

## 4.1 AESTHETICS

This section analyzes potential impacts of the proposed Parks Master Plan (Project) on aesthetics and visual resources. The section is based on a review of existing City plans and studies and site reconnaissance surveys in areas of scenic public views. This section also draws from the City of Santa Cruz General Plan 2030 EIR (SCH#2009032007), which was certified on June 26, 2012, regarding background information on scenic views and scenic resources within the City. The General Plan EIR is incorporated by reference in accordance with section 15150 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Relevant discussions are summarized in subsection 4.1.1. The General Plan EIR is available for review at the City of Santa Cruz Planning and Community Development Department (809 Center Street, Room 101, Santa Cruz, California) during business hours: Monday through Thursday, 7:30 AM to 12 PM and 1 PM to 3 PM. The General Plan EIR is also available online on the City's website at: <http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/Home/Components/BusinessDirectory/BusinessDirectory/102/1775>.

Public and agency comments were received during the public scoping period in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP). No comments were received regarding aesthetics. Public comments received during the public scoping period are included in Appendix A.

### 4.1.1 Environmental Setting

#### Regulatory Setting

##### *Federal and State*

There are no known federal or state regulations regarding aesthetics.

##### *Local*

Chapter 24.12 of the City of Santa Cruz Zoning Code provides community design standards related to site layout, parking, landscaping, fencing and other design features for new development.

**Design Permit Requirements.** The City's Zoning Code requires a "design permit" for most new construction in the City of Santa Cruz, including any project where the applicant is a public agency and public projects in the coastal zone. The purpose of the design permit is to promote the public health, safety and general welfare through the review of architectural and site development proposals and through application of recognized principles of design, planning and aesthetics and qualities typifying the Santa Cruz community. Pursuant to the Design Permit requirements (Zoning Code Section 24.08.430), findings must be made that address 17 specified criteria before the City issues a design permit. The criteria to be addressed in findings for a Design Permit include:

1. Consistency with physical development policies of the General Plan and Local Coastal Program (LCP), if located in the coastal zone.

2. Compatible exterior design and appearance with other existing buildings and structures in neighborhoods which have established architectural character worthy of preservation.
3. Respect design principles in terms of maintaining a balance of scale, form and proportion, using design components which are harmonious, and materials and colors which blend with elements of the site plan and surrounding areas.
4. Site planning that takes into account uses other than that of a proposed project.
5. Orientation and location of buildings, structures, open spaces and other features to maintain natural resources including significant trees, maintain a compatible relationship to and preserve solar access of adjacent properties, and minimize alteration of natural land forms.
6. Protection of views along the ocean and of scenic coastal areas, and where appropriate and feasible, restore and enhance visual quality of visually degraded areas.
7. Site layout to minimize the effect of traffic conditions on abutting streets.
8. Encourage alternatives to travel by automobile where appropriate, through the provision of facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit.
9. Provision of open space and landscaping which complement buildings and structures.
10. Reasonably protect against external and internal noise, vibration and other factors which may tend to make the environment less desirable and respect the need for privacy of adjacent residents.
11. Provision of complementary signs.
12. Structural designs to take advantage of natural elements such as solar radiation, wind, and landscaping for heating, cooling and ventilation.
13. Incorporation of water-conservation features and landscaping.
14. Reuse of heat generated by machinery in industrial zones.
15. Design of buildings in industrial zones to make use of natural lighting wherever possible.
16. Solar heating systems for hot tubs and swimming pools.
17. Compatible siting and design along West Cliff Drive streetscape.

**Heritage Trees.** Chapter 9.56 of the City Municipal Code defines heritage trees, establishes permit requirements for the removal of a heritage tree, and sets forth mitigation requirements as adopted by resolution by the City Council. Heritage trees are defined by size, historical significance, and/or horticultural significance, including but not limited to those which are:

- (1) unusually beautiful or distinctive;
- (2) old (determined by comparison with other trees or shrubs of its species within the City);
- (3) distinctive specimen in size or structure for its species;
- (4) a rare or unusual species for the Santa Cruz area (to be determined by the number of similar trees of the same species within the City); or
- (5) providing a valuable habitat.

Resolution NS-23,710 adopted by the City Council in April 1998 establishes the criteria for permitting removal of a heritage tree. City regulations require tree replacement for trees approved for removal. Heritage tree removal would be permitted if found to be in accordance with the criteria and requirements in the City’s regulations.

### **Visual Character of the City of Santa Cruz**

The visual character of the City of Santa Cruz is influenced by a blend of natural features, historic neighborhoods and a mix of development types. Santa Cruz is strongly characterized by its coastal location along Monterey Bay, which defines the City’s entire southern boundary. Open space areas, including those that make up the City’s greenbelt, also are significant contributors to Santa Cruz’s natural setting. The Santa Cruz Mountains and its foothills on the north provide a backdrop of open space views and offer panoramic views of the City and ocean (City of Santa Cruz, April 2012, DEIR volume). Key natural and open space features include:

- The coastline and beaches;
- The San Lorenzo River and other watercourses, parks and open space; and
- The background view of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

According to the City’s General Plan, varied topography shapes the city’s character and creates many public views throughout the community, including views of Monterey Bay and the City as a whole. Arroyos and steep coastal cliffs are identified as providing the greatest variation in the City’s topography. Other features include pronounced hills—most notably the coastal terraces of the UCSC campus, Pogonip, the Carbonera area, and DeLaveaga Park; smaller hills—such as Beach Hill and Mission Hill—act as community landmarks; and shallow slopes toward Monterey Bay (City of Santa Cruz, June 2012).

Open space areas, including those that make up the City’s greenbelt, are significant contributors to Santa Cruz’s natural setting and aesthetic quality. Arana Gulch Open Space, DeLaveaga Park, Moore Creek Preserve, Pogonip, Neary Lagoon, Younger Lagoon, Antonelli Pond, Arroyo Seco Canyon, and the Jessie Street Marsh are identified in the General Plan as important natural features that provide scenic amenities and contribute to the identity of surrounding residential neighborhoods (City of Santa Cruz, June 2012). The San Lorenzo River also is identified as an important defining feature through the City (Ibid.). It is noted, however, that neither Younger Lagoon nor Antonelli Pond are owned or managed by the City.

### **Scenic Views**

Prominent scenic views within the City of Santa Cruz are primarily those that are oriented toward Monterey Bay and the Pacific Ocean or toward the Santa Cruz Mountains, which frame the northern boundary of Santa Cruz (City of Santa Cruz, April 2012, DEIR volume). Open space areas, including

those that establish the greenbelt around the City, are significant contributors to Santa Cruz’s natural setting and aesthetic quality.

According to maps developed for the City’s *General Plan 2030* and included in the General Plan EIR, scenic views are available along West Cliff Drive and from some parks and open spaces areas, including DeLaveaga Park, Pogonip Open Space, and Arroyo Seco drainages (City of Santa Cruz, April 2012, DEIR volume-Figure 4.3-1). Limited portions of Arana Gulch Open Space, DeLaveaga Park, and Pogonip Open Space may be part of a distant mountain panoramic view from some locations in the City. Urban views are identified along San Lorenzo River and from Neary Lagoon.

There are no designated scenic highways or roads within the City. The *General Plan 2030* defines a scenic highway or scenic route as “a highway, road, drive, or street that, in addition to its transportation function, provides opportunities for the enjoyment of natural and man- made scenic resources and access or direct views to areas or scenes of exceptional beauty or historic or cultural interest.” However, West Cliff Drive and East Cliff Drive are identified as “scenic routes” in the City’s Local Coastal Program (LCP). West Cliff Drive is a popular scenic route along the coast and is a primary location that offers prominent and panoramic views of the Monterey Bay.

In addition to West Cliff Drive, other coastal viewpoints with prominent ocean views include: the Santa Cruz Wharf, East Cliff Drive and the Santa Cruz Harbor jetties. Prominent public ocean views from upper elevations are most predominant at locations on the UCSC campus, Moore Creek Preserve and segments of City roads, including the Arroyo Seco and Miramar/Alta Vista areas in the western portion of the City and limited areas along DeLaveaga Road (City of Santa Cruz, April 2012, DEIR volume).

### Scenic Resources

Scenic resources are generally distinctive natural or historical structures with unique aesthetic qualities, such as prominently visible scenic trees and historic or other visually distinguished buildings. Distinctive natural resources could include heritage trees, rock outcroppings or other physical features that possess exceptional aesthetic qualities.

Within the City of Santa Cruz, landmarks are distinctive built and natural features that are highly visible or that help to define the identity of a particular place. In addition, to historical landmarks, the City’s *General Plan 2030* defines “landmark” as a visually prominent or outstanding structure or natural feature that functions as a point of orientation or identification. The City has approximately 35 City-listed historic landmarks and approximately 600 listed historic structures, some of which may also be considered scenic resources depending on the visual prominence and the character of the building (City of Santa Cruz, April 2012, DEIR volume).

According to maps developed for the City’s *General Plan 2030* and included in the General Plan EIR (City of Santa Cruz, April 2012, DEIR volume- Figure 4.3-1), visual landmarks include: Lighthouse Point, Santa Cruz Wharf, Depot Park, the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Santa Cruz Harbor and the Walton

Lighthouse at the Harbor, the Civic Auditorium, the Clock Tower in downtown, and Holy Cross Church. Because of the City's varied topography, Santa Cruz has few built landmarks that are visible from many different parts of town. The Holy Cross Church on Mission Hill is a notable exception; its tall, white steeple can be seen from numerous vantage points in the City, even in low-lying areas such as the Harvey West District. The Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk's brightly painted roller coasters are even more distinctive, but since the Boardwalk is just a few feet above sea level, the roller coasters are not as widely visible (Ibid.).

### Light and Glare

The City of Santa Cruz is characterized by a combination of lighting associated with residential and urban development and relatively little lighting in open space areas at the edge of the City. Lighting is generally absent in open space properties, and where provided in other parks and facilities, lighting is generally limited to shielded lighting for security. Nighttime lighting to allow use of recreational facilities is generally not provided, except for the lighting of the parking lot and fields at Harvey West and DeLaveaga Parks. At DeLaveaga Park, lighting is provided for the existing softball field, parking lot at Lower George Washington, next to the group picnic areas, and at Forty Thieves picnic area.

Most existing parks are located next to street lights. Parks and facilities that have lights for safety and security include:

- Audrey Stanley Grove
- Beach Flats
- DeLaveaga Golf Course, Lower DeLaveaga Park and George Washington Grove
- Depot Park
- Frederick Street Park
- Garfield Park
- Grant Park
- Harvey West Park
- John D. Franks Park
- Laurel Park
- Mission Plaza Park
- Riverside Gardens Park
- San Lorenzo Park
- Santa Cruz Riverwalk
- Santa Cruz Wharf
- Town Clock
- Trescony Park
- Tyrell Park
- West Cliff Drive

## 4.1.2 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with CEQA; State CEQA Guidelines (including Appendix G); City of Santa Cruz plans, policies, and/or guidelines; and agency and professional standards; a project impact would be considered significant if the project would:

- AES-1 Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- AES-2 Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
- AES-3 In non-urbanized area, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, or, if the project is in an urbanized area, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; or
- AES-4 Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

### Impacts and Mitigation Measures

#### *Areas of No Project Impact*

- AES-1 *Scenic Vistas-Views.* The *Parks Master Plan 2030* includes recommendations for park and recreational facility improvements that are generally limited to amenities or small facilities, such as benches, play equipment, picnic tables, or signage located within an existing park unit. Such facilities would not be highly visible. Potential new uses, such as community gardens, off-leash dog parks, pickleball courts, and trails would not result in structural development. Thus, most future park improvements or development of new facilities would not result in construction of structures that would affect scenic views. New structural development is limited to potential restrooms at a few neighborhood parks within developed areas (Sgt. Derby Park, University Terrace Park, and Westlake Park) and permanent restroom and dressing room facilities<sup>1</sup> at the Audrey Stanley Grove amphitheater at DeLaveaga Park. None of these areas are within a mapped or known scenic or panoramic public views. Similarly, the Parks Master Plan recommends consideration of facility improvements, such as workshop and storage structure, at the Santa Cruz Wharf Yard.

Potential improvements at open space properties that have scenic views or may be part of a scenic view are limited to non-structural improvements, such as potential trails, although no specific trail alignments are proposed in the Parks Master Plan; future trail alignments

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<sup>1</sup>An application for a Design Permit to construct a 5,500 square foot multi-purpose building to replace existing trailer at the amphitheater has been submitted to the City's Planning and Community Development Department.

would be proposed and considered after completion of additional studies as recommended in the Parks Master Plan. None of the recommended improvements would result in development that would obstruct or have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic view, which are primarily views of the Monterey Bay and Santa Cruz Mountains, because none of the improvements would be highly visible or located within a scenic vista or view. Therefore, the project would have *no impact* on scenic vistas or scenic views. It is noted that the Parks Master Plan does support access to areas with scenic views (Goal III-Policy F, Action 1f).

### ***Project Impacts***

**Impact AES-2: Scenic Resources.** The proposed Project would not result in substantial damage to scenic resources along a state scenic highway or elsewhere in the City with implementation Parks Master Plan and General Plan policies. Therefore, the Project would result in *no impact* to scenic resources.

Implementation of recommendations in the Parks Master Plan would not result in removal of or substantial damage to scenic resources within a state scenic highway. None of the state highways in the City (1, 9, 17) are designated state scenic highways.

Most City parks and recreational facilities are located within developed neighborhood areas and would not affect scenic resources. Five parks or recreational facilities have been identified as visual landmarks: Depot Park, Lighthouse Point, the Civic Auditorium, the Town Clock, and the Santa Cruz Wharf. There are no structural or other improvements recommended at Depot Park, Lighthouse Point, or the Town Clock that would affect the visual character of these parks as a visual landmark. While renovation to the Civic Auditorium is recommended in the Parks Master Plan, the recommendation relates to interior space renovations to improve the venue for arts, culture, entertainment, and programming, and would not affect the building's exterior appearance. Furthermore, future projects would need to be consistent with the City's General Plan, and the General Plan requires superior quality design for existing or proposed landmark buildings (CD3.5.1). Therefore, the project would not result in impacts to visual landmarks, which may be considered scenic resources.

The Parks Master Plan recommends that the Parks and Recreation Department work with other City departments to implement the Wharf Master Plan. The Wharf Master Plan, prepared in October 2014, has not been adopted by the City; preparation of an EIR is currently underway. The Wharf Master Plan is considered as part of the cumulative impacts evaluation included in this EIR.

Existing open space lands, the San Lorenzo River and other watercourses may provide or contain scenic resources, such as prominently visible and distinctive trees. There are no recommendations in the proposed Parks Master Plan that would result in removal of trees or significant vegetation. Removal of heritage trees would be subject to provisions of the City's heritage tree regulations. Furthermore, General Plan policies and actions call for protection and management of tree resources

with an emphasis on significant and heritage trees (NRC5.1), preservation of natural features that visually define areas within the City (CD1.1), and protecting existing significant vegetation and landscaping that provides scenic value (CD4.3.3).

Additionally, Parks Master Plan goals and policies call for increasing the number of trees and tree canopy at City parks and facilities. Specific policies and actions include:

- Goal I-Policy A, Action 1f*: Increase the number of trees and tree canopy.
- Goal I-Policy A, Action 1g*: Expand the dedication planting program to plant more trees.
- Goal IV-Policy A, Action 4d*: Inventory trees and increase the tree canopy.
- Goal IV-Policy A, Action 6*: Maintain and expand tree canopy coverage. This Action calls for completions of a tree inventory on public lands and increasing the City’s urban tree canopy by 10% between 2008 and 2020.

Therefore, the Project would result in increased tree canopy throughout the City and would not result in impacts to significant trees that might be considered scenic resources. The proposed project would have no direct impacts on scenic resources and potential indirect impacts would be avoided or minimized with implementation of the proposed *Parks Master Plan 2030* and *General Plan 2030* policies and actions that call for protection of significant and heritage trees. Therefore, the Project would result in *no impacts* to scenic resources.

### Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required as a significant impact has not been identified.

**Impact AES-3: Visual Character.** The proposed Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, this is a *less-than-significant* impact.

The proposed Parks Master Plan would not result in direct impacts on visual quality as no development is proposed. Potential indirect impacts related to future implementation of recommendations in the Plan would be less than significant due to the low-profile nature of proposed improvements and implementation of Parks Master Plan policies and actions that call for appropriate scale and design of new facilities. The proposed Parks Master Plan identifies a range of improvements, most of which would be considered enhancements with the addition of amenities or minor improvements, such as benches, picnic and play areas, improved signage, and facility renovations. Expanded or upgraded playgrounds are recommended for consideration at Central, Harvey West, Frederick Street, Garfield, Lighthouse Avenue, and Sgt. Derby Parks. Most of the recommendations in the Parks Master Plan would not result in new structural development, and additions and improvements would be consistent with the aesthetics and visual character of existing



parks and recreational facilities. Parks and recreational facilities are generally perceived as aesthetic amenities in a neighborhood or community.

New structural development recommendations include:

- Potential restrooms at a few neighborhood parks within developed areas (Sgt. Derby Park, University Terrace Park, and Westlake Park) and restroom renovation at DeLaveaga Park;
- Permanent restroom and dressing room facilities at the Audrey Stanley Grove amphitheater<sup>2</sup> at DeLaveaga Park;
- Potential addition of a caretaker residence at Pogonip;
- Potential workshop and storage structure at the Wharf Yard (at Depot Park); and
- Structural renovations at the Civic Auditorium, Loudon Nelson Community Center, and Pogonip clubhouse, as well as construction of a new DeLaveaga Golf Course clubhouse. However, the DeLaveaga Golf Course clubhouse is currently being remodeled, and according to City staff, a new structure would not be pursued during the 2030 timeframe of the Parks Master Plan.

All of the new facilities are small structures. Although not anticipated during the timeframe of the Master Plan, a potential future new golf course clubhouse would be reconstructed on its existing site.<sup>3</sup> None of the recommended structures would be out of scale with buildings on or adjacent to the site and they would not substantially degrade the visual character of the surrounding area. The Parks Master Plan recommendations are conceptual and additional study, planning, environmental analysis, and funding would need to occur prior to implementation.

The Parks Master Plan also calls for consideration of artificial turf for playing fields in some locations: DeLaveaga and Harvey West Parks, and potential development of an artificial turf playing field near Sgt. Derby Park and mini-soccer field at University Terrace Park. The use of artificial turf may look different than natural turf in some instances. However, the use of artificial turf has become widely used in many areas for playing fields, and designs have evolved that have established more a natural-looking appearance. The Parks Master Plan also calls for careful consideration of impacts of use of artificial turf when considering whether or not to convert grass to synthetic turf fields (Goal III-Policy D, Action 3). Therefore, the use of artificial turf in the locations identified in the Master Plan, which are in existing developed areas, would not be expected to result in significant aesthetic impacts.

Other potential improvements include small parking lots at three locations (Lower DeLaveaga Park, Moore Creek Preserve, and Pogonip Open Space) and potential new trails at DeLaveaga Park, Arroyo

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<sup>2</sup>An application for a Design Permit to construct a 5,500 square foot multi-purpose building to replace existing trailer at the amphitheater has been submitted to the City's Planning and Community Development Department.

<sup>3</sup> A new clubhouse is recommended in the DeLaveaga Golf Course Master Plan. However, the existing facility is currently being remodeled, and according to City staff, a new structure would not be pursued during the 2030 timeframe of the Parks Master Plan.

Seco, Moore Creek Preserve, and Pogonip. Improved parking at Sgt. Derby Park also is recommended. The potential locations for new parking areas are identified adjacent to existing roadways – Branciforte Drive for Lower DeLaveaga Park, Highway 1 for Moore Creek Preserve, and Clubhouse Drive for Pogonip. Although specific sites, design, or number of spaces have not been identified, the areas envisioned are small and likely would accommodate a limited number of parking spaces. The recommendations are conceptual and additional study, planning, environmental analysis, and funding would need to occur prior to implementation. The sites are generally ringed with trees or in the case of Moore Creek not highly visible from public roads or viewpoints due to intervening topography and vegetation. Therefore, development of new parking areas would not substantially degrade the visual character of the areas in which these new facilities would be located.

New trails would be on the ground surface without resulting structural development, and generally would have no aesthetic impacts. Additionally, the areas considered for potential new trails have existing trails that generally are not visible from major public viewpoints.

Policies and Actions included in the proposed Parks Master Plan provide guidance on design of future improvements and facilities to avoid aesthetic impacts. These includes policies and actions that support sustainable and artistic designs (Goal I-Policy B and supporting actions) and continuity in overall park style and design (Goal I-Policy B-Action 11). The Parks Master Plan’s policies and actions would guide future facility designs so that no substantial degradation to the existing visual character of public views of park sites would result. Specific policies and actions include:

- ❑ *Goal I-Policy B, Action 1:* Enhance existing settings when renovating parks through the use of complementary materials, colors, and features and the compatible placement, size, and layout for site furnishings, landscaping, pathways, plazas, artwork, and architectural features, while highlighting key natural features in the design.
- ❑ *Goal I-Policy B, Action 11:* Develop and update site materials, colors and site furnishings list to ensure continuity in overall park style and design.
- ❑ *Goal III-Policy B:* Requires that the scale of recreational facilities be compatible with the character of the neighborhood in which they are located.
- ❑ *Goal III-Policy B, Action 2:* Provide appropriate tree screening in design considerations

Additionally, the General Plan calls for ensuring that development is designed to be in harmony with natural topography and vegetation (CD1.3) and that the scale, bulk, and setbacks of new development preserve public views of city landmarks where possible (CD3.2).

Implementation of the proposed Parks Master Plan’s policies and actions would ensure that the visual character of parks, open spaces, and other facilities is preserved and enhanced if recommended new and improved park and recreational facilities are proposed and constructed in the future. In some cases, new development would also be subject to approval of a Design Permit pursuant to the City’s Municipal Code requirements. Implementation of recommended improvements at parks, community

facilities, and open space areas would not adversely or substantially degrade the visual character of surrounding areas.

The City of Santa Cruz is an “urbanized area” under the definition of the term in CEQA Guidelines section 15387. The State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G was amended at the end of the 2018 and under the revised aesthetics question, the City, as an urban area, need not specifically consider existing visual character or the quality of the existing views and the project’s potential effect on them, but rather would need to consider whether the Project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Nonetheless, this analysis has considered these issues and concludes that the Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character existing park sites, their surroundings, or the quality of the views to or from the site. There are no specific City zoning regulations that govern scenic quality, although some future improvements may be subject to Design Permit requirement. Thus, the Project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Therefore, implementation of the *Parks Master Plan 2030* would result in a *less-than-significant impact* on the visual character of the areas in which parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities are located.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

No mitigation measures are required as a significant impact has not been identified.

**Impact AES-4: Light and Glare.** The proposed Project would not result in new sources of substantial light or glare. Therefore, this is a *less-than-significant impact*.

Implementation of the proposed Parks Master Plan could result in the addition of facility lighting and some additional parking areas, but would none of the improvements recommended in the Parks Master Plan are of a magnitude or scale that would result in creation of a substantial new source of light or glare. Potential new parking areas are identified for consideration at DeLaveaga Park, Moore Creek Preserve, and Pogonip Open Space, as well as parking improvements at Sgt. Derby Park. The potential locations are identified adjacent to existing roadways, although specific sites, designs, or number of spaces have not been identified. However, the areas envisioned are small and likely would accommodate a limited number of parking spaces. The sites are generally ringed with trees or in the case of Moore Creek not highly visible from public roads or viewpoints due to intervening topography and vegetation. Therefore, the addition of parking contemplated in the Parks Master Plan would not result in large expanses of parking areas that could result in substantial glare from parked cars. Furthermore, the Parks Master Plan *Goal III-Policy B, Action 2* indicates that considerations in design should include providing appropriate tree screening.

Furthermore, the *City’s General Plan 2030* calls for maintaining high-quality landscaping on City-owned lands, parking lots, and parks. With sensitive siting, design, and installation of landscaping as set forth in the Parks Master Plan and General Plan, future parking improvements, if implemented,

would not result in introduction of a substantial source of glare, and the project would result in a *less-than-significant impact*.

Parks Master Plan Goal III-Policy D, Action 3, calls for adequate lighting of sports fields. Additionally, Goal V-Policy A, Action 1a calls for increased lighting and visibility in parks and on trails to deter illegal behaviors, but no specific locations are identified in this action. Site-specific recommendations are included in the Parks Master Plan for new or improved lighting at several existing facilities:

- DeLaveaga Park: Install energy-efficient lighting at ball fields;
- Harvey West Park: Continued renovation of the field lighting at Harvey West ball fields;
- Potential new lighting at Ken Wormhoudt Skate Park at Mike Fox Park, the tennis courts at Neary Lagoon Park, and volleyball courts at the Main Beach (seasonal lighting); and
- Depot Park: explore field lighting.

All of the facilities where new lighting is recommended are in areas where street, path, and exterior building lighting already exists. Future lighting would be required to comply with the City of Santa Cruz Municipal Code Section 24.14.266, which prohibits direct or sky-reflected glare from floodlights. Additionally, given the location near natural areas or residences, any future discussions regarding lighting at Ken Wormhoudt Skate Park, Depot Park or Main Beach would involve public review processes, light analyses, and other environmental considerations.

According to the International Dark-Sky Association,<sup>4</sup> light fixtures that are fully shielded minimize sky glow, glare, and light trespass. All project lighting would consist of LED fixtures and would be fully shielded and directed downward and away from neighboring structures or habitat areas. This would prevent light spillage both upward and onto adjacent properties. The policies and actions included in the proposed Parks Master Plan provide guidance on design of future lighting to avoid adverse impacts. These include:

- ❑ *Goal III-Policy B, Action 2:* Future designs should minimize impacts of light onto other properties.
- ❑ *Goal 1-Policy A, Action 2a:* Calls for installation of computer-controlled, energy-efficient lighting in parks and facilities and minimizing light spillover and wildlife impacts.
- ❑ *Goal III-Policy B, Action 2:* Indicates that considerations in design should include providing appropriate tree screening.

Furthermore, the General Plan includes policies and actions to reduce light pollution (HZ5.1) and to consider appropriate lighting when reviewing proposed development or renovation of parks and recreation facilities (HZ5.1.3).

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<sup>4</sup>International Dark-Sky Association. "Outdoor Lighting Basics." Accessed September 19, 2019 at <http://darksky.org/lighting/lighting-basics/>.

With implementation of the Parks Master Plan and General Plan policies and actions to prevent facility lighting from creating offsite impacts, the limited facility lighting recommended in the Parks Master Plan would not result in creation of a substantial new source of light or glare, and the project would result in a *less-than-significant impact*.

**Mitigation Measures**

No mitigation measures are required as a significant impact has not been identified.

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