
IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

B. VISUAL RESOURCES

1. INTRODUCTION

The analysis of visual resources addresses the issues of aesthetics, views, day-time shading and nighttime lighting. The aesthetics analysis addresses the character of the Project and its general appearance in relationship to development in the surrounding areas, as well as the potential affect on the aesthetic character at off-site areas subject to increased vacancy rates with Project implementation. The view analysis addresses potential alterations in views that would occur as a result of Project implementation. The views analysis considers the locations from which the population has views of the surroundings, the nature of the existing views from those locations (i.e., what do people see), and whether the Project would substantially alter views of any valued scenic resources. The shading analysis addresses the potential of the Project to cast shadows on off-site sensitive uses, and therefore interfere with activities that require sunlight for their performance. The lighting analysis addresses the affects of artificial lighting on the nighttime appearance of the Project, and whether Project lighting would interfere with the performance of off-site activities.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

a. Existing Visual Environment

The Project site is an undeveloped parcel, pocketed within an urbanized area. The existing visual characteristics of the site and its surrounding areas are shown in photographs presented in Figure 12 through Figure 16 on pages 170 through 174. Figure 12 illustrates the existing visual characteristics of the Project site, itself. Figure 13 illustrates the aesthetic and view conditions along Del Amo Boulevard as it passes through the Project site. Figures 14 through 16 illustrate aesthetic and view conditions in areas surrounding the Project site from the south, east, north, and west, respectively. The following discussion of aesthetic character addresses the appearance of existing sites and developments in the area. The subsequent discussion of views addresses view conditions (i.e. what people actually see) from prominent view locations (i.e. where they see it from) in the Project area.



Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photo Location Map



Photograph 3



Figure 12
Photographs of the Project Site

Source: PCR Services Corporation, 2005



Photograph 4



Photograph 5

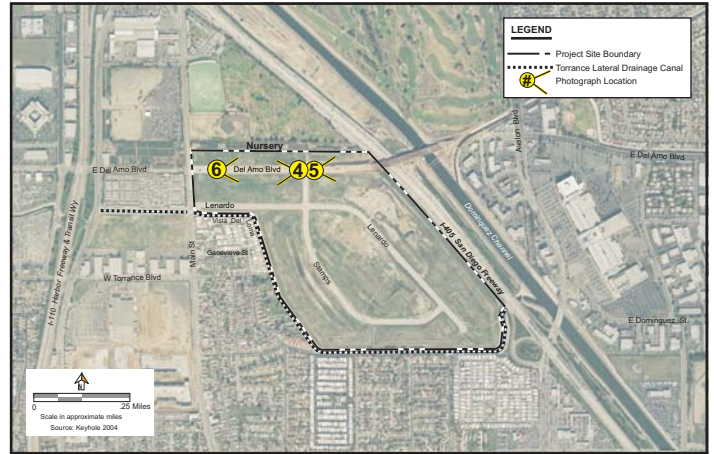
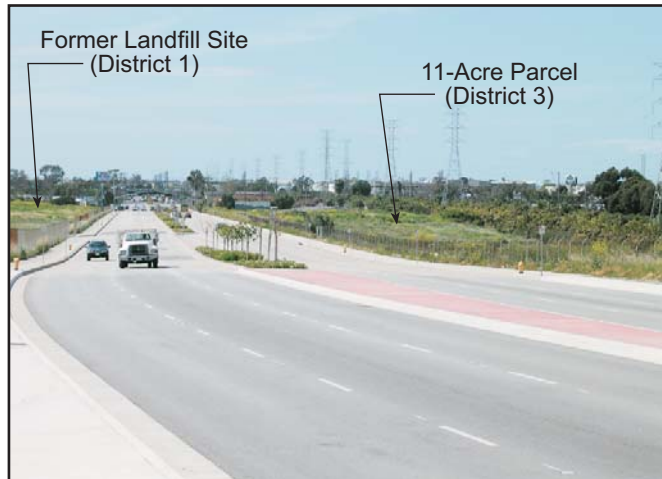


Photo Location Map



Photograph 6



Figure 13
Photographs
from Del Amo Boulevard
Through the Project Site



Photograph 7



Photo Location Map



Photograph 8



Photograph 9



Figure 14
Photographs From Areas South
of the Project Site

Source: PCR Services Corporation, 2005



Photograph 10



Photograph 11

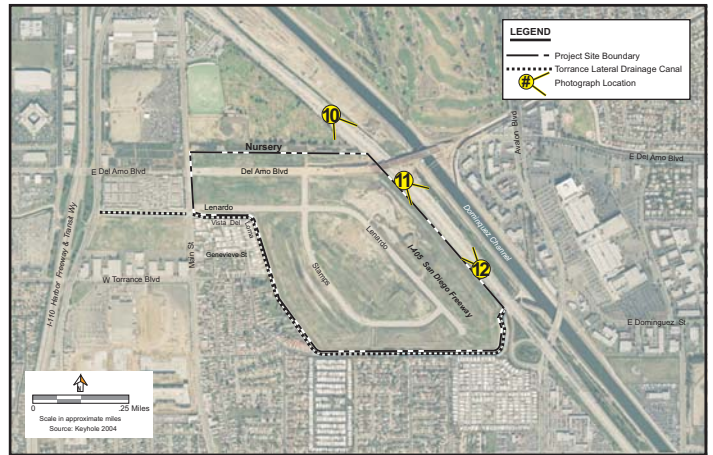


Photo Location Map



Photograph 12



Figure 15
Photographs From I-405-
East of the Project Site

Source: PCR Services Corporation, 2005



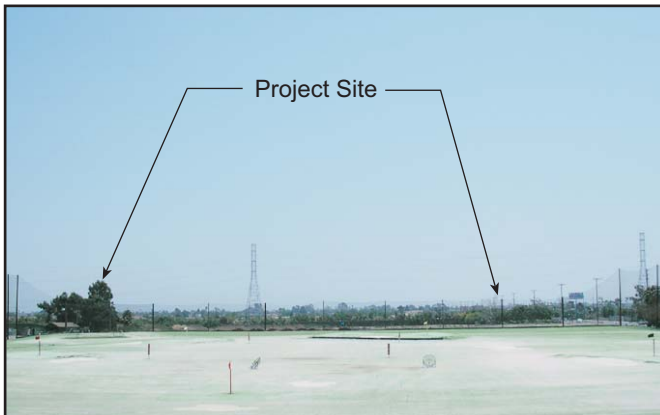
Photograph 13



Photograph 14



Photograph 15



Photograph 16



Photo Location Map



Figure 16
Photographs from North and West
of the Project Site

Source: PCR Services Corporation, 2005

(1) Aesthetic Character

(a) Project Site

The 168-acre Project site is currently vacant and undeveloped. (See Figures 12 and 13 on pages 170 and 171.) The Project site consists of a 157-acre parcel (Districts 1 and 2), south of Del Amo Boulevard, and an 11-acre parcel north of Del Amo Boulevard (District 3). The 157-acre parcel operated as a Class II Landfill until 1965. At the time landfill operations were ceased, the landfill was covered with a final layer of soil. The Project site is predominantly bare soil that becomes green with nonnative grasses following winter rains and turns brown by summer. The 11-acre portion of the site north of Del Amo Boulevard is a typical urban vacant lot that is undeveloped and covered with loose soil and tall grass.

As such, the Project site does not contain unique, natural resources or other features that would be considered aesthetic resources. However, the large expanse of undeveloped land adds to the City's urban environment in a manner that contributes to the quality of its aesthetic setting. The Project site also allows exposure to large visual expanses and a feeling of spaciousness, thereby providing a visual break from surrounding development.

(b) Areas Adjacent to the Project Site

(i) Areas South and Southwest of the Project Site

The area that lies south and southwest of the Project is a residential neighborhood consisting of single family residential units and three mobile home parks that are interspersed among the single-family units. (See Figure 14 on page 172.) Most of the units are single story, but many include second stories. The residential neighborhood is separated from the Project site by the Torrance Lateral Drainage Channel, a concrete lined infrastructure improvement. The Channel strongly shapes the aesthetic character of the immediate area between the Project site, and the residential development to the south.

(ii) Areas East of the Project Site

The eastern edge of the Project site faces the I-405 Freeway (See Figure 15) and beyond that the Dominguez Channel, a large flood control facility. Together, the I-405 and Dominguez Channel, with an open space corridor between them, comprise a large area of infrastructure that distinctly separates the Project site from other uses in the larger community.

(iii) Areas West of the Project Site at Main Street

The western boundary of the Project site, at its most northern location, faces Main Street, with off-site uses consisting of light industrial uses (mini-storage), interspersed with vacant area, a nursery, and residential uses. As Main Street extends, north and south of the Project site, the number of uses increases (some retail, some more residential, etc), but the general visual character of Main Street in the Project area is dominated by light industrial activity. Buildings in this area are typically single story in height.

(iv) Areas North of the Project Site

The land directly north of the Project site consists of an open space/utility corridor with a nursery, grassy area and utility lines. Further north of the open space/utility corridor, lies the Dominguez Hills Golf Course and Practice Range, a small par-3 golf facility, which although improved for recreation activity, contributes to the feeling of open space in the Project vicinity.

(c) Regional Area

The Project site is located within a larger regional context that includes an extremely large range of uses: residential neighborhoods, commercial corridors, centralized commercial centers, light and heavy industrial uses and recreational uses, as well as schools and service facilities. These varied uses are dispersed in a patchwork arrangement, intermixed among the elevated freeways that stand as physical barriers between areas. While the character of development varies at a local scale, these uses blend into an overall pattern of a developed, urban/suburban environment, without remarkable organizing features.

(2) Views**(a) View Resources**

The view-scape in the Project area is that of an urban environment characterized by an array of interspersed developments, open spaces, and infrastructure improvements. The Project vicinity does not contain notable features that would typically fall under the heading of view resource, e.g. unique geologic features, natural areas, etc. The Project site lies in a large basin with little vertical differentiation that might provide scenic quality (e.g. hillside areas). The nearest notable geologic feature, the Palos Verdes Peninsula is located approximately five miles southwest of the Project site. More distant features that define the basin are located at some distance. The San Gabriel Mountains are located approximately 25 miles to the northeast, and the Santa Ana Mountains are approximately 25 miles to the east.

The features of the Project's visual setting that might shape an appreciation of its visual character are limited to typical urban elements, and are subject to personal interpretation. Some viewers may look at the general urban environment, while some may appreciate the architecture of particular buildings or patches of open space/landscaping between buildings.

There are two notable features that might catch the eye of travelers through the area. The port for the Goodyear Blimp is located on the north side of the I-405 Freeway in the vicinity of the Project site. This site has visual value due to its expanse of open space and, when the blimp is in port, its familiarity as a cultural symbol. Also, there is a large fiberglass statue of a man holding a golf club on the south side of the I-405 Freeway. This statue advertises the Dominguez Hills Golf Course and has historic value (as an extant example of roadside mimic architecture), and may be a recognizable visual feature for some travelers through the area.

(b) View Locations

(i) Public Vantage Points

The Project Site is visible from the I-405 Freeway (along the northeast edge of the Project site), Del Amo Boulevard (east-west thoroughfare that bisects the northern portion of the site), and Main Street (north-south thoroughfare that defines the western edge of the site). None of these roadways is designated as a scenic highway.

I-405 Freeway

The I-405 Freeway provides the most notable views of the Project site, due to its large number of travelers and adjacency to the Project site. The view along the I-405 is mostly defined by its immediate surroundings consisting of vehicles, freeway walls, intermittent trees and signs, and freeway overpasses. (See Figure 15 on page 173.) Beyond that, there are views of the urban/suburban environment that are typical of freeway views throughout the South Bay to Orange County corridor. There are no notable natural features or scenic resources in the Project area. Views of the two notable cultural/historic features in the area, the Goodyear Blimp site, and the large statue of the man with a golf club, are available to passers-by on the I-405 Freeway. Views of the Project site from the I-405 Freeway, which is at a lower elevation than the Project site, are upward to limited views of fencing and an earthen slope along the eastern edge of the Project Site.

Del Amo Boulevard

Del Amo Boulevard passes through the Project site separating the 11-acre parcel on the north and the 157-acre parcel on the south. (See Figure 13 on page 171.) Views along Del Amo

Boulevard are predominantly shaped by the Project site's open area. Travelers through the area have expansive views, due to the lack of development.

Main Street

Views along Main Street are shaped by light industrial uses interspersed among vacant and underdeveloped lands on the west and residential development, the vacant Project site and open space on the east. (See Figure 16 on page 174.) The overall view is that of a low density urban street, with large tracks of vacant land. The Project site contributes to the low density character of the immediate area for a small stretch, as travelers approach from the north and south. Views of the Project site show a vacant, fenced edge. A slight berm on the south side of Del Amo Boulevard builds up from the Project site's edge towards the inner portions of the Project site, limiting views into, and over, the Project site from some locations.

(ii) Private Vantage Points

Residences Adjacent to the Project Site

Opposite to the Project site, along its south and southwest edges, there are approximately 100 residential units, including mobile home units and single-family residences. The units are typically one story in height; however, many units include second stories, thereby creating improved view opportunities for these units.

Short-range views from these locations are dominated by the Torrance Lateral. (See Figure 14 on page 172.) Mid-range views are dominated by the berm along the edges of the Project site. The berm rises approximately 13 feet to 17 feet above the Lateral for most of the length, with the rise diminishing to approximately 8 feet at the east-west/north-south turn at the edge of District 1. Long-range views are very limited due to the berm rising above most viewing locations in the residential area. However, there may be some limited residential locations where two-story structures are located opposite lower berm faces and offer more distant views of open areas beyond the Project site.

Other Private Locations

Views of the Project site are extremely limited, due to the flat terrain in the surrounding area and the prevalence of existing development. Further, there is limited private development in the Project area, with those uses not oriented toward providing long-range views over the Project site. A few taller buildings (e.g., office buildings) may provide some views over the Project site from outlying areas and some distant locations at increased altitude (e.g., the raised elevations in Rolling Hills/Palos Verdes). From the more distant locations, the Project site is a relatively small, undeveloped parcel located within an established urban environment.

Views of the site are also available from the Dominguez Hills Golf Course north of the Project site. Although buffered from the Project site by an open space/utility corridor and some distance, the openness of the Project site allows for distant views from this location. (See Photo 16 on Figure 16 on page 174.)

b. Policy and Regulatory Environment

(1) City of Carson

(a) General Plan of the City of Carson

The Carson General Plan sets forth objectives, goals, policies, and implementation measures that provide guidelines to meet the existing and future needs and desires of the community. Included within the General Plan are numerous guidelines pertaining to the design of the physical environment. Such Guidelines are included in both the 2004 and 1982 General Plans within the Land Use and Open Space Elements. Policies that are relevant to the visual qualities of the proposed Project are listed in Table 15 in the Plan Consistency analysis on page 202.

(b) Carson Zoning Ordinance

(i) General Zoning Provisions

The City of Carson implements its General Plan through Zoning and Specific Plans. The Project site is not currently included within the boundaries of an adopted Specific Plan. As described more fully in Section IV.A, Land Use, the Project's existing zoning includes the following: Regional Commercial with Design Overlay on the 11-acre parcel north of Del Amo Boulevard; Light Manufacturing with Design Overlay and Organic Refuse Landfill Overlay on the western portion of the 157-acre parcel; and Regional Commercial with Design Overlay and Organic Refuse Landfill Overlay on the eastern portion of the 157-acre parcel.²⁸

The City's zoning ordinance includes numerous guidelines that affect the final appearance of development within the City. For example, the ordinance addresses the general character of development by limiting the permitted uses, and addresses the massing of buildings on a project site by establishing regulations for building height, density, setbacks and space between buildings. The ordinance also addresses other design considerations including such

²⁸ *The Organic Refuse Landfill Overlay zone on the 157-acre parcel addresses issues that pertain to the public health, safety, and general welfare by regulating uses of organic refuse landfill sites. The zone does not include regulations regarding visual qualities.*

items as the use and character of walls, signage and lighting. Section IV.A, Land Use, of this Draft EIR includes an evaluation of the Project's relationship to the existing regulations as they relate to general site use and development compatibility. The zoning requirements that are more directly related to the visual qualities of development are identified in the analytical discussion of zoning regulations in Subsection 3.(c).(2).(a).iv on page 201.

(ii) Overlay Zoning

Overlay zones are an implementation mechanism used to address unique site conditions at particular locations that must be considered separately from the uses and standards that are otherwise applicable under the standard zoning classification.

The Project site's current Design Overlay (DO) zone designation provides for Site Plan and Design Review of future development in order to achieve special standards of design, architectural quality, style and compatibility, landscape treatment, and functional integration of neighboring developments. Review of projects in the DO zone requires findings by the Planning Commission that a project is compatible with the General Plan, any specific plans for the area and surrounding uses; compatibility of architecture and design with existing and anticipated development in the vicinity, including the aspects of site planning, land coverage, landscaping, appearance and scale of structures and open spaces; and other features relative to a harmonious and attractive development of the area.

(iii) Site Plan and Design Review

Section 9172.23 of the City Zoning Ordinance establishes procedures for Site Plan and Design Review by the Planning Commission for construction of buildings with estimated valuations of \$50,000 or more. Under these provisions, site plans are reviewed in a manner similar to that described for the Design Overlay Zone.

(2) Caltrans

The State of California, Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is responsible for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of the California State Highway System, as well as that portion of the Interstate Highway System within the state's boundaries. The proposed Project does not include roadway improvements that are under the jurisdiction of Caltrans; however, the Project faces the I-405 Freeway, which is a Caltrans facility, and the internal Project roadways would link to a new Freeway ramp improvement at Avalon, the I-405/Avalon Boulevard Interchange Modification Project. Therefore, the Project would be expected to consider Caltrans Guidelines at locations where it would have aesthetic impacts on a Caltrans facility.

The Highway Design Manual provides guidelines for Caltrans projects and generally addresses landscaping and grading considerations. For example, it encourages visually compatible plantings that integrate highway facilities and surrounding communities, as well as integrate into the overall existing composition.

3. PROJECT IMPACTS

a. Methodology

The following analysis addresses the Project impacts that could occur under the proposed conceptual plan, and also the greatest impacts that could occur if the final site design were varied from the conceptual plan, subject to the limitations of the Specific Plan. The currently proposed Conceptual Plan is one design scenario that would be allowed under the Project's Specific Plan regulations. Variations in impacts on Visual Resources that might occur under other development scenarios are limited because of Specific Plan restrictions that limit residential development to Development District 1 and Development District 3; and that limit larger commercial buildings (greater than 50,000 sq.ft.) to Development District 2. The most notable variation that could occur would be a choice to relocate the theater and/or hotel uses, with their taller building heights than allowed for other commercial uses, to alternative locations. This would increase the size of potential development at such locations. Therefore, discussion of other development scenarios is provided in the applicable Subsections below.

(1) Aesthetics

The analysis of aesthetics is based on a three-step process as follows:

Step 1: Describe the massing and general configuration of buildings, open space and proposed landscaping treatments around the Project edges;

Step 2: Compare the resulting appearance to the existing site appearance and character of adjacent uses and determine whether and/or to what extent a degrading of the visual character of the area could occur (considering factors such as changes in the appearance of natural features and open space, and the blending/contrasting of new and existing buildings given uses, density, height, bulk, setbacks, signage, etc.); and

Step 3: Compare the anticipated appearance to standards within existing plans and policies which are applicable to the Project Site (regulatory analysis).

(2) Views

The analysis of views addresses view resources (what is seen) and view locations (from where it is seen). These elements were evaluated to determine whether views of existing resources occur, to what extent they would be altered should they occur, and whether the sight of a particular view resource would be obstructed.

To determine whether a potentially significant view impact would occur, a four-step process is used to weigh several considerations, as follows:

Step 1: Survey the visual setting to determine the nature of view characteristics and presence or absence of valued scenic resources.

Step 2: Identify the view locations in the proximity of the Project site, and the nature of the existing views from those locations.

Step 3: Evaluate whether a potential obstruction from Project development would substantially alter the view of valued view resources.

Step 4: Consider whether the proposed Project includes design features which offset the alteration of viewing conditions.

(3) Shade/Shadow

The shading analysis addresses the potential of the Project to cast shadows on off-site sensitive uses and whether shadows could substantially interfere with activities that require sunlight for their performance. The potential Project impacts were evaluated by identifying potentially sensitive uses lying adjacent to the Project site and then modeling the shading patterns that would occur in their vicinity from buildings on the Project site. Potential shadow impacts have been plotted for morning, noon, and afternoon hours, during the Equinoxes and the Winter and Summer solstices. These periods represent the portion of the day during which maximum seasonal shadows occur and which would be of concern to most people.

The analysis of potential shading impacts is based on the maximum potential height of the buildings that could occur in accordance with the Project's proposed development standards. This produces a shadow effect that is equal to the greatest shadow impact that might occur from Project buildings. Thus, the analysis results in a conservative estimate of shading impacts since the actual shading likely to occur would be less than that analyzed.

(4) Artificial Lighting

The lighting analysis addresses the affects of artificial lighting on the nighttime appearance of the Project and whether the Project lighting would interfere with the performance of off-site activities. The analysis begins with an identification of the characteristics of the area surrounding the Project site and areas that might be sensitive to impacts from off-site lighting. The analysis then identifies the nature of lighting that is proposed for the Project site, and describes the potential for causing off-site impacts. The analysis compares the anticipated off-site impacts to levels of lighting that could alter a neighborhood's character, or interfere with the performance of off-site activities.

b. Significance Thresholds

(1) Aesthetics

The proposed Project would have a significant impact on aesthetics, if:

- The proposed Project would substantially alter, degrade or eliminate the existing visual character of the area, including valued existing features, natural open space or other valued resources;
- The Project features would substantially contrast with the visual character of the surrounding area and its valued architectural image; or
- The implementation of the proposed Project would preclude the attainment of existing aesthetics regulations as expressed in applicable regional and City planning documents.

(2) Views

The proposed Project would have a significant impact on views, if:

- Project development would substantially obstruct an existing view of a valued view resource from a prominent view location.

(3) Shade/Shadow

The proposed Project would have a significant impact if:

- Shadow-sensitive uses would be shaded by Project structures for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M., between late October and early April, or more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. between April and late October.

(4) Artificial Lighting

The proposed Project would have a significant impact if:

- The Project would substantially alter the character of off-site areas surrounding the Project site.
- Project Lighting would interfere with the performance of an off-site activity.

c. Analysis of Project Impacts

(1) Project Design Features

The proposed Project would be developed under regulations, standards, and guidelines established in the Carson Marketplace Specific Plan. While these Specific Plan elements do not define specific building sizes, locations and appearance, they do set a framework that limits the potential affects of development on the visual qualities of the surrounding area. The implementation mechanisms of the Specific Plan require that site plan review be performed to review individual building projects for compliance with the Specific Plan requirements.

The Specific Plan's regulations, standards and guidelines are described in detail in Section II, Project Description. In summary, the key Specific Plan features that would shape the overall character of the development include the following:

- The total amount of development would be constrained by maximum development limits: 1,550 residential units and 1,995,125 square feet of commercial activity.
- Residential Density would be limited to 60 units per acre, and commercial floor area (FAR) would be limited to 33 percent (0.33) of the overall Project site.
- The heights of all buildings would be restricted depending on their use and size as shown in Table 13 on page 185. In summary, residential building heights would be limited to 75 feet. Generally, the largest portion of the commercial buildings would be limited to 32 feet in height, with incremental increases in height to 52 feet at limited locations. The theater and hotel could have base heights up to 60 feet and 75

Table 13

Building Height Development Standards

USE	AREA	Base Building	With Secondary Features ^c		With Major Features ^c	
		Max. Height	Max. Height	Max. Width of Feature (% of elevation length)	Max. Height	Max. Width of Feature (% of elevation length)
<u>RESIDENTIAL</u>						
Multi-family ^{a,b}	n/a	75 feet	75 feet	n/a	75 feet	n/a
<u>COMMERCIAL</u>						
Retail	>100,000 SF	32 feet	42 feet	30%	52 feet	15%
Retail	60,000-100,000 SF	30 feet	36 feet		48 feet	20%
Retail	40,000-60,000 SF	28 feet	34 feet		44 feet	30%
Retail	15,000-40,000 SF	28 feet	34 feet		40 feet	40%
Retail	<15,000 SF	22 feet	26 feet		30 feet	50%
Theater	n/a	60 feet	70 feet		80 feet	20%
Hotel	n/a	75 feet	79 feet		85 feet	15%
<u>MIXED-USE</u>						
Vertical mix of uses: two-story office/retail over at grade retail	10,000-30,000 SF	35 feet	40 feet	30%	45 feet	30%
Other vertical mix of uses ^{a,b}	n/a	75-85 feet	75-85 feet	n/a	75-85 feet	n/a
<u>PARKING</u>						
Parking Structure	n/a	45 feet	45 feet	n/a	45 feet	n/a
<u>ACCESSORY STRUCTURES</u>						
Accessory Storage		maximum height to be determined according to standard for principal use				

^a The maximum height of any living space in residential structures cannot exceed 74 feet, 11.9 inches, so as not to be classified as a high-rise structure as defined by Los Angeles County Fire Department regulations.

^b The maximum height for vertically-mixed buildings is 85 feet when located within 1,000 feet of the project's easterly border (loosely defined as the 405 Freeway) as measured along the southern edge of Del Amo Boulevard. For buildings along the northern edge of Del Amo Boulevard or beyond the 1,000 foot area described above, the maximum height is 75 feet.

^c Major and secondary features are building elements that are added to building faces to provide architectural interest, without adding to interior floor area. Major features are more prominent than secondary features, and are often used to focus visual attention with a vertical element that rises above the base building.

Source: The Planning Center, October 2005.

feet, respectively, with additional heights on some architectural features up to 80 feet and 85 feet at limited locations.

- Project setbacks would limit development along the major project edges to the following: 110 feet along the I-405 Freeway, 70 feet facing the Torrance Lateral and existing residential development, 10 feet along Main Street and Del Amo Boulevard on the north side of Del Amo Boulevard, and 20 feet along Main Street and Del Amo Boulevard on the south side of Del Amo Boulevard.

Illustrations that portray the potential building shapes and locations are shown in Figures 17 through 20 on pages 187 through 190, respectively. Figure 17 illustrates the Project's conceptual plan, in plan and isometric views. It shows the Project densities and illustrates the Project's schedule of proposed height limits, whereby commercial buildings are limited to base building heights, but may have increased heights for secondary and major design features across limited portions of the buildings. It demonstrates that a substantial amount of the development would be at the lower permitted heights and that when higher limits are used, the building appearance may benefit from vertical variation.

Figures 18 through 20 further illustrate the Project's visual qualities along key Project edges with cross-sections through site buildings, and elevations of the frontages along those edges. Each of the section and elevation illustrations reflects two sets of building heights. One set pertains to the building heights that are shown on the Project's conceptual plan. The second set of elevations shown (dotted lines) reflect the maximum building heights that would be allowed under the Specific Plan. These heights reflect potential building heights that could occur at those locations if taller buildings, such as the hotel or movie theater were moved to that location from the location shown in the conceptual plan. If buildings are located differently than shown on the conceptual plan, the overall massing of building would be limited by the Specific Plan's development and density limitations; and overall site densities similar to those shown, although the location of larger buildings would vary.

In addition to the general development guidelines that define the Project, the Specific Plan also includes numerous Project Design Features that address the design of the Project and its aesthetic qualities. Of the various such features, the following were considered elemental to the evaluation of aesthetic impacts discussed below:

- **Landscaping.** As described in more detail in Subsection D.2.(a)(1).e of Section II, Project Description, all landscaping would be consistent with a plant palate of native trees, shrubs and groundcovers that would add uniformity to the Project site.²⁹ Plants

²⁹ *Plants would be limited to those that require lesser amounts of water consumption, and that are suited for potting and/or rooting without posing a threat to the remediation cap.*

PLAN VIEW

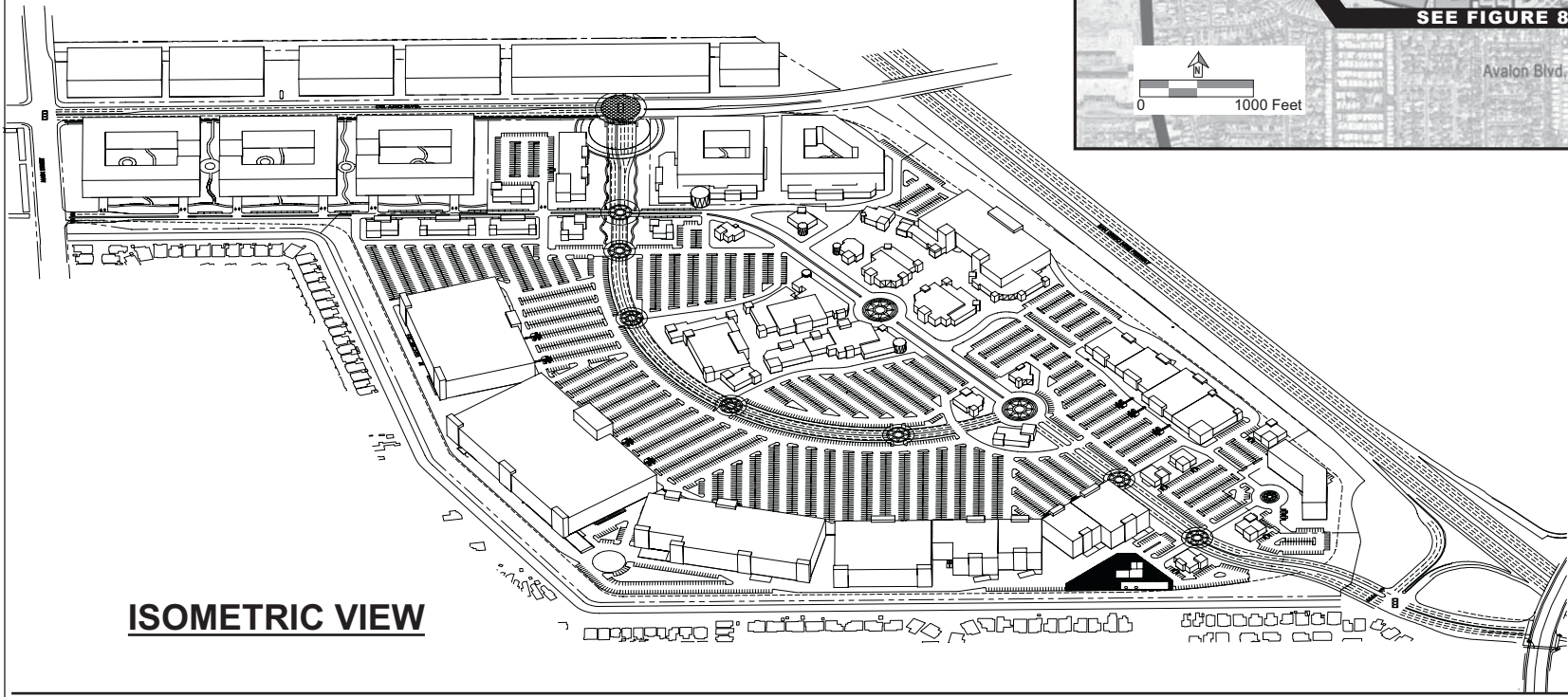
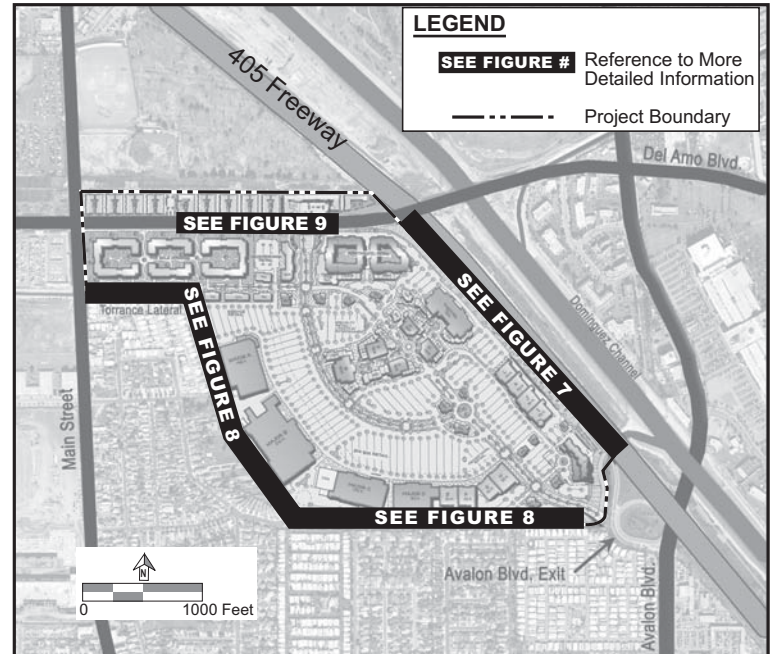
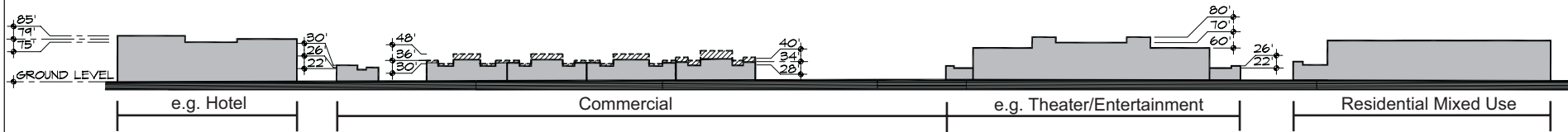
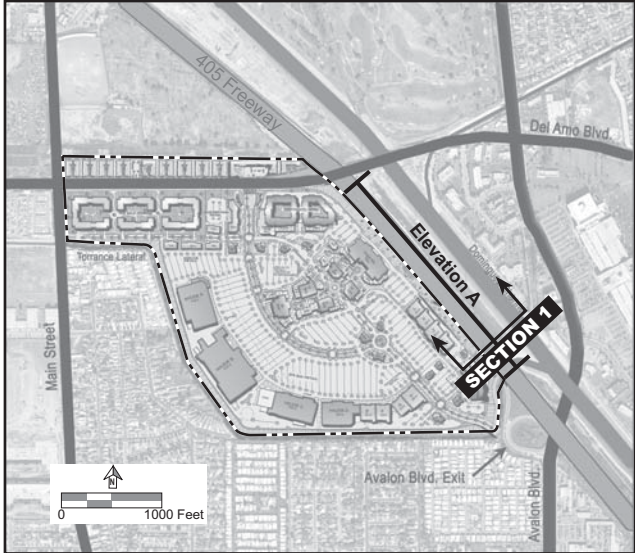
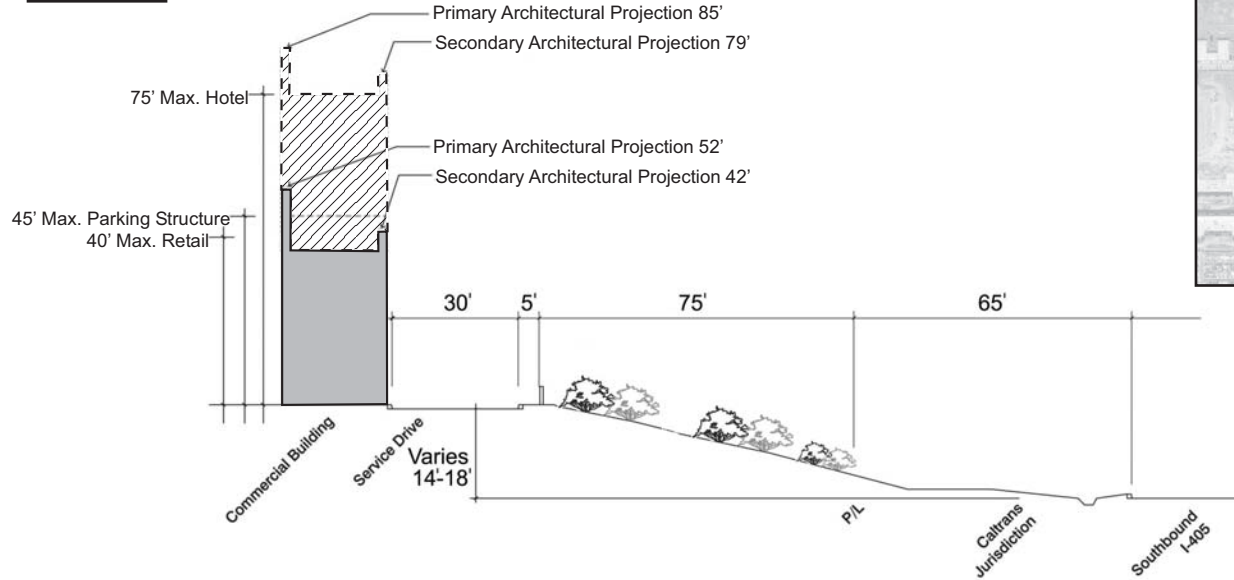


Figure 17
Conceptual Plan and
Isometric Portrayal of Development

LEGEND

- Maximum Building Heights Per Conceptual Plan
- Maximum Building Envelopes with other Building Locations

SECTION 1



ELEVATION A: Facing the I-405 Freeway

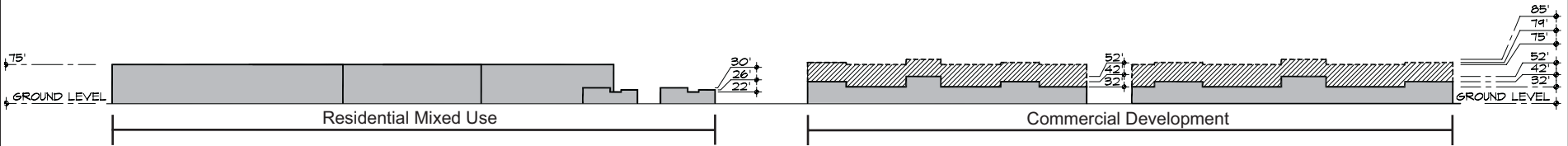
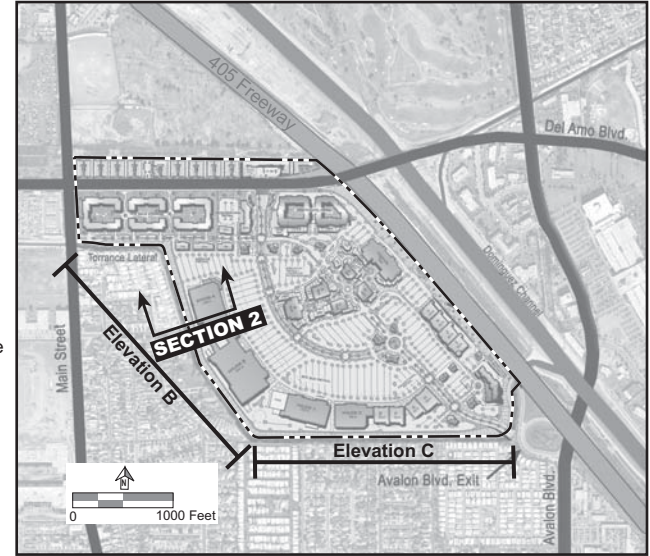
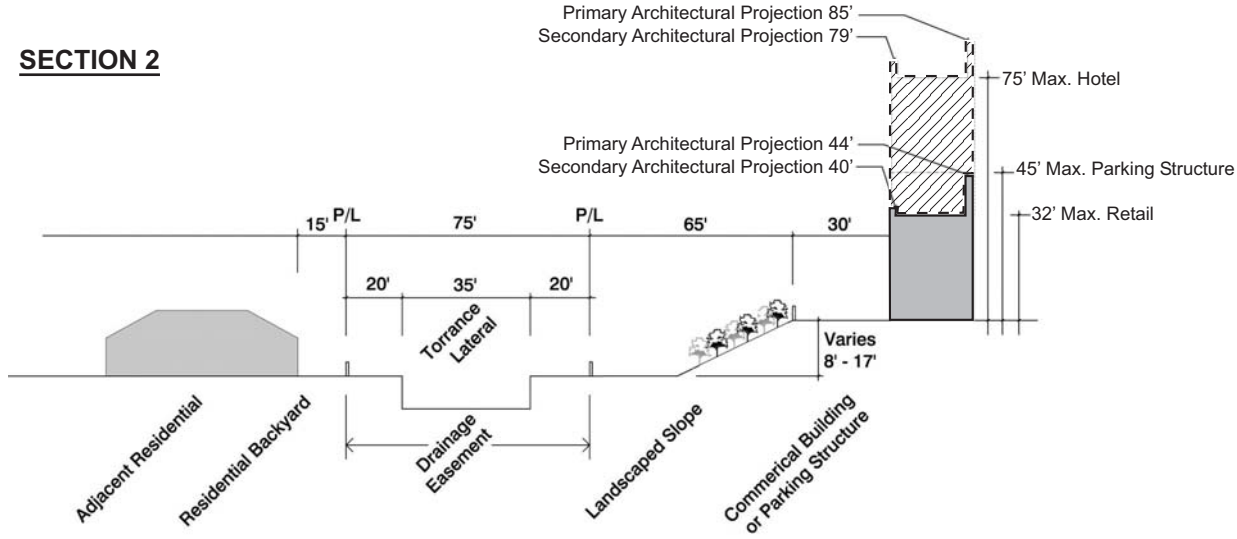


Figure 18
Section and Elevation:
I-405 Freeway

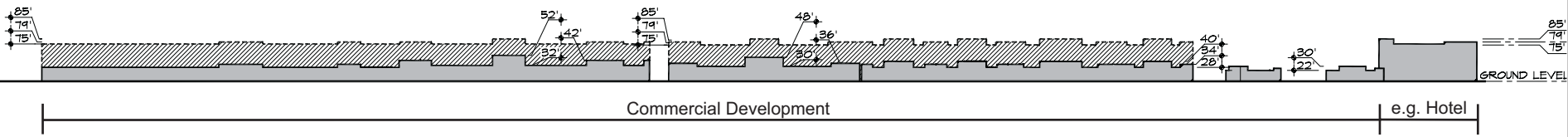
LEGEND

- Maximum Building Heights Per Conceptual Plan
- ▨ Maximum Building Envelopes with other Building Locations

SECTION 2



ELEVATION B: Facing the Southwest Edge



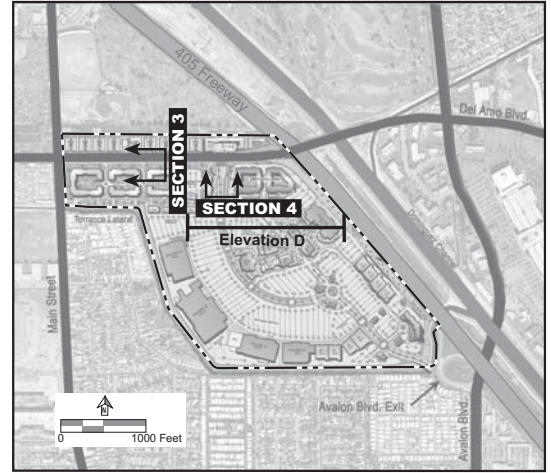
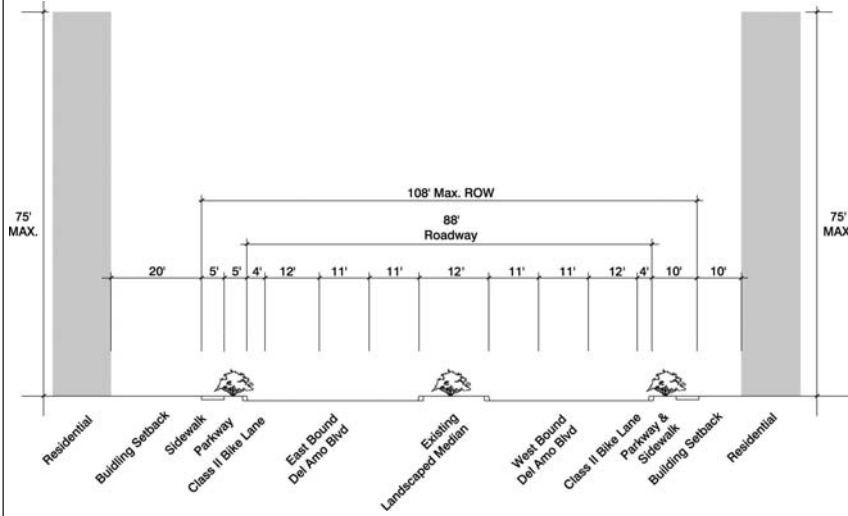
ELEVATION C: Facing the Southern Edge



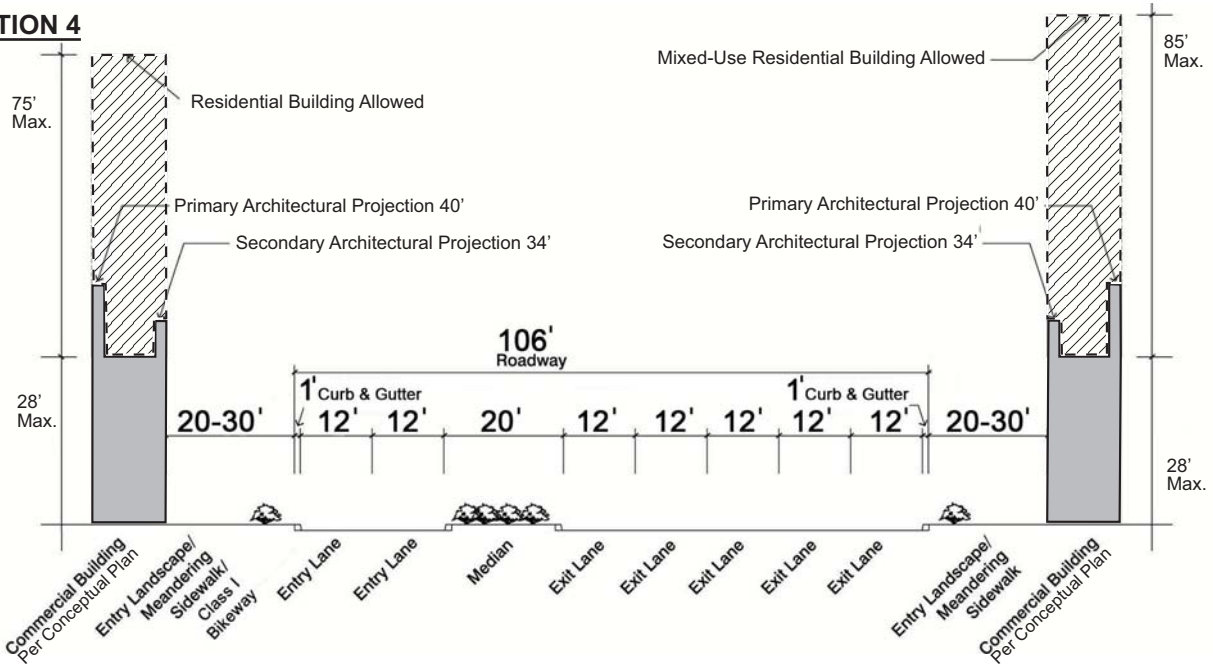
Figure 19
Section and Elevation:
South and Southwest Edges

Source: Johnson Fain and Nadel Architects Inc., 2005

SECTION 3



SECTION 4



ELEVATION D



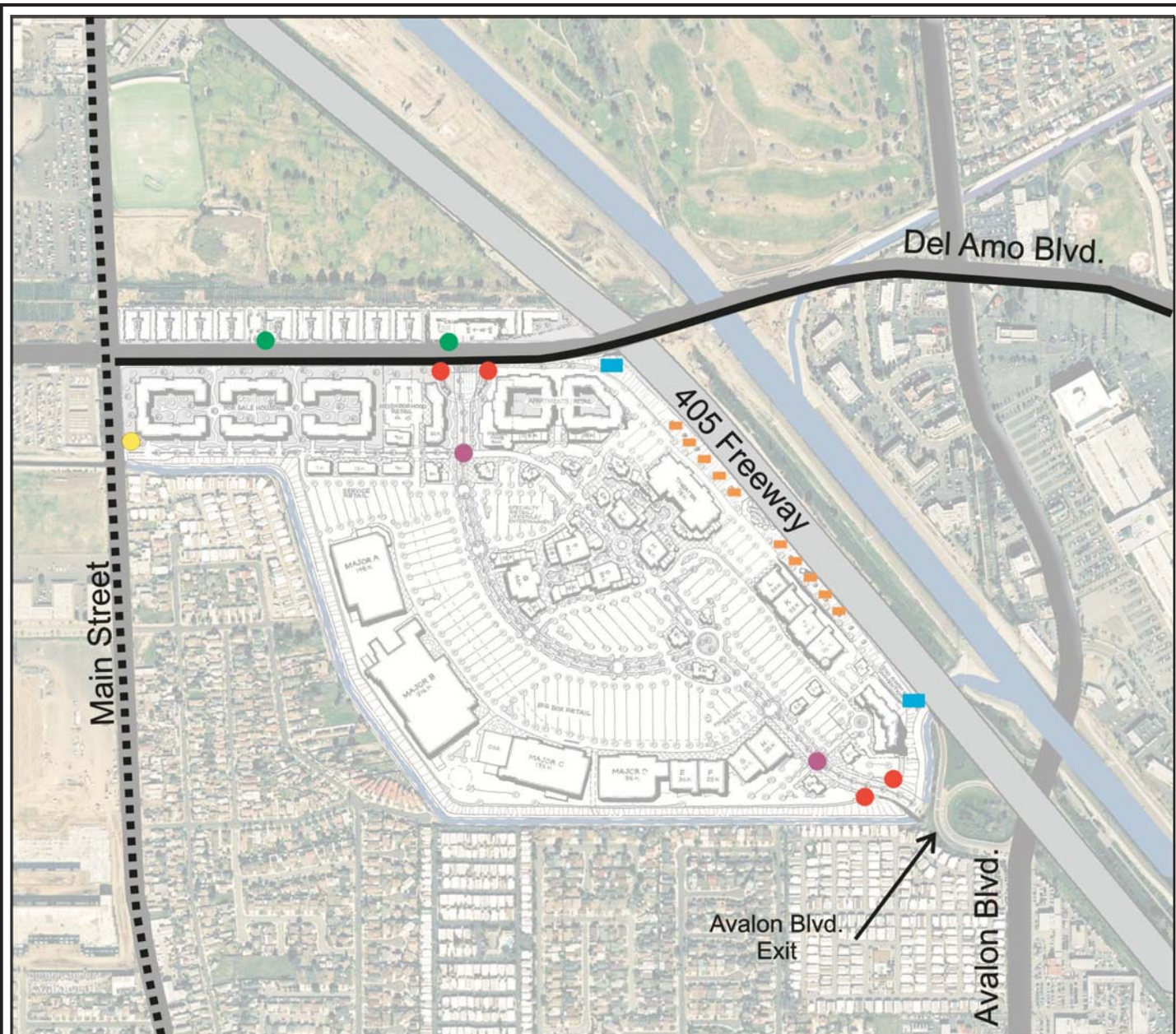
Figure 20
Sections and Elevation-
Del Amo Boulevard

would be selected to support and complement the themes of the various Project components. Specially themed landscaping treatments would occur at key locations (e.g. freeway edge, channel slope and lifestyle and entertainment area). Of more detailed note: (1) landscaping themes on Del Amo Boulevard and Main Street would be coordinated with the landscaping of the Carson Street Conceptual Visualization and the Home Depot Center; (2) continuous shrub and ground cover plantings would be provided in the medians and edges of internal streets with vertical landscape and/or hardscape elements at a minimum of every 50 feet along the edges; (3) 5% landscape coverage would be provided in parking lots, and (4) 50% landscape coverage would be provided on parking structures visible to residences.

- **Buildings.** Buildings would include the following design features: varied and articulated building façades, featuring the use of colorful stucco, with a variety of architectural accent materials for exterior treatment at visually accessible locations.
- **Accessory facilities.** Wall façades would be varied and articulated. Accessory facilities such as trash bins, storage areas, etc., would be covered and screened.
- **Lighting.** Lighting would be limited in intensity, light control methods, and pole heights, so as to be directed on site, and not interfere with off-site activities.
- **Signs.** Signs would be limited in number and size as shown in Table 14 on page 192. The placement of the signs under the proposed conceptual plan is shown in Figure 21 on page 193. As indicated, the Project would provide a hierarchy of signs that would provide varied functions within the Project site. Taller signs would be located along the I-405 Freeway, where, two Freeway Icon signs (75 feet high) and 10 Freeway Monument signs (35 feet high) would be provided. Other signs would be more limited in size with four Primary Entry Monument signs limited to 15 feet in height and two Entry Arch sites limited to 25 feet. Main Street Entry and North Del Amo Entry Monument signs would be limited to 14 feet and 8 feet respectively. These signs would be located at selected locations, dispersed along roadways within the Project site.

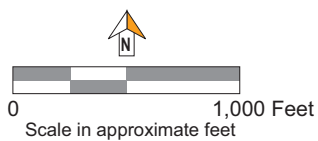
Table 14
Sign Standards

SIGN TYPE	MAXIMUM NUMBER	MAXIMUM SIGN DIMENSIONS		NOTES
		Height	Width	
Freeway Icon	2	70 feet ^a	25 feet	The base width will be 15-25 feet. If the base is greater than 15 feet, the sign will taper up to 15 feet at top. The attached reader board will be a maximum 16 feet high x 20 feet wide. The top of the reader board will be located no higher than 40 feet above the base of the sign. If only one Freeway Icon sign is constructed, it will most likely be located in a central location, between the Freeway Monument signage.
Freeway Monument	10	35 feet	20 feet	While the overall height is 35 feet, the sign is stepped up the slope along the freeway. Each sign consists of a sloped base - 5 feet high x 20 feet wide, tenant signage up to 15 feet high x 20 feet wide, and a tower element that extends 15 feet above the tenant signage and is 3 feet in width.
Primary Entry Monument	4	15 feet	20 feet	While the overall height is 15 feet, the sign consists of tenant signage up to 10 feet high x 20 feet wide and a tower element that extends 5 feet above the tenant signage and is 3 feet in width.
Entry Arch	2	25 feet	40 feet	Each arch consists of two towers, each with a dimension of 25 feet high x 3 feet wide. Each arch will span approximately 40 feet in width over the roadway. The banner element will be no greater than 3 feet in height x 40 feet in width.
Main Street Entry Monument	1	14 feet	8 feet	While the overall height is 14 feet, the sign consists of tenant signage up to 6 feet high x 8 feet wide and a tower element that extends 8 feet above the tenant signage and is 3 feet in width.
North Del Amo Entry Monuments	2	8 feet	12 feet	If the signage serves residential development, the sign dimensions shall be no greater than 6 feet high x 8 feet wide.
<p><i>Note: Signage adjacent to the freeway will comply with Caltrans standards and requirements.</i></p> <p>^a <i>Heights of Freeway Icon signs are measured from the adjacent freeway grades.</i></p> <p><i>Source: The Planning Center, October 2005.</i></p>				



LEGEND

- Freeway Icon
- Freeway Monument
- Primary Entry Monument
- Entry Arch
- Main Street Entry Monument
- North Del Amo Entry Monument



Source: The Planning Center, 2005

Figure 21
Conceptual Signage Plan

(2) Project Impacts

(a) Impacts on the Aesthetic Character of the Area

The impact of the proposed Project on aesthetics addresses five issues: (1) whether proposed development would substantially affect a valued aesthetic resource; (2) whether the visual character of the proposed development would substantially contrast with the visual character of surrounding development; (3) whether the Project would adversely affect existing retail activities so as to cause increased vacancies, with adverse affects on aesthetic character at off-site locations; (4) whether proposed development would cause greater effects than anticipated in existing regulations; and (5) whether the Project's construction activities would cause substantial changes to the environment of a nature different than those identified for the proposed Project.

(i) Impacts on Valued Resources

The proposed Project site is currently a large vacant parcel. It is fenced and contains no unique natural features or valued visual features. However, due to its lack of buildings, the site contributes to the visual quality of the area by offering visual relief from development, and offering a sense of spaciousness to those surrounding and traveling through the Project area (see Figure 13 on page 171 and Figure 15 on page 173). This open character of the site would be considered a valued resource.

Development of the Project site would convert its undeveloped appearance to one of development. This would constitute a substantial change to the aesthetic character of the Project site, and in so doing reduce the valued sense of spaciousness offered by the Project site. This change would have the greatest affects for travelers along Del Amo Boulevard, which is a public view corridor traveled by a large number of people. For these travelers, the open space would be converted to development on either side of the roadway that could be up to 75 feet tall, and 85 feet on the southern side of Del Amo Boulevard at the eastern end of the Project site (see Figure 20 on page 190). The change would also be noticeable by travelers along the I-405 Freeway (Photos 10 and 12 on Figure 15 on page 173), residential locations along the southerly/southwesterly edge of the Project site (Photos 7 through 9 on Figure 14 on page 172), and golfers at the Dominguez Hills Golf Course (Photo 16 on Figure 16 on page 174). Based on the impacts on Del Amo Boulevard, a public thoroughfare, and the overall impact on all of the surrounding locations combined, the conversion of the undeveloped area to a developed appearance would be considered a significant impact.

(ii) Impacts on Contrast with Existing Development

Relationship to Nearby Uses

The proposed Project would develop the site with uses that would lie adjacent to surrounding off site areas. The resulting visual relationships with the off-site areas would be as follows:

- **The Residential Neighborhoods to the South and Southwest.** (See Photos 7 through 9 on Figure 14 on page 172.) The area that lies south and southwest of the Project is a residential neighborhood consisting of single family residential units and three mobile home parks that are interspersed among the single-family units. Most of the units are single story, but many include second stories. The residential units would be separated from proposed development by a minimum of approximately 185 feet, inclusive of the intervening Torrance Lateral (55 feet wide with service roads) and the slope along the Project edge (see Cross-Section 2 on Figure 19 on page 189). The Specific Plan requires that the slope be landscaped with a combination of native and adapted drought tolerant trees, shrubs and groundcovers in order to soften the development edge as viewed from outside the southern and western edge.

The development at the top of the slope would be designed pursuant to the Specific Plan guidelines. The potential massing of buildings under the proposed Conceptual Plan is shown in Elevations B and C on Figure 19 on page 189. Building heights for commercial buildings would vary from 22 feet to 32 feet depending on store size, with extensions up to 52 feet at limited locations for secondary and major building design features. Of the various design guidelines in the Specific Plan, several would reduce potential visual impacts along this Project edge. These include the following: (1) varied and articulated building footprints and wall facades, with vertical and horizontal offsets and varied roof ridge lines, (2) the use of colorful stucco, adobe stone, and sandstone for the exterior treatment of buildings, and (3) the covering and screening of accessory facilities (e.g. trash bins, storage areas, etc.).

As shown in the proposed Conceptual Plan, the proposed Project would place uses on the Project site that vary from the existing off-site residential uses. However, the new development would not create a substantial contrast with the visual character of the surrounding area for the following reasons: (1) Project buildings would be located at some distance from residential units in a distinct district; (2) the buildings would be at a higher elevation, atop the berm, reducing the visual linkage between Project buildings and the residential uses; (3) the Project would provide landscaping on the buffer space between the Project uses and existing residential uses; (4) The maximum Project building heights that would occur along this edge under the Conceptual Plan would restrict much of the development to heights in the range of 28 feet to 32 feet,

which is not substantially greater than the heights of the two-story residential units; (5) the Project buildings and residential units would not sit side by side within a common view seen by large numbers of people from a public area; and (6) the Project design would follow guidelines established in the Carson Marketplace Specific Plan that would add interest to buildings and walls facing the existing development.

If development were to occur under a development scenario that varies from the proposed Conceptual Plan, impacts along this Project edge would be substantially similar to those of the Conceptual Plan due to Specific Plan restrictions that limit residential development to District 1 and District 3. The one notable exception is that development under the Specific Plan would allow a relocation of the theater and hotel, with building architectural features up to 80 feet and 85 feet, respectively, along a 70-foot setback. This would cause greater impacts than the Conceptual Plan by allowing larger commercial buildings along this Project edge. Unlike the currently proposed commercial uses, the theater and hotel uses would create a substantially greater contrast with the existing residential development. A substantial contrast could result in a significant impact. However, such an impact can be reduced to a less than significant level through the provision of a greater setback for these uses to increase the amount of buffer area, and reduce the exposure of nearby residents to such a contrast. A mitigation measure is proposed below to reduce such an impact to a less than significant level.

- **The Eastern Project Edge.** (See Photos 10 through 12 on Figure 15 on page 173. The proposed Project would add a new developed appearance to the top of the Project site along the I-405 Freeway. The building massing and its relationship to the Freeway are illustrated in Section 1 and Elevation A on Figure 18 on page 188.

The I-405 Freeway along the eastern edge of the Project site is a large-scale infrastructure facility. It does not contain development, and therefore it has no potential for generation of contrast with existing development. Development along freeway edges, particularly commercial development, is a common and expected occurrence. The visual impact of the Project along the I-405 Freeway would be controlled by Specific Plan limitations and requirements including the following: (1) Separation between Project buildings and the I-405 freeway by 175 feet, inclusive of a 14-foot to 18-foot landscaped berm (with visually compatible plantings that would work in conjunction with signage and building facades) that would face freeway travelers; and (2) the Project design features that would include the 360 degree architecture, varied and articulated building footprints and wall facades, and the use of colorful stucco, adobe stone, and sandstone for the exterior treatment of buildings, and the covering and screening of accessory facilities (e.g. trash bins, storage areas, etc.).

The appearance of the freeway edge would be largely shaped by the signage that would be located within the landscaped slope facing the freeway. The proposed signage is intended to support the Project's role as a signature project, and attract attention. Consistent with this objective, the proposed signage program would allow two Freeway Icon signs (up to 70 feet high by 25 feet wide) and up to 10 Freeway Monument signs (up to 35 feet high by 20 feet wide). (See Figure 21 on page 193.)

Signs are often considered to detract from the aesthetic character of areas in which they are located. Such occurrences are more notable when signs are oversized for their context, disjointed, and individually unattractive. At the same time, signs can be attractive and add interest to an area, as well as useful information. The Carson Marketplace Project proposes a program of signs along the freeway, consistent with the Project's function as a signature Project, and commercial center for the City of Carson. This program would be implemented under the provisions of the Specific Plan.

The signage program presented in the Conceptual Plan, as shown on Figure 21 , has been configured to blend the signs into an overall thematic presentation along the freeway edge. Signs placed into such a thematic presentation can minimize unexpected contrasts between Project elements (i.e. buildings, landscaped buffer area, and multiple signs), thus avoiding a significant impact on the aesthetic character of this Project edge. If signage were to occur in a configuration that varies from that shown in the Conceptual Plan, it is not assured that a thematic presentation of the signs would occur and substantial contrast be avoided, in which case a significant impact could occur along this Project edge. A mitigation measure is included below to assure that the presentation of signs along this Project edge is in substantial compliance with that presented in the Conceptual Plan, to avoid such a significant impact.

- **The Northern Edge** The Project would add new residential and mixed use development adjacent to the northern edge of the Project site, which is an open-space utility corridor. There are no structures located along the northern edge of the Project site, and therefore there is no potential for contrast with existing development. The changes to the Project site's amenity as a neighbor to the golf course is addressed in the discussion of visual resources, above.
- **The Main Street Light-Industrial Edge** (See Photos 13 through 15 on Figure 16 on page 174). The northwest boundary of the Project site faces Main Street, with development areas located on either side of Del Amo Boulevard. Main Street currently demarcates a boundary between the largely light industrial district to the west and non-industrial uses to the east. Project development along this edge of the Project site would be mixed-use, with residential and commercial uses. The proposed

conceptual plan shows residential development along this Project edge. The aesthetic character of Main Street is shaped by its varied uses. If commercial development were provided it would be in keeping with the existing commercial/light industrial character of uses west of Main Street. New residential development, as shown in the conceptual plan, would offer a use that occurs north and south of the Project site along the east side of Main Street. While the mid-rise buildings would be taller than other residential development in the area, mid-rise residential buildings are commonly found in the vicinity of mixed use areas, and would not be considered to adversely contrast with existing buildings. Project development, with new landscaping, would replace the somewhat degraded character of the site. As was the case along other Project edges, impacts would be limited by the Specific Plan requirements including: the 360 degree architecture, varied and articulated building footprints and wall facades, and the use of colorful stucco, adobe stone, and sandstone for the exterior treatment of buildings.

Regional Context

The proposed Project is located within an urbanized area. Development to the west is comprised of a predominantly light-industrial district with scattered commercial uses, and development to the south consists of residential neighborhoods. The existing development on the eastern side of the Project site, a distinct commercial area, is substantially separated from the Project site by an infrastructure corridor that is comprised of the I-405 Freeway, open space, and the Dominguez Channel. The area north of the Project site has a distinct character with open space, the Dominguez Hills Golf Course, a small area of residential development, and the same infrastructure corridors as it extends north of the Project site, with open space and a recreational area beyond.

The implementation of the proposed Project would provide an in-fill development amongst these uses. In so doing it would contribute to the general urban character of the area. Development in District 2 would be commercial in nature and would have a maximum FAR of 0.33. With this limitation, large portions of District 2 would remain devoid of buildings, with large tracts of parking area. The development would have a character that is typically expected at interspersed locations throughout this region. The Carson Marketplace Specific Plan proposes landscaping and design treatments to add to the attractiveness of the Project. Among the landscaping features are the following: landscaping themes on Del Amo Boulevard and Main Street that would be coordinated with the Carson Street Conceptual Visualization and the Home Depot Center, continuous shrub and ground cover plantings in the medians and edges of internal streets with vertical landscape and/or hardscape elements at a minimum of every 50 feet along the edges, themed landscaping treatments at key locations (e.g. freeway edge, channel slope and lifestyle and entertainment area), 5% landscape coverage in parking lots, and 50% landscape coverage of parking structures visible to residences. Key design features have been identified above, including varied and articulated building facades, featuring the use of colorful stucco,

with a variety of architectural accent material for the exterior treatment of buildings. Signs across the Project site would be provided per a hierarchy of number and size that would be established in the Specific Plan so as to relate signage to specific purposes.

Development in Districts 1 and 3 would be mixed-use in nature. Their character under the conceptual plan would be dominated by the residential development, which would include mid-rise residential units. The maximum residential heights and densities would be 75 feet and 60 units per acre, respectively. The development character would convey mid-rise housing characteristics. This development would be located in an active urban area adjacent to and close to nearby freeways and would contribute to the urban form in an expected manner, and would therefore be in keeping with the overall character of the regional area. To the extent the development fully uses the available heights allowed, the occurrence of taller buildings on the Project site would offer vertical variation and would not necessarily be considered an adverse condition. If less residential development than shown in the conceptual plan were to occur, and more commercial development were provided in its place, the overall massing of development would be less. Commercial development has more stringent height and FAR limits, and stand-alone commercial development greater than 50,000 sq.ft. would not be allowed in these Districts. Commercial development would be in keeping with the character of other such development that is interspersed throughout the area. Development would occur under the same Specific Plan guidelines that were noted for the commercial development in District 2.

Environmental Operations and Equipment Station

In addition to the uses described above, the Project site would include an operations and equipment station for operations of the landfill gas system that would be required as a component of the Projects site remediation program. This station would include a small building, up to 20 feet tall, and a flare stack(s) up to approximately 35 feet tall on an approximately 1-acre site, surrounded by a wall.

While this use may vary from the commercial and residential development described above, its impacts on aesthetic character would not be substantial. Due to restrictions imposed by the SCAQMD, the station can not be located within 1,000 feet of residential development. Therefore, there would be no contrast with adjacent residential development. Further, the station would be subject to the Design Standards of the Specific Plan. Thus, even though the nature of the use is varied, its design can be blended with other site buildings, through architectural treatments. As a small building placed amongst the larger Project, with similar architectural treatments, the station would not cause a substantial contrast with surrounding buildings.

Conclusions Regarding Impacts on Contrast

As discussed above, the proposed Project would provide a distinct development set among the City's urban environment. Whether built according to the currently proposed Conceptual Plan, or variations from the Conceptual Plan that would be allowed under the

Specific Plan, the Project would portray a character that is in keeping with similar large-scale developments within the region. Further, except as noted below, development along the Project edges would be limited and not substantially contrast with the visual character of the surrounding area and its valued aesthetic image, and impacts on aesthetic character would be less than significant. These conclusions apply to all development under the proposed Conceptual Plan, and all development allowed under the Specific Plan, with two exceptions. Potentially significant impacts on aesthetic character were identified for development that might vary from the Conceptual Plan along two Project edges. In the first case, if the theater and hotel were to be located along the southern/southwestern Project edge, the additional heights allowed for those buildings, given their commercial nature, could result in a substantial contrast with the existing off-site residential development. In the second case, if signage along the eastern/I-405 Project edge were provided in a manner that is not consistent with that shown in the Conceptual Plan, the overall thematic scheme that minimizes contrast within the Project site may not occur. Mitigation measures are included below to address both of these potential impacts, and reduce them to less than significant levels.

(iii) Off-site impacts on Aesthetic Character

The proposed Project would not involve direct changes to the aesthetic character of any off-site locations. However, the Proposed Project poses a potential to affect existing retail businesses in the City, particularly the area in proximity to the Project site, with a resulting increase in retail vacancies within existing off-site retail areas at off-site locations. An increase in vacancy in any area has numerous potential land use consequences. Among these are the boarding of buildings and lack of maintenance, which can cause degradation of the visual appearance of the areas affected.

In order to determine whether such affects could result with implementation of the proposed Project, a study was undertaken to identify the proposed Project's affects on the sustainability of other economic areas (see Appendix J of the Draft EIR). This study is discussed more fully in Section IV.A., Land Use. In summary, the report concludes that during the short-term (the first five years following completion of the proposed Project), an impact on vacancy and sales per square foot would likely occur, most likely in smaller, older retail centers. However, the growth in retail demand that is forecasted to occur over the next 15 years is sufficient to support existing retail development as well as the proposed Project. As a result, long-term adverse impact on existing retail businesses is not anticipated. Thus, the addition of the Project's new retail activities would not likely cause any widespread, prolonged urban decay.

In addition, the study also concludes that short-term vacancies and/or closures that may occur among the smaller, older retail uses could likely result in retail renovations or upgrades – such as is occurring at the Del Amo and Southbay Pavilion Malls – or some of the space could transition from retail to non-retail uses, such as office or residential uses.

These conclusions suggest that there could be some decline in the viability of some existing off-site retail businesses that would detract from the aesthetic character of their surroundings. However, such occurrences would be limited and of short-term duration. The analysis of such impacts in Section IV.A., Land Use, concluded that no areas of the City are expected to fall into large-scale physical disrepair that would be unable to recover with natural increases in economic demand in the future. Therefore, impacts on the physical environment from Project induced vacancies or effects on sales per square foot, inclusive of impacts on the visual quality of the area, are concluded to be less than significant.

(iv) Comparison of Proposed Project with Existing Regulations

General Plan Policies

The Carson General Plan sets forth objectives, goals, policies, and implementation measures that provide a guideline for day-to-day land use policies and to meet the existing and future needs and desires of the communities, while integrating a range of state-mandated elements. Included within the General Plan are numerous guidelines pertaining to the design of the physical environment. Such Guidelines are included in both the 2004 and 1982 General Plans within the Land Use and Open Space Elements.³⁰ Policies that are particularly relevant to the visual qualities of the proposed Project are listed in Table 15 on page 202. Table 15 also evaluates the relationship between the Project's design features. As indicated, the design features are consistent with the general plan policies, and thus, a less than significant impact would occur.

Zoning Regulations

Section IV.A, Land Use, provides an analysis of the Project's consistency with the existing zoning regulations that are applicable to the Project site. As indicated, the proposed Specific Plan would provide zoning provisions that cover issues addressed in existing site zoning and would provide environmental protections that are generally equivalent to, or more protective of the environment than the existing zoning; and therefore, the proposed Project would be compatible with the City's Zoning ordinance. The analysis addresses zoning mechanisms that restrict the potential affects of development on the visual quality of the area: e.g. (1) allowed uses, (2) maximum height limits, (3) setbacks, (4) sign restriction, and (5) lighting regulations.

³⁰ *This analysis addresses the Land Use Elements of both the 1982 and 2004 Plans in order to address currently adopted policies, as well as previous policies and issues that may be raised under the legal challenge to the 2004 Plan.*

Table 15

Project Consistency General Plan—Design-Related Policies

Relevant Policy	Analysis of Project Consistency
<i>Land Use Element—2004</i>	
<p>LU-12.3 Review landscape plans for new development to ensure that landscaping relates well to the proposed land use, the scale of structures, and the surrounding area.</p>	<p>The Carson Marketplace Specific Plan establishes landscaping concepts for the various areas of the Project site, and identifies a palette of permitted plants. The Specific Plan further requires site plan review for compliance with the Specific Plan to ensure that landscaping is provided consistent with this policy.</p>
<p>LU-12.5 Improve City appearance by requiring landscaping to screen, buffer and unify new and existing development. Mandate continued upkeep of landscaped areas.</p>	<p>The residential uses on the south and southwest sides of the Project site would be separated from proposed development by a minimum distance of approximately 185 feet that would serve as a buffer, inclusive of the intervening Torrance Lateral (75 feet wide with service roads) and a slope that runs along this face of the Project site. The slope rises approximately 8 feet to 16 feet to the Project site's finished grade level and Project Development which would also add to the buffer between proposed uses and the adjoining off-site residential uses. To further enhance this buffer, the Specific Plan proposes landscaping of the slope with a combination of native and adapted drought tolerant trees, shrubs and groundcovers.</p> <p>The only other location where new development would face existing development is the Main Street edge. The Specific Plan proposes landscaped setbacks along Main Street following the themes established in the Carson Street Conceptual Visualization and the Home Depot Center, thus creating a continuity of landscape appearance within the City..</p> <p>Maintenance of landscaping would be provided in perpetuity through arrangements established by Applicant or its successors.</p>
<p>LU-13.1 Promote a rhythmic and ceremonial streetscape along the City's arterial roadways, continuing the use of landscaped medians.</p>	<p>The Specific Plan identifies landscaping concepts for each of the roadways, and includes the use of landscaped medians for all roads other than the Loop Road. The existing 15-foot landscaped median on Del Amo, a throughway across the Project site, would be maintained.</p>
<p>LU-13.3 Continue and, when possible, accelerate the undergrounding of utility lines throughout the City.</p>	<p>Proposed development would include undergrounding of utilities within the Project site.</p>

Table 15 (Continued)

Project Consistency General Plan—Design-Related Policies

Relevant Policy	Analysis of Project Consistency
LU-13.4 Encourage architectural variation of building and parking setbacks along the streetscape to create visual interest, avoid monotony and enhance the identity of individual areas. Encourage pedestrian orientation by appropriate placement of buildings.	The Specific Plan includes design standards that require architectural variation, and landscaped setbacks, 360 degree architecture, varied and articulated building footprints and wall facades, and the use of colorful stucco, adobe stone, and sandstone for the exterior treatment of buildings.
LU-13.5 Continue to require landscaping treatment along any part of a building site which is visible from City streets.	Landscaped setbacks would be provided along all of the existing City streets.
LU-13.7 Ensure proper maintenance of parkways along arterial streets and landscaping of private property visible from the public right-of-way.	Maintenance of landscaping would be provided in perpetuity through arrangements established by Applicant or its successors.
LU-14.1 Work with Caltrans to provide and maintain an attractive freeway environment in Carson, including access ramps.	The Specific Plan includes landscaping and signage guidelines for the slope facing the I-405 Freeway. The Specific Plan requires visually compatible plantings that would work in conjunction with signage and building facades, thus creating an overall composition. In so doing, the Project would address Aesthetic recommendations of the Caltrans, Highway Design Manual.
LU-14.2 Require new commercial or industrial development adjacent to and visible from freeways and freeway ramps to incorporate full architectural and landscape treatment of the building on the freeway side.	The proposed Specific Plan includes design guidelines for development along the Project's I-405 edge. These guidelines include landscaping treatments for the slope facing the I-405 Freeway.
LU-14.4 Provide entry markers with landscaping on the major arterials.	The Specific Plan requires entryway landscaping treatments that separates them from their surrounding context via differing heights, color and textures.
<i>Open Space Element—2005</i>	
OSC-1.2 Maintain existing landscaping along the City's major streets and expand the landscaping program along other arterial streets throughout the community.	The Specific Plan includes landscaping treatments for all of the City's major streets. The recommended treatments for the two existing major City streets serving the Project site (Del Amo Boulevard and Main Street) require coordination with the landscaping themes of Carson Street Conceptual Visualization and the Home Depot Center, thus creating a continuity of visual treatments.
OSC-1.3 Require that adequate, usable and permanent private open space is provided in residential developments.	All residential development would include private open space, pursuant to the requirements of Section 9128.15 of the City of Carson Municipal Code.

Table 15 (Continued)

Project Consistency General Plan—Design-Related Policies

Relevant Policy	Analysis of Project Consistency
<i>Land Use Element—1982</i>	
<u>Residential Land Use</u>	
1. Residential areas should be organized into distinct districts and located in harmonious relationship with other adjacent or nearby land use activities.	Residential development would occur either as distinct developments, or in mixed-use configurations within Development Districts 1 and/or 3. Development would occur pursuant to various design and development standards established in the Specific Plan to insure harmonious relationships between uses; e.g., standards regarding site planning, building massing, color and materials, building detailing, etc.
5. Realistic density standards should be established to ensure adequate space, light and safety.	The Specific Plan includes a residential density limit of 60 du/acre. Development would be provided under Specific Plan guidelines that include landscaping requirements and minimum distances between buildings.
<u>Commercial Land Use</u>	
4. Commercial activities should be screened or buffered from adjacent residential uses wherever possible.	The residential uses on the south and southwest sides of the Project site would be separated from proposed development by a minimum distance of approximately 185 feet that would serve as a buffer, inclusive of the intervening Torrance Lateral (75 feet wide with service roads) and a slope that runs along this face of the Project site. The slope rises approximately 8 feet to 16 feet to the Project site's finished grade level and Project Development which would also add to the buffer between proposed uses, and the adjoining off-site residential uses. To further enhance this buffer, the Specific Plan proposes landscaping of the slope with a combination of native and adapted drought tolerant trees, shrubs, and groundcovers.
<i>Source: PCR Services Corporation, 2005.</i>	

The greatest impacts that could occur from Project development under the limitations established in the proposed Specific Plan have been addressed in the analysis in the remainder of this Section of the EIR. As indicated, development pursuant to the Specific Plan would not have a significant impact on the visual quality of the environment, except for two situations (tall buildings along the southern/southwestern Project edge, and signs along the I-405 Freeway), which can be mitigated. Since the Project, with the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures below, would not result in significant impacts and for the reasons stated in Section IV.A, Land Use, it is concluded that the Project would be compatible with existing zoning protections for the Visual Quality of the environment.

(v) Construction Impacts

Development of the proposed Project would also cause changes in the aesthetic conditions of the Project site during the time of construction. Construction would occur over several years. Activities would include site work, provision of infrastructure/streets, the sequential addition of buildings, and finally, the provision of landscaping and other aesthetic treatments.

The Proposed Project site currently has an altered and somewhat degraded appearance, with fencing around the site edges (see Photo 1 on Figure 12 on page 170). During the Project's development, the site would take on the appearance of a typical construction site. Construction activities related to Project development would bring construction workers and heavy equipment to the Project site to engage in typical construction activities (e.g., earth movement, materials delivery, building construction, etc.).

As buildings begin to rise on the site, its appearance would change in an incremental fashion from one of openness to one associated with full buildout of the area. At various times, the site would contain buildings in various stages of development, at various locations. Completed buildings would add, incrementally, to the total buildout effect described above.

Accordingly, construction impacts would cause an alteration in the site's aesthetic conditions. Site construction would be quite noticeable for travelers along Del Amo Boulevard. Views of construction activity would not be particularly noticeable from other locations, due to intervening development and the Project's elevation atop the berm. Because of the site's higher elevation in relationship to other, surrounding locations, e.g. the I-405 freeway, and residential areas south and southwest of the Project site, direct views of construction at and below ground level would be limited. This includes views of grading activity, with related equipment, workers and site disturbance. Impacts on views from these location would occur primarily with the construction of buildings as they arise on the Project site.

The short-term changes in the site's aesthetic conditions would not be considered to result in substantial impacts on the environment due to the following: (1) views of construction activity would be limited (occurring primarily for travelers along Del Amo Boulevard); (2) the site appearance would be typical of construction sites in urban areas; (3) the site currently has a somewhat degraded character; and (4) construction would occur within an urban setting and not adjacent to aesthetic resources, where unique or special visual conditions would be affected. As buildings arise on the Project site, the loss of undeveloped area and a feeling of spaciousness would be incrementally altered. At some point during construction, enough of the new buildings would be on site to cause the significant impact identified above regarding loss of a valued visual resource.

(b) Impact on Views

The impacts of the proposed Project on views addresses the impacts that would be caused by Project buildings locating between visual resources and view locations that surround the Project site. The nature of the existing views and view resources as well as the view locations are discussed in Subsection 2.a.(2).(a) of the Existing Conditions discussion, above.

As discussed therein, the view resources surrounding the Project site are limited. The view-scape in the Project area is that of an urban milieu with its array of interspersed developments, open spaces, and infrastructure improvements. The Project vicinity does not contain notable features that would typically fall under the heading of view resource, e.g. unique geologic features, natural areas, etc. The features of the Project's visual setting that might shape an appreciation of its visual character are limited to typical urban elements that may be subjectively appreciated, such as the architecture of particular buildings or patches of open space/landscaping between buildings. The two notable features that might catch the eye of travelers through the area are the Goodyear Blimp site, located on the north side of the I-405 Freeway, and the large fiberglass statue of a man holding a golf club on the south side of the I-405 Freeway.

The view locations that are addressed in the analysis include views from both public and private locations. Views toward and over the Project site from public vantage point are available from the I-405 Freeway, Del Amo Boulevard and Main Street. Views toward and over the Project site are available from limited residential units south and southwest of the Project site, and from fairly distant taller buildings, and buildings located in distant areas with raised elevations.

(i) Impacts from Public Vantage Points**I-405 Freeway**

The I-405 Freeway provides the most notable views of the Project site, due to its large number of travelers and adjacency to the Project site. Views toward and over the Project site are limited, due to the site's location, which is off to the side of the freeway, and the berm along the edge of the Project site that limits longer-range views over and beyond the Project site (see Photos 10 through 12 on Figure 15 on page 173, and Section 1 on Figure 18 on page 188). Development beyond the Project site is urban in nature, without unique scenic resources. Therefore, Project development would not interfere with views of any such features. As described in the environmental setting subsection, above, the two visual resources along the I-405 Freeway – the Goodyear Blimp (when it is in port) and the large statue of the man with a golf club – are located north of the Project site and would remain visible from Freeway locations once Project development is complete.

Del Amo Boulevard

Del Amo Boulevard passes through the Project site separating the 11-acre parcel on the north (District 1) and the 157 -acre parcel on the south (Districts 1 and 2). Views of areas surrounding the Project site for both eastbound and westbound travelers on Del Amo Boulevard are limited (see Photos 4 through 6 on Figure 13 on page 171). The Project site's elevation and berms are at a higher elevation, thereby blocking clear views of surrounding development and features. When surrounding areas are apparent, those views are of the general urban environment and not toward any identified visual resource.

Main Street

Views along Main Street are shaped by light industrial uses interspersed among vacant and underdeveloped lands on the west and residential development, the vacant Project site, and open space on the east (see Photos 13 through 15 on Figure 16 on page 174). Views beyond the Project site are limited. Existing development on Main Street, north and south of the Project site, limits views over the site from distances beyond that development to the vicinity of the site entrance at Del Amo Boulevard. Views are further limited due to the berm along the western edge of the Project site and raised elevations within the Project site, that rise above Main Street. There are no views of unique scenic resources from vantage points along Main Street.

(ii) Private Vantage Points

Residential Neighborhood Adjacent to the Project Site

Views over the Project site from the residential neighborhood located to the south and southwest of the Project site are limited. The locations in this area currently have views toward the 8-foot to 16-foot slope (13 feet to 16 feet for most of its length) that lies along the edge of the Project site (see Photos 7 through 9 on Figure 14 on page 172). The raised slope presents a face to the adjacent areas that rises higher than ground level and first floor locations, limiting views of distant locations. However, views over the Project site may be available from some second-story rooms where they occur amongst the approximately 100 units adjacent to the Project site, or from a few more distant units located within the neighborhood. However, the number of such occurrences would be extremely limited. Views of the Project site at all from the remainder of the residential units in the neighborhood are blocked by existing development. Views of the site from neighborhood streets are available (from Grace Avenue, Neptune Avenue, Deloris Street, Dominguez Street, and Torrance Boulevard), however, these views also face the site berm and do not extend beyond the Project site. Again, there would be no views available of unique scenic resources, from vantage points within this area.

Other Private Locations

Views over the Project site are extremely limited, due to the flat terrain of the surrounding area and the prevalence of existing development. Existing development in the Project area blocks views of the Project site from more distant areas that lie at elevations lower than the intervening buildings. However, a few taller buildings (e.g., office buildings) may provide some views over the Project site from outlying areas and some distant locations at increased elevations (e.g., from the Palos Verdes Peninsula). From the more distant locations, the Project site is a relatively small, undeveloped parcel located amongst the urban environment. From such locations, the Project site becomes part of the scenery. Further, there is limited private development in the Project area, with those uses not oriented toward providing long-range views over the Project site.

Views of the site are also available from the Dominguez Hills Golf Course north of the Project Site (see Photo 16 on Figure 16 on page 174). Views from this location are shaped by the short- to mid-range views of the utility corridor and Project site, itself. The nearby Big Man statue and Blimp facility are located north of the golf course and their views would not be affected.

(iii) Conclusions Regarding View Impacts

The Project site is not considered a view resource, as it is in a degraded state, and does not include qualifying unique or natural qualities. The existing scenery in the Project area is limited to that of an urban setting with its array of interspersed developments, open spaces, and infrastructure improvements. The Project vicinity does not contain notable features that would typically fall under the heading of view resource, e.g. unique geologic features, natural areas, etc. Views of the two notable features that might catch the eye of travelers through the area, the Goodyear Blimp site located on the north side of the I-405 Freeway, and the large fiberglass statue of a man holding a golf club located on the south side of the I-405 Freeway would not be lost due to Project development. Views over the Project site are limited due to intervening development, the flat terrain in the areas surrounding the Project site, and that the Project site sits atop a berm that slopes down to surrounding areas. Therefore, the proposed Project would not substantially diminish any such views, and impacts on views of unique, valued scenic resources would be less than significant.

(c) Shade and Shadow Impact

The analysis of potential shading impacts focuses on the length of time for which sunlight for light, warmth, and overall quality of life is expected for land uses which include routinely useable outdoor spaces. Such uses are termed “shadow sensitive.” Uses typically considered shadow sensitive include parks, residences and recreational areas, churches, and schools.

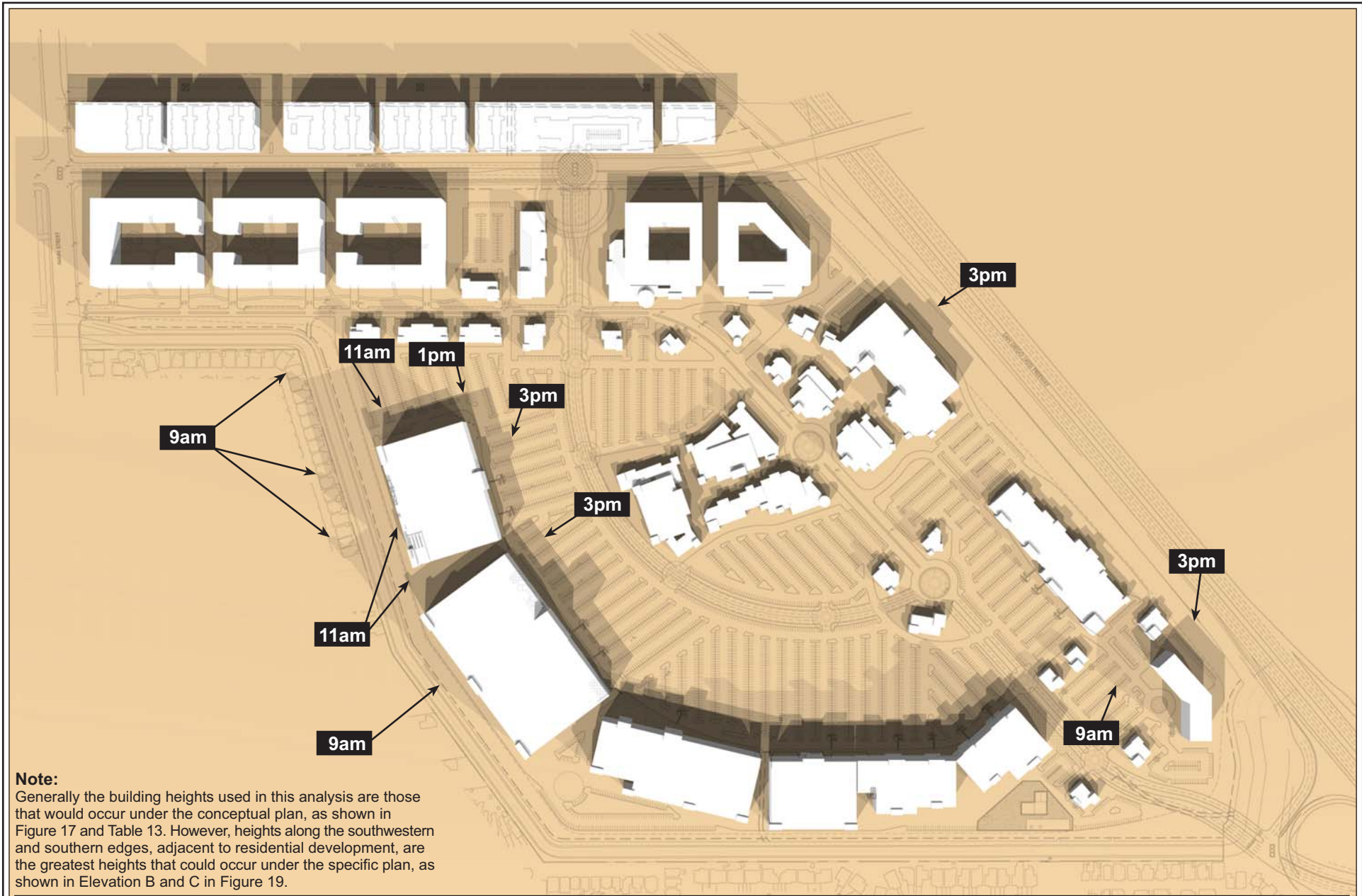
The shading analysis focuses on impacts that could occur at existing off-site locations. Shading within the site is considered a consequence of Project development and thus concluded to be an acceptable condition as new residents have the option of considering shading conditions when they select their residential locations. It is expected that people preferring greater amounts of sun access would choose locations accordingly and, at the same time, some population would exercise a preference for more shaded areas.

Shadow-sensitive uses in the vicinity of the proposed Project are confined to the residential uses located south and west of the Project site. There are approximately 100 residential units located opposite the Project site, across the Torrance Lateral. The shading that would occur in the vicinity of these residential uses is shown in the shading diagrams presented in Figures 22 through 24 on pages 210 through 212. These figures show the daily shading patterns for the winter solstice, fall equinox and summer solstice, respectively.³¹ Shading impacts for other times of the year fall between the ranges that occur on these dates.

The shading analyses in Figures 22 through 24 are based on the building locations shown in the Conceptual Plan and Isometric Portrayal shown in Figure 17 on page 187. The building heights over most of the Project site are also the heights shown there, as shown in Table 13 on page 185. However, the heights used for the analysis on the southwest and southern edges of the Project site, the focus of this shading analysis due to the adjacent residential uses, are the maximum heights that could occur, pursuant to the Specific Plan limitations. These are the taller heights shown in Elevations B and C on Figure 19 on page 189. That is, they represent building envelopes that would be available should the theater or hotel be located along this Project edge. Thus, the potential shading conditions shown are overstated, since the heights analyzed, could only occur within a portion of the envelope shown.

Shadows are a function of the season, latitude and longitude, the height and shape of the structure casting the shadow, and topography. Due to the earth's rotation and annual revolution around the sun, the sun's position relative to any structure is constantly changing throughout the annual cycle. Consequently, shadows cast by a structure change substantially during the day, and from day to day throughout the year. Early morning shadows are quite long in westerly directions, shortening into northerly midday shadows as the sun moves from an eastern rise to a zenith, then gradually lengthening in an easterly direction as the sun approaches its late afternoon or evening setting location in the west. In the winter, when the period of sunlight is shorter and the sun is lower in the sky, shadows are uniformly longer than in summer for the same time of day.

³¹ *Shading impacts at the spring equinox are similar to those of the fall equinox. The fall equinox has been represented here, since it occurs during daylight savings time when there is a greater opportunity to enjoy daylight activities.*

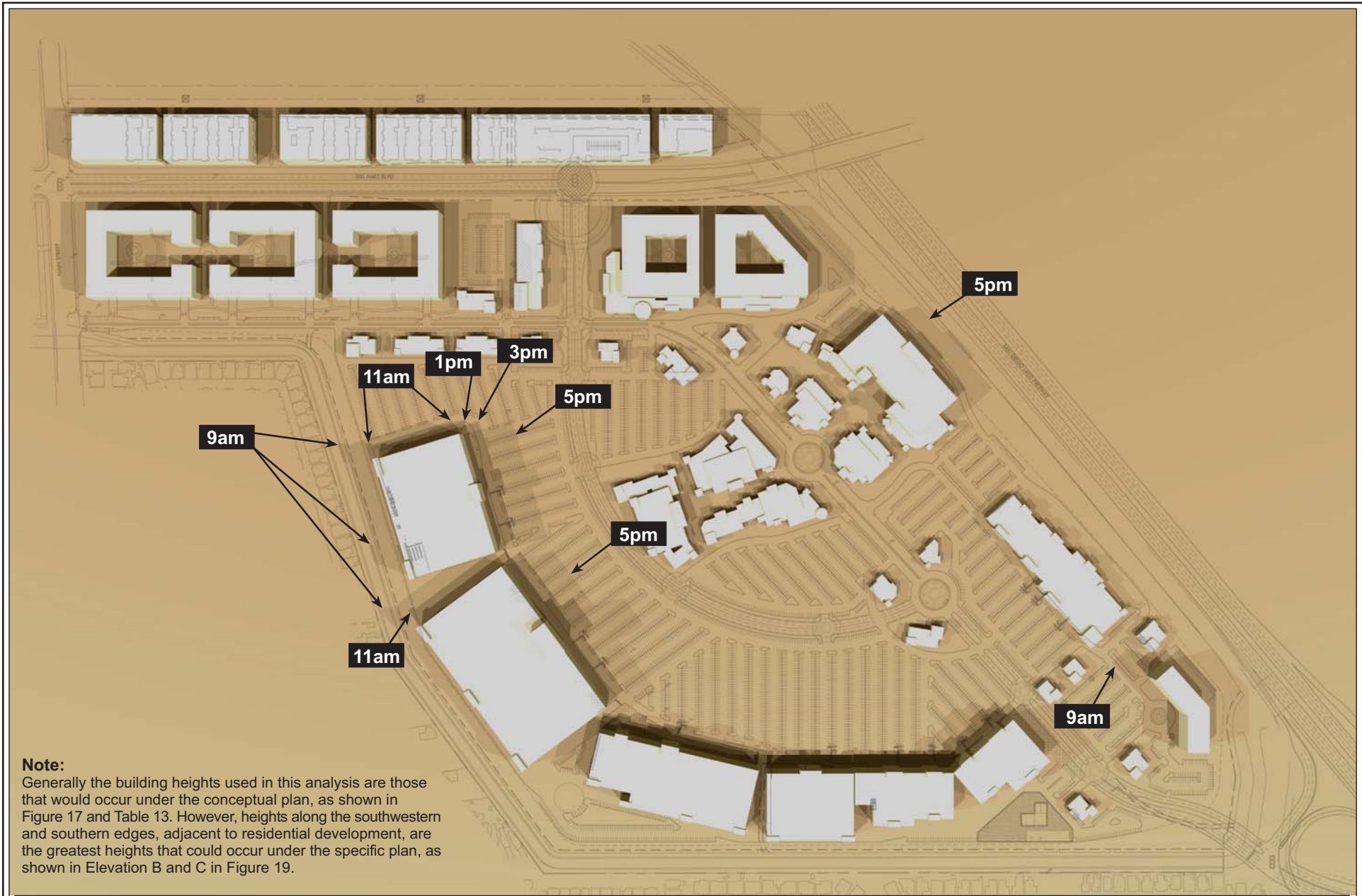


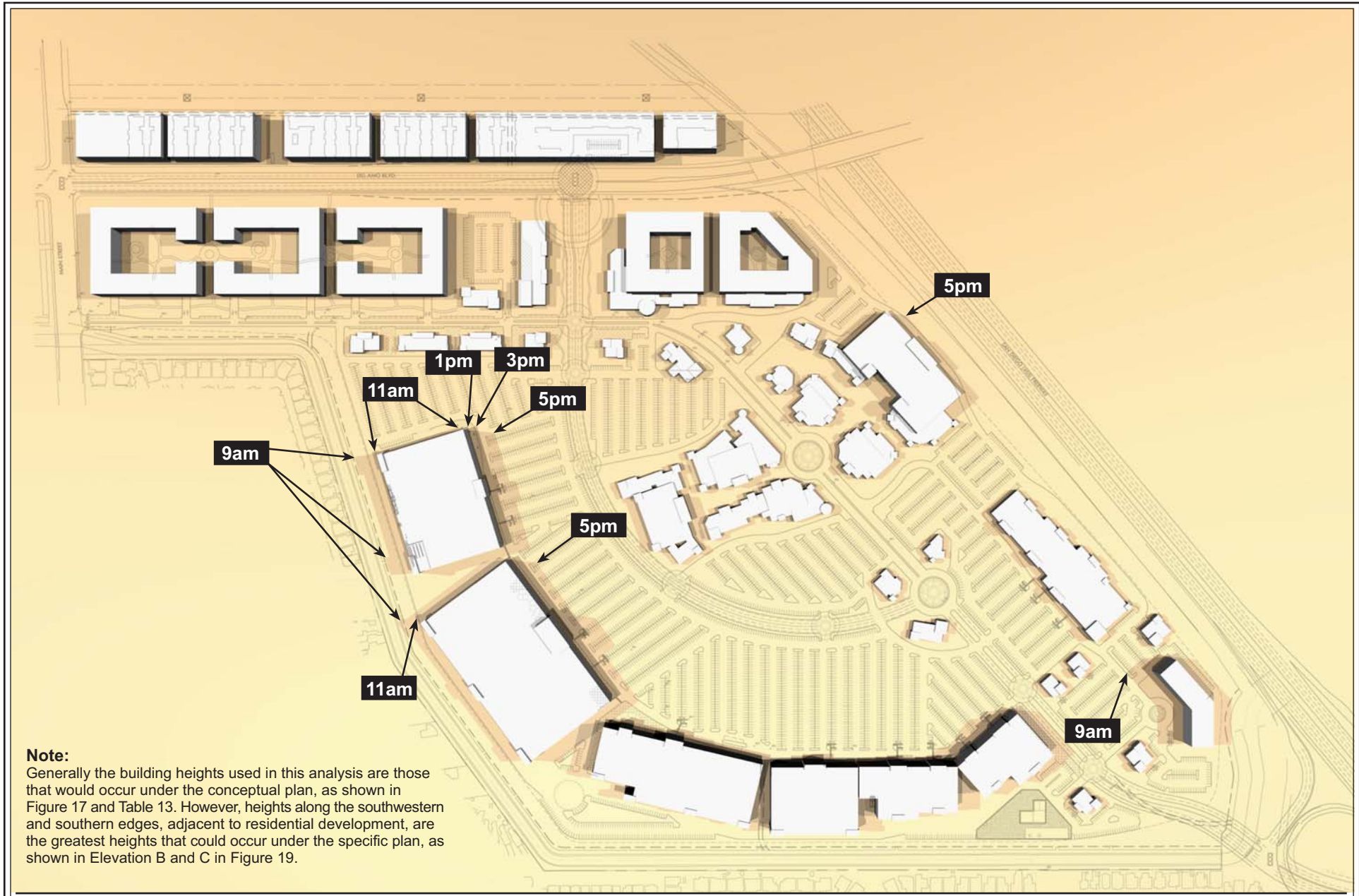
Note:
Generally the building heights used in this analysis are those that would occur under the conceptual plan, as shown in Figure 17 and Table 13. However, heights along the southwestern and southern edges, adjacent to residential development, are the greatest heights that could occur under the specific plan, as shown in Elevation B and C in Figure 19.



Source: Nadel Architects, 2005

Figure 22
Winter Solstice Shadows





Source: Nadel Architects, 2005

Figure 24
Summer Solstice Shadows

As indicated in Figures 22 through 24, the maximum off-site shading that could occur on sun-sensitive uses is limited. The greatest shading on nearby residential development would occur during winter mornings. Shading on the residential properties during the hours analyzed would occur for less than one hour. This is less than the 3-hour significance threshold, and impacts on shading would thus be less than significant.

(d) Impact of Artificial Lighting

The proposed Project is located within an urban area, amidst existing roadways (including the I-405 Freeway) with numerous sources of nighttime illumination. These uses establish ambient lighting levels typical of urban areas. There is an overall urban glow, with brighter lighting along major thoroughfares and commercial districts, and more subdued lighting within residential neighborhoods and developments.

The proposed Project would add new lighting to the Project area causing increases to the lighting levels of the existing setting. Project lighting would be typical of lighting anticipated with the Project uses, and would continue the existing lighting patterns. At the same time, Project lighting would be provided pursuant to the Project's lighting guidelines, which include requirements limiting light intensity, light control methods (e.g. shielding of lighting), and pole heights. The intention of these guidelines is to limit the lighting to levels within the needed range of lighting required for the Project uses and site security. In particular, the guidelines focus lighting on-site, and limit the glow that could occur on the Project site.

The analysis of potential impacts from Project lighting is concerned with the following issues: (1) additional glow from the Project site that would change the ambient lighting conditions in the Project area, (2) direct views of site lighting that could cause glare to population in surrounding areas, and (3) spillover lighting onto adjacent properties that could interfere with activities on those properties. The Project's increases in lighting at the Project site would not substantially alter the lighting characteristics of the area with regard to these issues. Because Project lighting would be akin to similar development in the Project area, and would be limited via lighting intensity and shielding, the Project's ambient lighting would blend with surrounding areas, and not offer a substantial contrast with the overall urban lighting conditions. Because site lighting would be directed on site through limited pole heights and shielding, the Project lighting would not cause off-site glare, or interference with off-site activities. Since, the Project lighting would not substantially alter the character of off-site areas surrounding the Project site and would not interfere with off-site activities, impacts of Project lighting would be less than significant. Notwithstanding, it is noted that lighted signs can cause distraction from and be out of character with residential development. Therefore, a mitigation measure is proposed to limit any such potential off-site affects on residential development adjacent to the Project site.

4. MITIGATION MEASURES

The above analysis identified a significant impact regarding the loss of a valued aesthetic resource; i.e., the spaciousness that is provided by the undeveloped Project site. The loss of spaciousness occurs as a result of placing development at the Project's location rather than by the particular type, size or location of development. Any notable development on the Project site would change its currently undeveloped character. Therefore, this significant impact cannot be mitigated.

Two other potentially significant impacts were identified that could occur if development varied from that shown in the proposed Conceptual Plan. Accordingly, two mitigation measures are proposed that address potentially significant impacts that could occur due to the location of taller buildings along the Project's southern/southwestern edge than could occur from buildings portrayed in the Conceptual Plan, and variations in sign placement that could occur along the Project's I-405 edge. A mitigation measure is also proposed to insure that sign lighting does not adversely affect residential development adjacent to the Project site.

Mitigation Measure B-1 The minimum setback for hotel and theater uses along the Torrance Lateral, adjacent to residential uses, shall be 250 feet.

Mitigation Measure B-2 The distribution, placement and orientation of signs along the I-405 Freeway shall be in substantial compliance with the signage concepts presented in the Conceptual Plan.

Mitigation Measure B-3 The line of sight between lighted signs on the Project site and existing residential development along the Torrance Lateral, opposite to the Project site shall be minimized.

Otherwise, the proposed Project would not generate significant impacts on the environment. This conclusion was based on the assumed implementation of the Specific Plan regulations, guidelines, and standards. The Specific Plan includes a mechanism for site plan review of all development to insure that it does in fact meet the requirements of the Specific Plan. As many of Specific Plan features were relied upon in the above analysis, the following mitigation measure is proposed:

Mitigation Measure B-4 All Project development shall undergo site plan review by the Planning Manager to assure that the following design measures have been implemented:

- **Landscaping.** All Landscaping shall be consistent with a plant palate of native trees, shrubs and groundcovers that shall add uniformity to the Project

site. Plants shall be selected to support and complement the themes of the various Project components. Specially themed landscaping treatments shall occur at key locations (e.g. freeway edge, channel slope and lifestyle and entertainment area). Of more detailed note: (1) landscaping themes on Del Amo Boulevard and Main Street shall be coordinated with the landscaping of the Carson Street Conceptual Visualization and the Home Depot Center; (2) continuous shrub and ground cover plantings shall be provided in the medians and edges of internal streets with vertical landscape and/or hardscape elements at a minimum of every 50 feet along the edges; (3) 5% landscape coverage shall be provided in parking lots, and (4) 50% landscape coverage shall be provided on the sides of parking structures visible to residences.

- **Buildings.** Buildings shall include the following design features: varied and articulated building façades featuring the use of colorful stucco, with a variety of architectural accent materials for exterior treatment at visually accessible locations.
- **Accessory Facilities and Walls.** Wall facades shall be varied and articulated. Accessory facilities such as trash bins, storage areas, etc., shall be covered and screened.
- **Lighting.** Lighting shall be limited in intensity, light control methods, and pole heights, so as to be directed on site, and not interfere with off-site activities.

5. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

A list of Related Projects is presented in Section III.B in Table 9 on page 117, with their locations identified on Figure 8 on page 119. None of these projects is located in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project. Except as noted below, none of the related projects would contribute to the same visual context as the proposed Project. The nearest related projects are located along Avalon Boulevard. These projects are located north of the I-405 Freeway, which acts as a large buffer between the Project site and uses along Avalon Boulevard. Many of the Related Projects are located south of the Project site, in an area that is buffered from the Project site by the existing residential neighborhoods.

One related project of note is Related Project No. 32, a small retail development located on Main Street to the south of the proposed Project site. This small project, which does not lie adjacent to the Project site, would contribute with the proposed Project, to the overall character of Main Street between Carson Street and the I-405 Freeway. This roadway segment was described in the analysis of Project impacts as having a somewhat mixed urban character defined by a range of different land use types. This related project is consistent with the existing range of uses along Main Street and would be consistent with the existing mix of urban uses which

already includes interspersed, commercial development, thereby precluding potential visual impacts.

Furthermore, all related projects in the City of Carson would be subject to numerous provisions of the Carson Municipal Code, which includes development standards, procedures for Site Plan and Design Review, and, for some sites, design review under the Design Overlay zoning designation. Therefore, other projects in the City of Carson would be expected to minimize adverse visual impacts. Should other projects result in significant impacts due to unusual circumstances, those occurrences would be isolated and at some distance from the proposed Project. The impacts of the related projects would be less than significant. However, since the proposed Project would have significant impact, cumulative impacts would also be significant.

6. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The proposed Project would result in the conversion of the undeveloped vacant site to a developed use, causing a loss of spaciousness that contributes to the aesthetic quality of the Project site and its surroundings. This impact is a significant impact that is inherent in the development of the site, and thus cannot be mitigated or avoided. Two other potentially significant impacts were identified that could occur if development varied from that shown in the proposed Conceptual Plan. Accordingly, mitigation measures were included to address impacts that could occur if buildings taller than those shown in the Conceptual Plan were located along the Project's southern/southwestern edge, or a variation in sign placement were to occur along the Project's I-405 edge. These mitigation measures reduced the related impacts to a level that is less than significant. Otherwise the proposed Project would not have significant impacts on aesthetic character of the surrounding area, views, shading conditions, or nighttime illumination.