façades of facilities and structures within the Airport. Existing nighttime sources of glare are primarily associated with vehicle headlights traveling throughout the project site.

3.1.5 Thresholds of Significance

The following significance criteria for aesthetics and visual resources impacts are derived from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. Under these criteria, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to aesthetics and visual resources if it would:

Impact 3.1-1 Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

Impact 3.1-2 Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

Impact 3.1-3 Conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Impact 3.1-4 Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

The City of San Diego Development Services Department has prepared a set of Significance Determination Thresholds for CEQA environmental evaluations.¹³ Although SDCRAA is not subject to the City's significance thresholds, as part of the analysis under the Impact 3.1-1 and Impact 3.1-3 criteria, this Recirculated Draft EIR considers the following City thresholds related to views and neighborhood character, because the project site is adjacent to communities within the City of San Diego.

Views

- Projects that would block public views from designated open space areas, roads, or parks or to significant visual landmarks or scenic vistas (Pacific Ocean, downtown skyline, mountains, canyons, waterways) may result in a significant impact.
 - The project would substantially block a view through a designated public view corridor as shown in an adopted community plan, the General Plan, or the Local Coastal Program. Minor view blockages would not be considered to meet this condition.

¹³ City of San Diego. California Environmental Quality Act Significance Determination Thresholds, July 2016. Available: https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/july_2016_ceqa_thresholds_final_0.pdf.

- The project would cause substantial view blockage from a public viewing area of a public resource (such as the ocean) that is considered significant by the applicable community plan.

Neighborhood Character/Architecture

- Projects that severely contrast with the surrounding neighborhood character.
 - The project exceeds the allowable height or bulk regulations and the height and bulk of the existing patterns of development in the vicinity of the project by a substantial margin.
 - The project would have an architectural style or use building materials in stark contrast to adjacent development where the adjacent development follows a single or common architectural theme (e.g., Gaslamp Quarter, Old Town).

The project is located in a highly visible area (e.g., on a canyon edge, hilltop, or adjacent to an interstate highway) and would strongly contrast with the surrounding development or natural topography through excessive height, bulk, signage, or architectural projections.

3.1.6 Project Impacts

As described in more detail in Chapter 2, Project Description, the proposed project would implement new facilities and replacement of outdated facilities within the south side of the Airport, including:

- A new three-level/up to 90-foot-high T1,¹⁴ consisting of approximately 810,000 square feet.
- A new five-level/60-foot-high T1 parking structure,¹⁵ with 7,500 spaces.
- Addition of a new three-story/65-foot-high concourse, northward from the western terminus of T2-West (T2-West Stinger), consisting of approximately 450,000 square feet.
- A new three-story/65-foot-high T2-East concourse between the new T1 and modified T2, consisting of approximately 250,000 square feet.
- A new 95-foot-high, 150,000 square-foot airport administration building near the intersection of McCain Road and Airport Terminal Road (western end of the Airport).
- A new 90-foot-high, 400,000 square-foot commercial development opportunity building directly south of the proposed new T1.

¹⁴ Only the T1 main roof/façade would be 90 feet; the top of the concessions roof would be 75 feet and the top of the concourse would be 61 feet.

¹⁵ The main deck of the T1 Parking Structure would be 60 feet, while the height of the elevator penthouses and light poles may extend up to 84 feet.

- Circulation and roadway improvements to enhance vehicle circulation to the existing and proposed terminals from North Harbor Drive. The circulation and roadway improvements include:
 - Inbound on-airport road.
 - On-airport circulation roadways and curbsfronts connecting vehicle users and emergency responders to the terminals, parking, and transit stops.
 - Outbound airport circulation.

The following provides an analysis of the impacts of the proposed facilities on aesthetics and visual resources.

3.1.6.1 Impact 3.1-1

3.1.6.1.1 Summary Conclusion for Impact 3.1-1: The proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. As such, and as further described below, implementation of the proposed project would result in a *less than significant impact* relative to construction and operations.

3.1.6.1.2 Construction

As discussed in Section 3.1.3 above, the CCA and local planning documents include policies, goals, objectives, and/or guidelines to preserve public views of scenic resources in the area, including San Diego Bay, the Navy Boat Channel, the Pacific Ocean, the Point Loma peninsula, and the downtown skyline. As described in Section 3.1.3, and in more detail below in Section 3.1.6.1.3 for operations, designated public views of coastal/scenic resources that overlook SDIA are located from the west of the Airport within NTC Park (see Figures 3.1-10 and 3.1-14) and from the east/northeast of the Airport in the elevated areas within the Middletown and Mission Hills neighborhoods (see Figures 3.1-6, 3.1-7, 3.1-8, and 3.1-9). Public views of scenic resources are also available from the east along the I-5 southbound lanes (see Figure 3.1-5). There are no designated public views towards SDIA from areas to the north or south of the Airport.

The typical work week schedule for construction of the proposed project would be Monday through Friday from approximately 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with occasional nighttime work and weekend work. Typical construction equipment from the proposed facilities would include tractors, backhoes, scrapers, pavers, cranes, and pile drivers. All construction activities would be located on-Airport and would incorporate temporary construction fencing/barriers to screen construction activities and equipment. Even with screening, construction activities would be distantly visible from viewpoints within elevated public streets/I-5 east of the Airport. However, impacts to designated public views from the east/northeast would be temporary¹⁶ and existing views of San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, the Point Loma peninsula, and the downtown skyline would not be blocked and would be preserved. As with views from the east, even with screening, construction

¹⁶ Although the overall construction period for the proposed project would be approximately 15 years, construction activities/equipment would not be in the same locations during the entire construction period, but would vary depending on the facility undergoing demolition/construction. As an example, construction of the recently completed T2 Parking Plaza was completed in just 20 months; it is anticipated that construction of the proposed T1 Parking Structure (the proposed facility that would be closest to, and most visible from, North Harbor Drive), would similarly be constructed in less than 2 years.

activities, particularly related to the T2-West Stinger, would be visible from NTC Park. Impacts would be temporary (limited to those associated with construction of the T2-West Stinger) and existing views of the Navy Boat Channel and the downtown skyline from NTC Park would not be blocked and would be preserved. As such, construction of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista and the impact would be ***less than significant***.

3.1.6.1.3 Operations

As discussed in Section 3.1.3, the CCA and local planning documents include policies, goals, objectives, and/or guidelines to preserve public views of scenic resources in the area, including San Diego Bay, the Navy Boat Channel, the Pacific Ocean, the Point Loma peninsula, and the downtown skyline. As described in Sections 3.1.2 and 3.1.4, in order to determine impacts of the proposed project related to view preservation of scenic vistas, several long- and short-range views were selected based on representative viewer groups, public viewing locations, and public policies, such as policies related to view corridors identified in regulatory/planning documents. In addition, since the proposed facilities would be located on the south side of the Airport and, therefore, most visible from North Harbor Drive, a number of key views were taken north/northeast towards SDIA to illustrate the proposed facilities in relation to existing Airport and other facilities (further discussed in Section 3.1.6.3 below). The 13 key public view locations represent typical viewpoints of the proposed facilities locations. These viewpoints are located at recreational facilities and public roadways, including I-5. Figure 3.1-1 identifies the location of these key views. Each of these key views is depicted, along with a brief description, in Figures 3.1-2 through 3.1-14. To determine the potential impacts of the proposed project related to view preservation of scenic vistas, conceptual visual simulations of the proposed facilities (new T1, new T1 Parking Structure, T2 “Stinger,” new airport administration building, new commercial development opportunity building, and roadway improvements) were developed, as shown on Figures 3.1-2 through 3.1-14 and discussed below.

South/Southwest of SDIA

A number of key views from the south towards the proposed facilities were identified (Key Views 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, and 12). Views of existing facilities at SDIA from these public key views are shown and described on Figures 3.1-2, 3.1-3, 3.1-4, 3.1-11, 3.1-12, and 3.1-13, respectively. There are no existing scenic resources/vistas included in these views and views to the north towards SDIA are not identified for preservation in the CCA or local planning documents. The proposed facilities would not affect designated scenic views from Spanish Landing Park and Harbor Island south towards San Diego Bay, downtown San Diego, and the Pacific Ocean and, thus, there would be ***no impact*** related to view preservation of scenic vistas.

East/Northeast of SDIA

Elevated areas east/northeast of the Airport have relatively unobstructed views of scenic resources (San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, the Point Loma peninsula, and the downtown skyline) beyond SDIA. Views from I-5 to the west/southwest are depicted on Figure 3.1-5. As illustrated in Figure 3.1-5, based on conceptual visual simulations of the proposed facilities, the new T1, commercial development opportunity building, T2-West Stinger, and new airport administration building, as well as the new T2-East concourse, would be visible from the southbound lanes of I-5; however, existing views of San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, the Point Loma peninsula, and the downtown skyline would not be blocked and would be preserved.

Based on public viewsheds identified in the Uptown Community Plan, four key views were identified from public streets within the elevated areas of the Middletown and Mission Hills neighborhoods east of I-5. As illustrated in Figures 3.1-6, 3.1-7, 3.1-8, and 3.1-9, based on conceptual visual simulations of the proposed facilities, although the proposed new facilities, most notably the new T1 and T2-West Stinger, would be visible from public streets in Middletown and Mission Hills, existing views of San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, and the Point Loma peninsula would not be blocked and would be preserved. As such, there would be a ***less than significant impact*** related to view preservation.

North of SDIA

As indicated in Section 3.1.4, although there are views to the downtown skyline from portions of MCRD San Diego, as these views are not public, key views were not identified at locations within MCRD San Diego. Views from areas north of the Airport to the south towards SDIA are not identified for preservation in the CCA or local planning documents. As such, there would be ***no impact*** related to view preservation of scenic vistas.

West of SDIA

Based on public viewsheds identified in the Peninsula Community Plan and NTC Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program, two key views (Key Views 9 and 13) were identified within NTC Park on the east side of Liberty Station, along the Navy Boat Channel. As shown in Figure 3.1-14, the only scenic resource in view from Key View 13 from the southern edge of NTC Park towards SDIA is the Navy Boat Channel. As illustrated in Figure 3.1-14, the new airport administration building would be visible in the distance, and would be on the opposite side of the Navy Boat Channel; thus, existing views of the Navy Boat Channel would not be affected. As shown in Figure 3.1-10, scenic resources in view from Key View 9 from the northern edge of NTC Park towards SDIA include the Navy Boat Channel and partially obstructed distant views of the downtown skyline. As illustrated in Figure 3.1-10, based on conceptual visual simulations of the proposed facilities, although the new T2-West Stinger would be visible from NTC Park, existing views of the Navy Boat Channel and the existing partially obstructed distant views of the downtown skyline would not be blocked and would be preserved. As such, there would be a ***less than significant impact*** related to view preservation of scenic vistas.

3.1.6.1.4 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required for construction or operations.

3.1.6.1.5 Significance of Impact After Mitigation

As indicated above, no mitigation is needed relative to this impact. The project would result in a ***less than significant impact*** for construction and operations.

3.1.6.2 Impact 3.1-2

Summary Conclusion for Impact 3.1-2: The proposed project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. As such, and as further described below, implementation of the proposed project would result in *no impact* relative to construction and operations.

3.1.6.2.1 Construction

The project site consists of highly-developed areas within and adjacent to a busy international airport. The project site is not located adjacent to or within the viewshed of a designated state scenic highway. The nearest designated state scenic highway is approximately 2 miles east of the project site (a one-mile segment of State Route 163 along the western portion of Balboa Park).¹⁷ The project site is not visible from the scenic highway-eligible portion of State Route 163. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not impact scenic resources within a state scenic highway and there would be ***no impact***.

3.1.6.2.2 Operations

As discussed above, the project site consists of highly-developed areas within and adjacent to a busy international airport. The project site is not located adjacent to or within the viewshed of a designated state scenic highway. The project site is not visible from the scenic highway-eligible portion of State Route 163. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would not impact scenic resources within a state scenic highway and there would be ***no impact***.

3.1.6.2.3 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required for construction or operations.

3.1.6.2.4 Significance of Impact After Mitigation

As indicated above, no mitigation is needed relative to this impact. The project would result in a ***no impact*** for construction and operations.

3.1.6.3 Impact 3.1-3

Summary Conclusion for Impact 3.1-3: The proposed project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. As such, and as further described below, implementation of the proposed project would result in a *less than significant impact* relative to construction and operations.

3.1.6.3.1 Construction

Plan Consistency

The following discussion focuses on consistency with the applicable aesthetics-related CCA and local plan policies, goals, objectives and/or guidelines discussed in Sections 3.1.3.1 and 3.1.3.2 that are relevant to construction activities.

The California Coastal Act

The CCA contains policies for the protection of views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas. Construction activities for the proposed facilities would be located on Airport property and would not impact views of coastal resources from along North Harbor Drive or tourist-recreational uses to the south (Spanish Landing Park and Harbor Island). As discussed for Impact 3.1-1 above, although construction activities would be distantly visible from elevated public streets and I-5 east/northeast of the Airport, such impacts would be temporary and existing views of San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, the Point Loma peninsula, and the downtown skyline would not be blocked

¹⁷ California Department of Transportation, California Scenic Highway Mapping System website, updated September 7, 2011. Available: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/index.htm.

and would be preserved. Therefore, construction activities associated with the proposed facilities would be consistent with the policies in the CCA regarding aesthetics and visual resources, and the impact would be ***less than significant***.

Port Master Plan (PMP)

The PMP contains goals for the protection of views of San Diego Bay. As discussed for Impact 3.1-1 above, construction activities for the proposed facilities would be located on Airport property and would not impact views of coastal resources from along North Harbor Drive or tourist-recreational uses to the south (Spanish Landing Park and Harbor Island).

The PMP also include a goal to “[e]stablish guidelines and standards facilitating the retention and development of an aesthetically pleasing tideland environment free of noxious odors, excessive noise, and hazards to the health and welfare of the people of California.” All construction activities would occur on Airport property, and as discussed in Section 3.2 - Air Quality, Section 3.4 - Human Health Risk, Section 3.9 - Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Section 3.12 - Noise, construction-related air quality/odor, noise, and health and safety impacts to users/workers/residents in off-Airport areas, including Port tidelands to the south, would be less than significant.¹⁸ Further, temporary construction fencing/barriers would be implemented to screen construction activities, to the extent possible, from off-site areas, including to the south. Construction activities would be further screened from off-site adjacent areas by existing Airport buildings, elevated roadways, and landscaping.

Therefore, construction activities associated with the proposed facilities would be consistent with the goals in the PMP regarding aesthetics and visual resources, and the impact would be ***less than significant***.

City of San Diego Community Plans

The San Diego Downtown Community Plan, Uptown Community Plan, Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan, Peninsula Community Plan, and NTC Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program all contain policies, goals, objectives, and/or guidelines related to the protection of public views of scenic/coastal resources. As discussed for Impact 3.1-1 above, although construction activities would be distantly visible from elevated public streets and I-5 east/northeast of the Airport and also visible from NTC Park west of the Airport, such impacts would be temporary and existing views of San Diego Bay, the Navy Boat Channel, the Pacific Ocean, the Point Loma peninsula, and the downtown skyline would not be blocked and would be preserved. Therefore, construction activities associated with the proposed facilities would be consistent with the policies, goals, objectives, and/or guidelines in the applicable City of San Diego community plans regarding aesthetics and visual resources, and the impact would be ***less than significant***.

¹⁸ As discussed in Section 3.4, Human Health Risk, all potentially significant impacts related to human health risk from construction and operation of the proposed project would be mitigated to a level less than significant with implementation of proposed Mitigation Measures MM-AQ/GHG-1 through MM-AQ/GHG-10. As discussed in Section 3.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, all potentially significant impacts related to exposure to hazardous materials during construction would be mitigated to a level less than significant with implementation of proposed Mitigation Measures MM-HW-1: Preparation of Hazardous Materials Management Plan (HMMP), MM-HW-2: Existing Groundwater Monitoring Wells, and MM-HW-3: Hazardous Building Materials Abatement.

Neighborhood Character

Construction of the proposed project would result in temporary changes to the visual character of the project area. Construction activities of the proposed facilities would occur entirely on SDIA property, on the south side of the Airport. Depending on the type of activity occurring at any given time during the four phases of development (i.e., Phases 1a, 1b, 2a, and 2b, as described in Section 2.6.8, Project Phasing, in Chapter 2, Project Description), construction activities would include demolition, site clearing, grading, and building construction of each of the proposed project components. Typical construction equipment would include tractors, backhoes, scrapers, pavers, cranes, and pile drivers, and other typical construction equipment. All construction activities would incorporate temporary construction fencing/barriers to screen construction activities and the previously identified equipment. Construction activities would be further screened from off-site adjacent areas by existing Airport buildings, elevated roadways, and landscaping. While construction of the proposed project would introduce new features, the existing proposed project area is highly urbanized with uses including military training and headquarters areas, mixed-use residential, civic developments, port operations, parks, recreation and boating, single-family residential, commercial, and industrial areas. More specifically, construction of the proposed project would occur on Airport property that contains existing Airport buildings, with multi-story hotels, surface parking lots/areas, and governmental offices to the south along North Harbor Drive. As such, while construction of the proposed project would result in temporary changes to the visual character of the project area, it would not severely contrast with the character of the surrounding neighborhood and the impact would be *less than significant*.

3.1.6.3.2 Operations

Plan Consistency

The California Coastal Act

The CCA contains policies for the protection of views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas. The proposed facilities would be located on Airport property and would not impact views of coastal resources from along North Harbor Drive or tourist-recreational uses to the south (Spanish Landing Park and Harbor Island). Moreover, as discussed for Impact 3.1-1 above, existing views of coastal resources from public areas/roadways (including Interstate 5 and surrounding public viewpoints) surrounding the Airport would be maintained during operation of the proposed facilities.

The CCA also contains a policy that development shall be designed and sited to minimize alteration of natural landforms. As indicated in Section 3.1.4, SDIA is relatively flat, with an average elevation between 10 to 15 feet msl. All of the proposed facilities would be located on Airport property; there would be no impact to the natural landforms of the Point Loma peninsula to the west of the Airport and the hillsides of Uptown (Middletown and Mission Hills) to the east of the Airport.

In addition, the CCA contains a policy that development shall be designed and sited to be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding area. The proposed facilities would occur entirely on SDIA property. The current character of the proposed project area is that of a major U.S. airport – consisting of an airfield, terminals, ground transportation, circulation, parking, transit plazas, and air cargo and general aviation facilities – within a highly urbanized area. As discussed below under the heading “Neighborhood Character,” the proposed facilities would be compatible

and consistent with the existing urban character of the proposed project area. The proposed facilities (with building heights ranging between 60 and 95 feet) would be compatible and consistent with existing on-Airport facilities (with buildings heights up to 90 feet¹⁹), and with the low- and medium-rise buildings surrounding the Airport, and would not be out of character for the area. Moreover, the new T1 would have a contemporary design that complements the existing T2-West (the Green Build) and would incorporate high-quality materials and public art.

In summary, operation of the proposed facilities would be consistent with the policies in the CCA regarding aesthetics and visual resources, and the impact would be *less than significant*.

Port Master Plan (PMP)

The PMP contains goals for the protection of views of San Diego Bay. As discussed for Impact 3.1-1 above, the proposed facilities would be located on Airport property and would not impact views of coastal resources from along North Harbor Drive or tourist-recreational uses to the south (Spanish Landing Park and Harbor Island).

The PMP also include a goal to “[e]stablish guidelines and standards facilitating the retention and development of an aesthetically pleasing tideland environment free of noxious odors, excessive noise, and hazards to the health and welfare of the people of California.” [PMP Section II Planning Goals, page 9]. It is SDCRAA’s understanding that the Port has not established guidelines and standards to meet this goal. As discussed in Section 3.2- Air Quality, Section 3.4 - Human Health Risk, and Section 3.9 - Hazards and Hazardous Materials, implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant odor impacts, significant human health risk impacts, or any significant impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials, including to users/workers/residents in off-Airport areas (including Port tidelands to the south).²⁰ As reflected in Section 3.12 – Noise, there would be significant increases in aircraft noise (i.e., increase of 1.5 dB or more CNEL or greater in areas already exposed to 65 or more CNEL) in 2035 and 2050 at areas close to SDIA, which would include areas within the tideland environment. Those significant noise impacts would occur with or without the proposed project due to future regional growth, as described in Section 3.12 and further discussed in Chapter 5 – Alternatives Analysis. Whether such noise would be deemed “excessive” under the PMP’s aesthetic goal cannot be determined at this stage, since the Port has not set the guidelines and standards necessary for such an assessment.

Therefore, operation of the proposed facilities would be consistent with the goals in the PMP regarding aesthetics and visual resources, and the impact would be would be *less than significant*.

San Diego Downtown Community Plan

The San Diego Downtown Community Plan contains policies related to ensuring a diversity of land uses along Harbor Drive and fostering physical and visual linkages between downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods. The proposed facilities would be located on Airport property and

¹⁹ The only exception is the existing Airport Traffic Control Tower (152 feet).

²⁰ As discussed in Section 3.4, Human Health Risk, all potentially significant impacts related to human health risk from construction and operation of the proposed project would be mitigated to a level less than significant with implementation of proposed Mitigation Measures MM-AQ/GHG-1 through MM-AQ/GHG-10. As discussed in Section 3.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, the potentially significant impact related to exposure to hazardous materials during operations would be mitigation to a level less than significant with implementation of proposed Mitigation Measures MM- HW-4: Vapor Intrusion Assessment.

would not conflict with, or inhibit implementation of, these policies. The San Diego Downtown Community Plan also contains policies related to protecting public views to the water/San Diego Bay. As discussed in Section 3.1.3.2, the view corridors identified in the San Diego Downtown Community Plan are along public streets on the west side of the Community Planning Area looking west and south towards San Diego Bay; SDIA is located north of, and not within, these designated view corridors towards San Diego Bay. The one exception is the view corridor along Laurel Street (west of Kettner Street) towards San Diego Bay. Views of SDIA from elevated portions of Laurel Street at Kettner Street are screened from view by existing development (elevated trolley tracks and commercial buildings). SDIA is visible from the unelevated portion of Laurel Street between Pacific Highway and North Harbor Drive; however, the Airport is not within, nor does it block/disrupt, the view west towards San Diego Bay to the south of North Harbor Drive. As such, the proposed facilities would not conflict with the view preservation policies in the San Diego Downtown Community Plan, and there would be ***no impact***.

Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan

The Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan contains policies related to improving the visual quality along Pacific Highway, and maintaining views of San Diego Bay from public right-of-way at Kettner Boulevard and Redwood, Palm, and Olive Streets as feasible. None of the proposed facilities are located along Pacific Highway, nor would the proposed facilities impact the existing views from along Kettner Boulevard towards San Diego Bay (see Figure 3.1-5 - Key View 4, which is at the I-5 Pedestrian Overpass at Palm Street, near/above the intersection of Kettner Boulevard and Palm Street). Operation of the proposed facilities would be consistent with the policies in the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan regarding aesthetics and visual resources, and there would be ***no impact***.

Uptown Community Plan

The Uptown Community Plan contains policies related to protecting public views of scenic resources. As discussed for Impact 3.1-1 above, based on review of the designated public viewsheds identified in the Uptown Community Plan, four key views were identified from public streets within the elevated areas of the Middletown and Mission Hills neighborhoods east of I-5. As illustrated in Figures 3.1-6, 3.1-7, 3.1-8, and 3.1-9, based on conceptual visual simulations of the proposed facilities, although the proposed new facilities, most notably the new T1 and T2-West Stinger, would be visible from public streets in Middletown and Mission Hills, existing views of San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, and the Point Loma peninsula would not be blocked and would be preserved. As such, operation of the proposed facilities would be consistent with the policies in the Uptown Community Plan regarding aesthetics and visual resources, and the impact would be ***less than significant***.

Peninsula Community Plan/NTC Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program

The Peninsula Community Plan and NTC Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program contain objectives related to protecting public views of San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, the Navy Boat Channel, and the downtown skyline. As discussed for Impact 3.1-1 above, based on public viewsheds identified in the Peninsula Community Plan and NTC Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program, two key views were identified within NTC Park on the east side of Liberty Station, along the Navy Boat Channel. As shown in Figure 3.1-14, the only scenic resource in view from Key View 13 from the southern edge of NTC Park towards SDIA is the Navy Boat Channel. As illustrated in Figure 3.1-14, the new

airport administration building would be visible in the distance, and would be on the opposite side of the Navy Boat Channel; thus, existing views of the Navy Boat Channel would not be affected. As shown in Figure 3.1-10, scenic resources in view from Key View 9 from the northern edge of NTC Park towards SDIA include the Navy Boat Channel and partially obstructed distant views of the downtown skyline. As illustrated in Figure 3.1-10, based on conceptual visual simulations of the proposed facilities, although the new T2-West Stinger would be visible from NTC Park, existing views of the Navy Boat Channel and the existing partially obstructed distant views of the downtown skyline would not be blocked and would be preserved. As such, operation of the proposed facilities would be consistent with the objectives in the Peninsula Community Plan/NTC Precise Plan and Local Coastal Program regarding aesthetics and visual resources, and the impact would be ***less than significant***.

Neighborhood Character

The current character of the proposed project area is that of a major U.S. airport – consisting of an airfield, terminals, ground transportation, circulation, parking, transit plazas, and air cargo and general aviation facilities – within a highly urbanized area.

As shown in Figures 3.1-2 through 3.1-14, the proposed facilities would be compatible and consistent with the existing urban character of the overall project area. Implementation of the proposed facilities would introduce new large-scale facilities on the south side of the Airport that would be notably visible from along North Harbor Drive and from within Liberty Station/NTC Park (see Figures 3.1-2, 3.1-3, 3.1-4, 3.1-11, 3.1-12, and 3.1-13). However, the proposed facilities (with building heights ranging between 60 and 95 feet) would be compatible and consistent with existing on-Airport facilities (with buildings heights up to 90 feet), and with the low- and medium-rise buildings surrounding the Airport, and would not be out of character for the area. Further, as shown in Figures 3.1-12, 3.1-13, and 3.1-14, the tallest proposed structure, the proposed new airport administration building (95 feet in height), would be set back from North Harbor Drive and partially screened from views along North Harbor Drive and from NTC Park by existing landscaping and structures within and adjacent to the airport property, and would be compatible with the multi-story new hotels constructed near the intersection of North Harbor Drive and McCain Road and the multi-story buildings on the east side of Liberty Station, east of the Navy Boat Channel and adjacent to SDIA (i.e., the City of San Diego Police and Fire-Rescue Training Facilities, City of San Diego Public Services Department laboratory facilities, and the San Diego State University Coastal and Marine Institute Laboratory). Moreover, the new T1 would have a contemporary design that complements the existing T2-West (the Green Build) and would incorporate high-quality materials and public art. Similarly, the proposed T1 Parking Structure would be designed to complement the existing T2 Parking Plaza, including incorporation of public art. As such, operation of the proposed project would not severely contrast with the character of the surrounding neighborhood and the impact would be ***less than significant***.

3.1.6.3.3 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required for construction or operations.

3.1.6.3.4 Significance of Impact After Mitigation

As indicated above, no mitigation is needed relative to this impact. The project would result in a ***less than significant impact*** for construction and operations.

3.1.6.4 Impact 3.1-4

Summary Conclusion for Impact 3.1-4: The proposed project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. As such, and as further described below, implementation of the proposed project would result in a *less than significant impact* relative to construction and operations.

3.1.6.4.1 Construction

Construction of the proposed facilities would involve various demolition, site clearing, grading, and building construction activities. Construction equipment would include, but not limited to, tractors, backhoes, scrapers, pavers, cranes, and pile drivers. Construction activities associated with the proposed project would occur primarily during the daytime (i.e., 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday); however, it is anticipated that construction activities at nighttime would be required from time to time. Such nighttime activities would require lighting of work areas at the construction sites. Construction-related nighttime lighting would include lights on vehicles, perimeter lighting, and safety lighting. Construction equipment would not include large expanses of mirrors or reflective surfaces that could cause daytime glare impacts that would affect daytime views in the area.

Construction activities would generate similar sources of light compared to existing conditions and would need to adhere to FAA guidance to avoid causing light impacts or glare to aircraft or air traffic controllers. Construction activities would be screened from off-site adjacent areas by fencing/barriers, as well as existing Airport buildings, elevated roadways, and landscaping. All construction activities would follow standard SDIA construction practices (i.e., ensure lighting is shielded and focused downward and establishing a schedule to use lighting only when required) to minimize the spillover of light off the project site.

Currently, areas to the east of the Airport in Middletown and Mission Hills that have nighttime views of San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, and the Point Loma peninsula are impacted by light and glare from the current uses at the SDIA and existing uses in the surrounding urbanized area, including vehicle lights associated with I-5. While construction of the proposed facilities would incrementally increase overall nighttime lighting, such lighting would be similar to existing light sources at the Airport.

Based on the above, construction of the proposed facilities would not alter lighting so as to create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area, and the impact would be *less than significant*.

3.1.6.4.2 Operations

The proposed project would result in the introduction of new and replacement structures to the project site, including a new T1, a new T1 parking structure, modifications to T2, a new airport administration building, and roadway improvements to enhance vehicle circulation to the existing and proposed terminals from North Harbor Drive. These new uses would contribute new sources of lighting typical of a modern airport transportation area, which currently contains moderate to high levels of ambient lighting.

The proposed project would incorporate adequate nighttime lighting throughout all of its components to ensure a safe and accessible environment for passengers. These sources of

nighttime lighting include, but are not limited to, poles and fixtures along the new roadway improvements, building entrance and walkway illumination, building mounted fixtures, roof perimeter lights, security lighting, landscape lighting features, and signage lighting. Various forms of wayfinding nighttime lighting would also be provided for safe pedestrian passage and property identification, as well as to direct ground transportation circulation. Other sources of lighting would be associated with ground transportation, such as private vehicles, buses, and shuttles.

Similar to existing development at SDIA, all lighting associated with the proposed facilities would be shielded and directed downward to minimize light spillover. The shielding and focusing of lighting sources would also minimize any adverse glare effects. The proposed facilities would also utilize low-reflective materials to minimize any introduced sources of daytime or nighttime glare within the area. Coordination with FAA would occur during project design to ensure that new facilities do not pose any hazard to aircraft or air traffic controllers.

While the proposed project would introduce new sources of lighting, these introduced sources of lighting would be typical of terminal, parking, and roadway facilities similar to the character of existing uses within the project area.

Currently, areas to the east of the Airport in Middletown and Mission Hills that have nighttime views of San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, and the Point Loma peninsula are impacted by light and glare from the current uses at the SDIA and existing uses in the surrounding urbanized area, including vehicle lights associated with I-5. While operation of the proposed facilities would incrementally increase overall nighttime lighting, such lighting would be similar to existing light sources at the Airport.

Based on the above, operation of the proposed facilities would not alter lighting so as to create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area, and the impact would be ***less than significant***.

3.1.6.4.3 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required for construction or operations.

3.1.6.4.4 Significance of Impact After Mitigation

As indicated above, no mitigation is needed relative to this impact. The project would result in a ***less than significant impact*** for construction and operations.

3.1.7 Summary of Impact Determinations

Table 3.1-1 summarizes the impact determinations of the proposed project related to aesthetics and visual resources, as described above in the detailed discussion in Section 3.1.6. Identified potential impacts are based on the significance criteria presented in Section 3.1.5, the information and data sources cited throughout Section 3.1, and the professional judgment of the report preparers, as applicable.

Table 3.1-1: Summary Matrix of Potential Impacts and Mitigation Measures Associated with the Proposed Project Related to Aesthetics and Visual Resources

Environmental Impacts	Impact Determination	Mitigation Measures	Impacts after Mitigation
Impact 3.1-1: The proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a <i>less than significant impact</i> relative to construction and operations.	Construction: Less than Significant Operation: Less than Significant	No mitigation is required	Construction: Less than Significant Operation: Less than Significant
Impact 3.1-2: The proposed project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in <i>no impact</i> relative to construction and operations.	Construction: No Impact Operation: No Impact	No mitigation is required	Construction: No Impact Operation: No Impact
Impact 3.1-3: The proposed project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a <i>less than significant impact</i> relative to construction and operations.	Construction: Less than Significant Operation: Less than Significant	No mitigation is required	Construction: Less than Significant Operation: Less than Significant
Impact 3.1-4: The proposed project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a <i>less than significant impact</i> relative to construction and operations.	Construction: Less than Significant Operation: Less than Significant	No mitigation is required	Construction: Less than Significant Operation: Less than Significant

3.1.7.1 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required for construction or operations.

3.1.8 Significant Unavoidable Impacts

There would be no significant and unavoidable impacts to aesthetics and visual resources associated with construction and operation of the proposed project.