

## 3.1 Aesthetics

### Environmental Setting

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This section provides an evaluation of potential impacts to Carlsbad's aesthetic character as a result of the proposed General Plan.

#### PHYSICAL SETTING

##### Visual Character Overview

Carlsbad is located in northwest San Diego County. In addition to the Pacific Ocean coastline along its western boundary, Carlsbad is surrounded by the cities of Oceanside to the north, Encinitas to the south, and Vista and San Marcos and unincorporated areas of San Diego County to the east.

The Pacific Ocean is among Carlsbad's principal visual features, and frames the city's western edge. Vistas of the ocean can be seen from much of Carlsbad Boulevard, especially in the central and southern portions of the boulevard. The city's three lagoons are also distinctive aspects of the city's visual character. The somewhat flatter terrain along the coastline gives way to hillsides toward the east.

The dominant man-made features are Interstate 5 (I-5) and the railroad corridor, which run parallel to the coastline within a mile of the ocean, and the McClellan-Palomar Airport located at the geographic center of the community along Palomar Airport Road and El Camino Real. In the northwest, the older neighborhoods of the Village and the Barrio form a gridded network of streets near the coast.

Urban development abuts Highway 78 along Carlsbad's northern edge, with the highway and Buena Vista Lagoon acting as a boundary between Carlsbad and Oceanside. Along the city's southern edge, Batiqitos Lagoon separates Carlsbad from the city of Encinitas. City boundaries to the east are less distinctive, where a mix of hillsides and urban development lie between the center and the cities of Vista and San Marcos.

Although primarily a residential community, Carlsbad contains a mix of development typologies and patterns. These range from the small-scaled mixed use and neighborhood commercial found in the northwestern Village and Barrio neighborhoods to the larger lot sizes and auto-oriented shopping centers found in the suburban neighborhoods of the northeast, southeast, and south-

west quadrants. In general, most Carlsbad buildings are one to two stories tall, although there are several three- and four-story residential and office/industrial buildings.

## **Scenic Resources and Vistas**

### **Coastline**

The Carlsbad coastline is one of the largest scenic areas in the city. Although access points to Carlsbad beaches are available, pedestrian and auto access is limited by both natural topography and man-made barriers, such as I-5 and the railroad. As a result, the most convenient way to access the beach is via car at designated crossings or road bridges. The promenade along the beach near Carlsbad Village and its overlook points provide visual access to the shoreline at Carlsbad State Beach. However, views of the coast from Carlsbad Boulevard are often interrupted by buildings, such as residential developments, hotels, and retail uses. Near the intersections of Carlsbad Boulevard with Carlsbad Village Drive and Cannon Road, there are several private uses along the coast that limit waterfront access and views from public streets. The Encina Power Plant located along Carlsbad Boulevard is perhaps the most visually prominent development feature along the coast, and it interrupts the scenic vistas and visual quality of the coastline.

### **Open Space**

Natural areas and open spaces, including watershed features, hillsides, habitats, parks and vistas, are some of the most defining and integral components of the city's form and structure. Carlsbad's beaches connect to three of California's natural lagoons—Buena Vista, Agua Hedionda and Batiquitos. These lagoons are rich with a diversity of plant, animal and aquatic wildlife and offer public amenities, such as hiking trails, scenic views, fishing, and water recreation. Watershed drainages give Carlsbad its rolling topography in the east, resulting in areas with steep slopes ideal for protected habitat. Hillsides layered with trees and brush create unique, intimate spaces where many of Carlsbad's master planned communities and resorts are located. Natural features also help shape the city's network of manmade open spaces such as city parks, trails and golf courses, many of which extend to the eastern boundary of the city. Parks are distributed throughout the city and host a variety of passive and active resources. A small amount of agricultural land is in productive use in Carlsbad, including the Flower Fields and Strawberry Fields.

### **Scenic Corridors**

Trails, promenades and bikeways are unique visual features and public amenities that evoke images of the city's beach community, small town feel, and connectedness. The beaches and the coastal corridor are key visual amenities in the city, enjoyed not only by beach goers, joggers, bicyclists, but also by passengers in cars along the coastal roads. The seawalls, ramps, and promenade that descend to the beach; the trails that meander along major roads; and the separated and landscaped bikeways along the railroad in the Barrio foster connections and are heavily used amenities for residents and visitors. When applied on a citywide scale, these types of amenities improve pedestrian and bike access while further enhancing neighborhood connections to natural and scenic surroundings. The El Camino Real roadway corridor is also considered a scenic roadway – areas adjacent to the roadway provide rolling hillsides and diverse views.

No highways in Carlsbad are included on the Caltrans list of officially designated or eligible scenic highways.

## **Community Character**

### ***Residential***

Carlsbad's residential neighborhoods generally consist of those developed on a grid street system within the older, northwest portion of the city, and larger areas of master-planned communities with curvilinear street patterns throughout the remainder of the city.

In the older residential neighborhoods, such as the Barrio and Carlsbad Village, located primarily west of I-5, homes were often built by individual builders, resulting in a greater variety in the housing stock. Homes in these older neighborhoods exhibit diverse architectural styles reflecting the city's long history: early ornate Queen Anne homes, Spanish and Mission influences, craftsman bungalows and ranch houses. Typical buildings stand one to two stories tall, though more contemporary two- to three-story multi-family housing is also found.

Master-planned communities, located primarily east of I-5, were built under the city's Planned Community zoning designation, which requires cohesive planning for housing types, open space, streets, landscaping and other amenities. While the dominant housing type in these communities is single family, several of them include townhomes and multi-family developments. Access to these developments is provided by auto-oriented streets; within the developments, internal streets provide vehicle circulation and sidewalks provide safe areas for walking. More recently, the city has sought to develop more connected and integrated neighborhoods, such as Bressi Ranch.

### ***Commercial and Visitor Attractions***

A smaller portion of the city is dedicated to local and regional shopping centers. Some smaller shopping centers located at major crossroads meet the daily needs of local residents, while larger-scale shopping destinations, generally near the freeways, have a region-wide customer base. Local shopping centers, hotels and visitor amenities are distributed along major roads such as El Camino Real, Palomar Airport Road and Rancho Santa Fe Road. The city's main regional shopping centers include the Village, Plaza Camino Real, The Forum, Premium Outlets, and Car Country. The city is also well known for its luxury hotels and resorts, including La Costa Resort and Spa and the Park Hyatt Aviara. These luxury facilities offer private, insular recreation areas in the hills that capture the advantages of topography, natural open space and views. In addition to shopping and natural amenities, like the beach and lagoons, Carlsbad also offers a variety of other visitor-attracting amenities, including numerous golf courses and LEGOLAND California. The majority of Carlsbad's shopping and visitor amenities are only accessible by car, which precludes walking or bicycling to nearby services and amenities—a common small-town quality.

### ***Employment Uses***

The city's employment centers are characterized by a much larger development scale than the residential neighborhoods. The Palomar Airport Road employment cluster, the city's main employment district, is located around the airport along Palomar Airport Road between Avenida Encinas

and the city's eastern boundary. The area comprises the vast majority of the city's high-tech, office, light industrial and warehouse sectors. The Carlsbad Research Center alone has more than 7.5 million square feet of office, research and light industrial space, and is home to several of the city's top employers, including golf manufacturers and high-tech firms.

The employment cluster is highly car-oriented, with large-scale developments primarily accessed by Palomar Airport Road. Buildings are typically large-footprint structures (sometimes up to 600 feet in length) of one to two stories, with up to three stories in newer office and industrial buildings around the airport. Building entrances face parking lots and landscaped setbacks typically separate the front building façade from the street. There are few basic commercial services within these employment areas (e.g. dry cleaners, salons, places for lunch), so most employees in this area must drive for all personal services. Moreover, although there are sidewalks along this corridor, distances between most destinations are too far apart to make walking a realistic transportation option. Additional services, small central plazas or parks, and better connections to them could reduce driving needs, promote interaction, and improve overall quality of life.

### **Light and Glare**

Light and glare sources within Carlsbad are primarily associated with residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. The light and glare that exist in these urbanized areas of the city are typical for an urban setting. Carlsbad also has abundant open space resources, which are dispersed throughout the city's land use pattern. Light and glare levels in these areas are generally lower; many of these natural open space resources serve as important habitat areas for wildlife, which may be sensitive to light and glare sources.

## **Regulatory Setting**

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### **STATE REGULATIONS**

#### **California Scenic Highways Program**

Recognizing the value of scenic areas and the value of views from roads in such areas, the California State Legislature established the California Scenic Highway Program in 1963. This legislation sees scenic highways as "a vital part of the all-encompassing effort...to protect and enhance California's beauty, amenity and quality of life." Under this program, a number of state highways have been designated as eligible for inclusion as scenic routes. However, there are no designated scenic highways in Carlsbad.

#### **California Coastal Act**

The California Coastal Act (Public Resources Code Section 30000 et seq.) authorizes the State of California to regulate development within the State Coastal Zone, defined as the area between the seaward limits of the state's jurisdiction and 1,000 yards landward from the mean high tide line. In Carlsbad, the coastal zone boundary generally encompasses the area east of the Pacific Ocean to El Camino Real. While scenic resources are not specifically mentioned, Public Resources Code

Section 30001.5 calls to “protect, maintain, and, where feasible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the coastal zone environment and its natural and artificial resources.”

## **LOCAL REGULATIONS**

### **City of Carlsbad Zoning Ordinance**

The city’s Municipal Code does not have a specific section dedicated to prevention of nuisance light and glare through regulation; rather, lighting is addressed for each land use type in the city’s Zoning Ordinance (Municipal Code Title 21). For example, for industrial uses allowed in the Planned Industrial zone, the ordinance states, “all uses shall be operated so as not to produce humidity, heat, glare or high-intensity illumination which is perceptible without instruments by the average person while on or beyond the lot containing the use.” For uses allowed in the Local Shopping Center, and Office uses, the ordinance states that “light sources shall be designed to avoid direct or indirect glare to any off-site properties or public rights-of-way.” Light and glare conditions are also regulated for campgrounds, greenhouses, and gas stations.

### **Chapter 21.40: Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone**

The purpose of the city’s Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone is to supplement the underlying zoning by providing additional regulations for development within designated areas to preserve or enhance outstanding views, flora and geology, or other unique natural attributes and historical and cultural resources. This chapter establishes criteria by which standards may be applied. Adopted standards may address, but are not limited to signs, utilities, landscaping, architectural treatment, setbacks, side yards, height, bulk, and building spacing. Currently, this overlay zone is applied to the El Camino Real corridor.

### **Chapter 21.82: Beach Area Overlay Zone**

The intent of the city’s Beach Area Overlay zone is to supplement the underlying zoning for residential areas west of the railroad and north of Agua Hedionda lagoon. The overlay zone provides additional regulations to protect the unique mix of residential development and aesthetic quality of the area.

### **Chapter 21.95: Hillside Development Regulations**

The city’s Hillside Development Regulations are intended to preserve and/or enhance the aesthetic qualities of natural hillsides and manufactured slopes. The regulations require project grading to be minimized, to relate to the slope of the land, and to incorporate contours in manufactured slopes located in highly visible public locations. The regulations additionally assure that the alteration of natural hillsides are done in an environmentally sensitive manner to protect lagoons and riparian ecosystems from increased erosion and avoid substantial impacts to natural resource areas, wildlife habitats, or native vegetation.

### **Chapter 21.204: Coastal Shoreline Development Overlay Zone**

The city's Coastal Shoreline Development Overlay Zone is intended to provide regulations for development along the coastline to ensure the shoreline is maintained as a unique recreational and scenic resource, promoting public safety and access, and avoiding the adverse geologic and economic effects of bluff erosion.

#### **Specific and Master Plans**

The city uses specific plans and master plans to coordinate development and infrastructure improvements on large sites or series of parcels. Specific plans and master plans must be consistent with the General Plan and are typically used to establish development plans and standards to achieve the design and development objectives for a particular area. Much of the residential areas in the southern and northeastern portions of the Carlsbad were developed as part of a master plan (e.g., Aviara, Bressi Ranch, Calavera Hills, Rancho Carrillo, Robertson Ranch, and Villages of La Costa). In addition to the large residential master plan areas, the city has several smaller residential specific plans and specific plans for commercial and industrial areas. The Village Master Plan (described below) guides development in that area. There are also many older specific plans and master plans that have been fully implemented.

#### **Carlsbad Village Master Plan and Design Manual, 1996 (Revised 2012)**

The Carlsbad Village Master Plan and Design Manual establishes the land use, zoning, design, and long-range strategy for the Carlsbad Village area. The Carlsbad Village Master Plan and Design Manual, together with other implementing ordinances, also serve as the Local Coastal Program for the Carlsbad Village area, pursuant to requirements of the California Coastal Act. The Carlsbad Village Master Plan and Design Manual articulates a six-point vision:

- The Village has a distinct visual identity that makes it unique and a memorable place with identifiable landmarks.
- The Village strives for excellence through high quality, well-designed private development and public improvements.
- The Village accommodates a wide range of land uses and also serves as a vibrant specialty retail center for the entire city.
- The Village has a strong civic character and provides a place for people to come to be a part of important community events.
- The Village is a comfortable and safe place to work, shop, visit and live.
- The Village demonstrates a welcoming attitude and a spirit of cooperation to new businesses and developers who are interested in becoming a part of the downtown.

#### **City of Carlsbad Scenic Corridor Guidelines**

The Scenic Corridor Guidelines were completed in 1988 and were developed to implement the then-existing Scenic Highways Element of the Carlsbad General Plan. The Guidelines designate a number of city streets and locations as scenic corridors based on criteria listed in the document, and provide guidance for improvements to take place within or adjacent to the scenic corridor

rights-of-way. The Guidelines also designate a number of community identity entries, based on included criteria, to receive monumentation or signage. For the scenic corridors, the Guidelines establish the following four categories:

1. Community Theme Corridors – This category contains El Camino Real, Carlsbad Boulevard, and Palomar Airport Road. The guidelines include goals and guidance for right-of-way treatments for each of these streets to promote the distinct characteristics of each of these three major thoroughfares.
2. Community Scenic Corridors – Streets included in this category are major arterial streets that pass through and connect major subareas of the city. These streets generally traverse the hills and residential areas of the central and eastern parts of the city.
3. Natural Open Space and Recreation Corridors – Streets in this category were selected based on their rural quality, and each is located adjacent to one of the city’s three lagoons. These streets are narrower, with relatively light traffic volume compared to the other categories, and generally do not connect to high-activity centers.
4. Railroad Corridor – This category encompasses the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railway. The Guidelines recognize the difficulty of controlling railroad-owned right-of-way, but offers guidance on improvements outside of the right-of-way to impact the viewing experience of rail passengers traveling through the city.

The Guidelines reflect the city’s official intentions for scenic corridor rights-of-way and adjacent properties, though the document is not intended to function as development standards or to supersede city policies. Rather, it is intended to be used in conjunction with the city’s other design guidelines, standards, and policies to aid in decisions regarding visual quality and aesthetics.

### ***El Camino Real Corridor Development Standards***

The El Camino Real Corridor Development Standards were adopted in 1984 to further the goals of the then-existing Land Use and Scenic Highways Elements of the Carlsbad General Plan to preserve unique city resources as they relate to highways. The standards provide a general design concept for the entire length of the El Camino Real right-of-way, and establish development restrictions for private properties fronting the roadway. The design concept is an easily identifiable homogenous corridor that capitalizes on the distinct design characteristics of five distinct subareas. The standards include design guidelines emphasizing retention of natural topography; right-of-way standards for landscaping, street lighting, signage, and furniture; and private frontage standards for design theme, medians, sidewalks, signage, building height and setback, grading, street furniture and lighting, roofing, and land use.

## **Impact Analysis**

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### **SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA**

For the purposes of this Program EIR, a significant adverse impact would occur if the proposed General Plan would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;

- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of Carlsbad and its surroundings; or
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day- or night-time views in the area.

## **METHODOLOGY AND ASSUMPTIONS**

Aesthetics and visual resources are generally subjective by nature, and therefore the level of the proposed General Plan's visual impact is difficult to quantify. In addition, it is difficult to estimate the impact future development would have on scenic resources, since individual development projects can enhance the aesthetic quality of an area. As such, this analysis was conducted qualitatively, assessing potential implications of growth occurring consistent with the proposed General Plan Land Use Map on the existing visual character of the planning area.

## **SUMMARY OF IMPACTS**

The proposed General Plan is not expected to have significant adverse impacts on Carlsbad's scenic resources by detracting from scenic vistas, existing visual character and quality, or existing conditions of light and glare. Land use and design changes in the proposed General Plan generally seek to direct development into already urbanized infill areas while providing for visual compatibility within those areas. This has the effect of preserving the scenic quality of open space, agricultural, and coastal areas, while enhancing and unifying visual quality of built environments. While densification of selected areas is likely to occur, proposed policies will regulate physical aspects of development such as lighting, signage, buffering, building height and massing, and refer to the other regulatory documents (e.g., Zoning Ordinance, area-specific master plans and guidelines) to ensure visual compatibility. Additional policies in the proposed General Plan promote the long-term retention of open spaces and agricultural practices, thus protecting these visual components of the city's landscape. Because new development would be sited mostly in urbanized areas, and will be subject to the Zoning Ordinance and design policies, the impacts of added light and glare resulting from the proposed General Plan would also be less than significant. The proposed General Plan is also consistent with resource protection programs, such as the city's Habitat Management Plan and Local Coastal Program, which contain policies and regulations that protect visual resources, agricultural and open space resources, and require impact mitigation.

## **IMPACTS**

### **Impact 3.1-1 Implementation of the proposed Carlsbad General Plan will not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. (*Less than Significant*)**

Scenic vistas in Carlsbad consist of the scenic corridors and views to and from the coastline, open spaces, and hillsides. The proposed General Plan will continue to regulate development in these areas, and contains policies to ensure that opportunities to enjoy scenic views are either preserved or enhanced. Thus, substantial adverse effects are not expected to occur.

The proposed General Plan introduces land use changes throughout the city. In the majority of cases, the land use change sites are located in or near already developed areas and coincide with

areas designated for development under the existing General Plan. By focusing development in infill areas, the proposed General Plan relieves pressure to develop in open space and agricultural areas while filling visual gaps in existing neighborhoods. This allows for the preservation of open space views and the enhancement of urban views.

Along the city's scenic corridors, the proposed General Plan's land use changes are minimal, occurring in areas where some development has already taken place. Proposed policies require that development be located away from visible ridges, and that larger buildings minimize their visual appearance from scenic corridors and other vistas.

Along the coastline, proposed policies and land use changes would encourage infill development in the Village and Barrio neighborhoods and on underutilized land in the Ponto area. The proposed policies and land use changes would allow greater access to coastal views while preserving the general visual character of the beaches and coast. Furthermore, the proposed General Plan calls for redevelopment of the Encina Power Plant—which currently has a negative impact on the coastline's scenic quality—as a mix of open space and commercial development that would enhance the coastline's scenic quality.

The proposed General Plan is also consistent with the city's existing Hillside Development Regulations, and continues to restrict development on hillsides. Permitted development would be expected to preserve or enhance the visual quality of existing topography. Additionally, the proposed General Plan conforms to the city's Local Coastal Program, which addresses coastal and hillside views and the prevention of development practices that threaten the stability of those areas.

Finally, individual development projects will still be subject to development and planning review, and must therefore conform to zoning and other ordinances regarding aesthetic qualities such as lighting, signage, landscaping, building setbacks, and hillside protection.

Due to the siting and nature of the proposed land use changes, and policies that ensure that new development will have minimal impact on scenic corridors and other scenic resources, the proposed General Plan will have a less than significant impact on the city's scenic vistas.

### ***Proposed General Plan Policies that Reduce the Impact***

#### *Land Use and Community Design Element Policies*

- 2-P.10** Development on slopes, when permitted, shall be designed to minimize grading and comply with the hillside development provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and the Carlsbad Local Coastal Program.
- 2-P.38** Establish development standards that will preserve natural features and characteristics, especially those within coastal, hillside and natural habitat areas.
- 2-P.40** Ensure that development on hillsides, where permitted pursuant to the hillside development regulations of the Zoning Ordinance, is designed to preserve and/or enhance the visual quality of the pre-existing topography.

- 2-P.41** Where feasible, locate development away from visible ridges; larger buildings, such as large retail stores and office and industrial development, should be arranged to minimize the buildings' visual appearance from major transportation corridors and vistas.
- 2-P.42** Encourage clustering of development to preserve natural terrain and maximize open space areas around developments.
- 2-P.51** Plan and design Carlsbad Boulevard and adjacent public land (Carlsbad Boulevard coastal corridor) according to the following guiding principles:
- a. Carlsbad Boulevard shall become more than a road. This transportation corridor shall provide for recreational, aesthetic and community gathering opportunities that equal the remarkable character of the land.
  - b. Community safety shall be a high priority. Create a destination that provides a safe public environment to recreate.
  - c. Strategic public access and parking is a key to success. Development shall capitalize on opportunities to add/enhance multiple public access points and public parking for the beach and related recreational amenities.
  - d. Open views are desirable and important to maintaining the character of the area. Preservation and enhancement of views of ocean, lagoons, and other water bodies and beaches shall be a high priority in road, landscaping, and amenity design and development.
  - e. Enhance the area's vitality through diversity of recreational land uses. Carlsbad Boulevard development shall provide for amenities, services and goods that attract a diversity of residents and visitors.
  - f. Create vibrant and sustainable public spaces. Development shall provide for unique and vibrant coastal gathering spaces where people of all age groups and interests can gather to enjoy recreational and environmental amenities and supporting commercial uses.
  - g. Connect community, place and spirit. Design shall complement and enhance connectivity between existing community and regional land uses.
  - h. Environmentally sensitive design is a key objective. Environmentally sensitive development that respects existing coastal resources is of utmost importance.
  - i. A signature scenic corridor shall be created through design that honors the coastline's natural beauty. The resulting improvements will capture the 'essence' of Carlsbad; making it a special place for people from throughout the region with its natural beauty and vibrant public spaces.

Properly carried out, the realigned boulevard will maximize public views and encourage everyone to slow down and enjoy the scenery.

- j. Reimaging Carlsbad Boulevard shall be visionary. The reimagined Carlsbad Boulevard corridor will incorporate core community values articulated the Carlsbad Community Vision by providing: a) physical connectivity through multi-modal mobility improvements including bikeways, pedestrian trails, and a traffic-calmed street; b) social connectivity through creation of memorable public spaces; and c) economic vitality through a combination of visitor and local-serving commercial, civic, and recreational uses and services.

**2-P.52** Work with the California Parks Department to provide beachfront amenities such as water fountains, bathrooms, and showers; ensure these are designed to be unobtrusive and harmonious with the natural character of the area.

### **Mitigation Measures**

None required.

### **Impact 3.1-2 Implementation of the proposed Carlsbad General Plan will not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of Carlsbad and its surroundings. (Less than Significant)**

The proposed General Plan does not call for any substantial changes to land use or building design for most neighborhoods within the planning area and includes provisions to preserve or improve the existing visual character of the city.

Proposed land use designations and policies would direct new development into underutilized or previously developed areas, where any proposed changes in land use and physical design are intended to increase visual quality. The proposed policies also seek to ensure that any development or redevelopment observe design guidelines to ensure visual compatibility with the surrounding environment. In areas where infill development is planned to occur, such as the Village and the Barrio, proposed General Plan policies reference existing design guidelines and master plans that directly address the physical appearance of landscapes and structures to ensure that they are characteristic of their surroundings. Additionally, by encouraging more diversified commercial and residential development in these infill areas, the proposed General Plan will also promote investment in the maintenance of existing structures and filling in vacant visual areas with attractive and economically vibrant new development.

The proposed General Plan also promotes a more pedestrian-friendly environment, including streetscape improvements at the pedestrian scale, and ensures that residents have nearby access to shops and services. The result would be a more unified and aesthetically pleasing streetscape with an emphasis on well-designed sidewalks, landscaping, and facades.

The open space and agricultural components of Carlsbad's visual character would not be significantly altered by the proposed General Plan. Overall, open space and agricultural land use designations would be retained, while proposed policies maintain existing standards of park land and

protected open space areas. The proposed General Plan also contains policies to discourage development on open space lands, such as growth management strategies, in-lieu fees and dedications, and suggests the adoption of density and development rights transfers. Additional measures ensure the continued viability of agricultural practices throughout the city, particularly regarding the distinctive Flower Fields and strawberry fields along Cannon Road.

As the proposed Plan includes policies recognizing the sensitivity of preserving the visual character of existing neighborhoods and open spaces, and which promote investment in the ongoing maintenance and improvement of these areas, it is unlikely to lead to visual degradation of the city or its surroundings. While the proposed Plan would have a beneficial impact in some areas, it is expected that any adverse impacts on visual character would be less than significant.

### **Proposed General Plan Policies that Reduce the Impact**

#### *Land Use and Community Design Element Goals*

- 2-G.3 Promote infill development that makes efficient use of limited land supply, while ensuring compatibility and integration with existing uses. Ensure that infill properties develop with uses and development intensities supporting a cohesive development pattern.
- 2-G.4 Provide balanced neighborhoods with a variety of housing types and density ranges to meet the diverse demographic, economic and social needs of residents, while ensuring a cohesive urban form with careful regard for compatibility.
- 2-G.5 Protect the neighborhood atmosphere and identity of existing residential areas.
- 2-G.9 Accommodate a diversity of business establishments in appropriately-scaled settings, including large-scaled industrial and research and development establishments proximate to the Palomar-McClellan Airport, regionally-scaled shopping centers, and neighborhood-serving commercial centers with smaller-sized stores, restaurants and offices to meet shopping, recreation, and service needs of residents and visitors.
- 2-G.17 Ensure that the scale and character of new development is appropriate to the setting and intended use. Promote development that is scaled and sited to respect the natural terrain, where hills, public realm, parks, open space, trees, and distant vistas, rather than buildings, dominate the overall landscape, while developing the Village, Barrio, and commercial and industrial areas as concentrated urban-scaled nodes.
- 2-G.18 Ensure that new development fosters a sense of community and is designed with the focus on residents, including children, the disabled and the elderly, instead of the automobile by providing: safe, pedestrian-friendly, tree-lined streets; walkways to common destinations such as schools, bikeways, trails, parks and stores; homes that exhibit visual diversity, pedestrian-scale and prominence to the street; central gathering places; and recreation amenities for a variety of age groups.

- 2-G.21** In accordance with Proposition D, which was enacted by Carlsbad voters in 2006, create a unique, community-oriented agricultural and open space area along the Cannon Road corridor located east of Interstate 5 including the existing flower fields and strawberry fields (does not include the 50 acre parcel located adjacent to the east side of Interstate-5).

*Land Use and Community Design Element Policies*

- 2-P.11** Consider density and development right transfers in instances where a property owner is preserving open space in excess of normal city requirements for purposes of environmental enhancement, complying with the city’s Habitat Management Plan, or otherwise leaving developable property in its natural condition. The density/development potential of the property being left in open space shall be reserved for and used on the remainder of the project site or, through an agreement with the city, may be transferred to another property.
- 2-P.16** Except within the Village, commercial development shall occur in the form of discrete shopping centers, as opposed to generalized retail districts or linear “strip commercial” patterns (i.e. long corridors of commercial uses with numerous curb cuts, unsafe intersection spacing, disharmonious architectural styles, and a proliferation of signs).
- 2-P.20** Limit general commercial development to sites where such uses are appropriate and desirable, provided the development is designed to be architecturally unified and does not result in “strip commercial” development.
- 2-P.22** Build and operate commercial uses in such a way as to complement but not conflict with adjoining residential areas. This shall be accomplished by:
- a. Controlling lights, signage, and hours of operation to avoid adversely impacting surrounding uses.
  - b. Requiring adequate landscaped buffers between commercial and residential uses.
  - c. Providing bicycle and pedestrian links between commercial centers and surrounding residential uses, and providing bicycle-parking racks.
  - d. Ensuring building mass does not adversely impact surrounding residences.
- 2-P.23** Ensure that commercial development is designed to include:
- a. Integrated landscaping, parking, signs, and site and building design
  - b. Common ingress and egress, safe and convenient access and internal circulation, adequate off-street parking and loading facilities. Each com-

mercial site should be easily accessible by pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles to nearby residential development.

- c. Architecture that emphasizes establishing community identity while presenting tasteful, dignified and visually appealing designs compatible with their surroundings.
- d. A variety of courtyards and pedestrian ways, bicycle facilities, landscaped parking lots, and the use of harmonious architecture in the construction of buildings.

**2-P.24** When “community” tenants (see Table 2-4, Chapter 2 of the General Plan) are included in a local shopping center, they must be fully integrated into the overall function and design of the center, including the architecture, internal circulation and landscaping. The inclusion of such tenants should complement, not supplant the principal function of the center, which is to provide local goods and services.

- a. No community “anchor” tenant may be built as a stand-alone building. It must share (or appear to share) walls and its building facade with other tenants in the center.
- b. No community “anchor” tenant or secondary tenant may feature corporate architecture or logos (excluding signage) that is not integrated into the overall design of the center.

**2-P.33** Ensure the existing Flower Fields remain in flower production by utilizing all available methods and programs, including grants and other outside financial assistance.

**2-P.39** Ensure that the review of future projects places a high priority on the compatibility of adjacent land uses along the interface of different residential density and non-residential intensity categories. Special attention should be given to buffering and transitional methods, especially, when reviewing properties where different residential densities or land uses are involved.

**2-P.43** Evaluate each discretionary application for development of property with regard to the following specific criteria:

- a. Site design and layout of the proposed buildings in terms of size, height and location, to foster harmony with landscape and adjacent development.
- b. Site design and landscaping to provide buffers and screening where appropriate, conserve water, and reduce erosion and runoff.

- c. Building design that enhances neighborhood quality, and incorporates considerations of visual quality from key vantage points, such as major transportation corridors and intersections, and scenic vistas.
- d. Site and/or building design features that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the life of the project, as outlined in the Climate Action Plan.
- e. Provision of public and/or private usable open space and/or pathways designated in the Open Space, Conservation, Park and Recreation Element.
- f. Contributions to and extensions of existing systems of streets, foot or bicycle paths, trails, and the greenbelts provided for in the Mobility, and Open Space, Conservation, Park and Recreation elements of the General Plan.
- g. Compliance with the performance standards of the Growth Management Plan.
- h. Development proposals which are designed to provide safe, easy pedestrian and bicycle linkages to nearby transportation corridors.
- i. Provision of housing affordable to lower and/or moderate-income households.
- j. Policies and programs outlined in Local Coastal Programs where applicable.
- k. Consistency with applicable provisions of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for McClellan-Palomar Airport.

**2-P.48**

Improve beach access through a variety of mechanisms, including:

- a. In the Village and adjacent areas, identify the primary pedestrian connections and entrances to the beach through signage, a consistent landscaping scheme, change in paving materials, wider sidewalks and preservation of view corridors. Identify opportunities for additional access points as improved connectivity and facilities are provided, particularly if new beachfront activity areas are established.
- b. In the Barrio neighborhood, provide a pedestrian crossing under or over the rail corridor at Chestnut Avenue.
- c. Identify and implement more frequent pedestrian crossings along Carlsbad Boulevard. Identify and prioritize crossings from residential neighborhoods and existing bicycle and pedestrian trails.

- 2-P.60** In coordination with land owners, provide for the protection and preservation of environmental and agricultural resources in the [Cannon Road] corridor area by permitting only:
- a. Open space
  - b. Farming and other related agricultural support uses, including flower and strawberry production and commercial support uses.
  - c. Public trails
  - d. Active and passive parks, recreation and similar public and private facilities (except on the existing Flower Fields)
  - e. Electrical Transmission Facilities
- 2-P.65** The Village Master Plan and Design Manual is the guide for land use planning and design in the Village. Comprehensively update the Village Master Plan and Design Manual as necessary to implement the goals and policies of the General Plan.
- 2-P.67** Seek ways of strengthening existing establishments [in the Village] through façade and streetscape improvements, upgraded public and private landscaping and aesthetically upgraded signage and way-finding. Encourage outdoor dining, sidewalk cafes and limited outdoor displays of merchandise to enliven street-level activity.
- 2-P.69** Enhance connections with the Barrio through streetscape improvements—including street trees, improved sidewalks, lighting and signage—and potentially mixed-use development along Roosevelt Street.

### **Mitigation Measures**

None required.

### **Impact 3.1-3 Implementation of the proposed Carlsbad General Plan could result in new sources of light or glare in the area, but will not adversely affect day- or night-time views. (Less than Significant)**

New development resulting from the proposed General Plan would necessitate the use of additional light fixtures and would contribute to existing conditions of light and glare. New light sources may include residential and non-residential interior and exterior lighting, parking lot lighting, commercial signage lighting, and lamps for streetscape and public recreational areas. Any new development resulting from the proposed General Plan would take place in or near developed and urbanized areas, where moderate light and glare already exist, and would not be out of character with the urban environment. The proposed General Plan includes policies related to buffering between development and sensitive habitats, and between commercial, residential, and industrial uses.

Additionally, new development would also be subject to zoning ordinances regulating light and glare and development buffers, as well as Habitat Management Plan and Local Coastal Program requirements to mitigate light spillage into sensitive habitats and open spaces. With these measures in place, this impact is considered less than significant.

**Proposed General Plan Policies that Reduce the Impact**

*Land Use and Community Design Element Policies*

**2-P.29** Regulate industrial land uses on the basis of performance standards, including, but not limited to noise, air quality, odor, and glare.

In addition, proposed policy 2-P.22, listed under Impact 3.1-2, would also reduce potential impacts on day- or night-time views to less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

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