

## 5. Environmental Analysis

### 5.1 AESTHETICS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) discusses the potential impacts to the visual character of the Project Area and its surroundings associated with implementation of the proposed La Puerta School Site Specific Plan (Specific Plan). This section includes a discussion of the qualitative aesthetic characteristics of the environment that could be potentially degraded by the Specific Plan's implementation. The assessment of aesthetic impacts is subjective by nature. Aesthetics generally refer to the identification of visual resources and the quality of what can be seen as well as an overall visual perception of the environment. This analysis attempts to identify and objectively examine factors that contribute to the perception of aesthetic impacts. Potential aesthetic impacts can be evaluated by considering proposed grade separations, landform alteration, building setbacks, scale, massing, and landscaping features associated with the design of development accommodated by the Specific Plan.

#### 5.1.1 Environmental Setting

##### 5.1.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to aesthetics that are applicable to the Specific Plan are summarized below.

##### **State**

##### *Caltrans Scenic Highway Program*

In 1963, California's Scenic Highway Program was created to preserve and protect the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. The state laws governing this program are in the Streets and Highway Code, Sections 260 to 263, and Caltrans oversees the program. Caltrans defines a scenic highway as any freeway, highway, road, or other public right-of-way that traverses an area of exception scenic quality. Suitability for designation as a State Scenic Highway is based on three criteria described in Caltrans' Guidelines for Official Designation of Scenic Highways (2008) (Caltrans 2022).

- **Vividness.** The extent to which the landscape is memorable. This is associated with the distinctiveness, diversity, and contrast of visual elements.
- **Intactness.** The integrity of visual order and the extent to which the natural landscape is free from visual intrusions (e.g., buildings, structures, equipment, grading).
- **Unity.** The extent to which development is sensitive to and visually harmonious with the natural landscape.

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#### Local

##### *City of Claremont Municipal Code*

##### ***Chapter 16.081***

Chapter 16.081, SP Specific Plan District, of the Claremont Municipal Code, intends to provide greater specificity and flexibility in carrying out the Claremont General Plan that would be possible in other districts. This district is for areas that are subject to a specific plan adopted under Article 8 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Government Code (Section 65450 and following) and Chapter 16.318 of the Claremont Municipal Code.

Chapter 16.081 indicates the following uses and development permitted:

- The uses, types of development standards in an area zoned specific plan are those permitted by the specific plan adopted for that area. Each separate Specific Plan District and its accompanying specific plan shall be sequentially numbered.
- If land is placed in the Specific Plan District before a specific plan is adopted for that land, the standards of the immediately preceding zoning shall continue to apply until a specific plan is adopted, except uses and development in Specific Plans Areas #10, 12, and 13 shall be subject to the standards and regulations applicable to the CH Commercial Highway District.

##### ***Chapter 16.154***

Chapter 16.154, Environmental Protective Standards, of the Claremont Municipal Code, includes the following general outdoor lighting and glare requirements and requirements for single-family residential development. These standards will apply to development of the project site even with the adoption of the proposed Specific Plan.

##### *General Requirements*

- Outdoor light fixtures shall be designed, installed, and maintained so as to direct light only onto the property on which the light source is located. All outdoor lighting fixtures shall have prismatic diffusing lenses and/or appropriate shielding so the light source is not directly visible from the public right-of-way or abutting residential properties.

In residential areas, no mercury vapor utility yard lights or other light fixtures with high intensity discharge lamps or bulbs, which are not designed to limit or control where light is directed and/or which do not shield the light source from direct view from neighboring residential properties or public right-of-way, shall be permitted.

- Any indirect illumination of neighboring residential properties or uses shall not exceed 0.5 footcandles at the property line as measured horizontally and vertically from adjacent grade to a height of 14 feet.

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### *Single-Family Residential*

- No outdoor lighting fixtures for a single-family home or in any Single-Family Residential Districts shall be mounted more than 14 feet above adjacent grade on any wall or structure except when used to illuminate a second-story entryway, balcony, or outside stairway, in which case the fixture shall not be higher than eight feet above the floor of the second story.
- No outdoor lighting fixture in any single-family residential development shall be mounted more than eight feet above adjacent grade on any pole.
- Outdoor lighting for properties located within the RR (Rural Residential) Districts shall conform to the lighting requirements set forth in Chapter 16.007 of this title and in the Rural Claremont Architectural and Landscape Standards.
- No building permit shall be issued for outdoor lighting for a single-family home or in a Single-Family Residential District until a lighting proposal, submitted by the applicant, has been reviewed by the Director of Community Development for compliance with the standards of this section. The lighting proposal shall include the following information:
  - Site plan with proposed location of exterior lights.
  - Type, design, and size of light fixture.
  - Height of light fixture.
  - Type and total wattage of lamps.
  - Any additional information the Director deems necessary to determine compliance with the provisions of this section.

### *City of Claremont General Plan*

The following policies are from Chapter 2, Land Use Character, Community Character, and Heritage Preservation Element, of the Claremont General Plan and are applicable to the Specific Plan:

- **Policy 2-1.4.** Avoid development of isolated residential areas in the hillsides or other areas where such development would require significant infrastructure investment, adversely impact biotic resources, and/or create adverse visual impact.
- **Policy 2-2.2.** Promote neighborhood identity and conservation of individual neighborhood character.
- **Policy 2.2-4.** Protect neighborhoods from impacts from non-residential development.
- **Policy 2-5.1.** Insist on excellence in architectural design of new construction in City.
- **Policy 2-5.2.** Encourage residents to take pride in their neighborhoods and to participate with neighborhood groups in addressing issues affecting the neighborhoods.

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- **Policy 2-11.1.** Encourage a variety of architectural styles for new and renovated structures that reflect local architectural characteristics.
- **Policy 2-11.2.** Strengthen neighborhood identity with new development that is architecturally compatible with surrounding structures.
- **Policy 2-11.3.** Require that new construction, additions, renovations, and infill developments be sensitive to neighborhood context and building forms and scale.
- **Policy 2-11.4.** Prohibit new and large structures that compromise neighborhood quality. Work with the Architectural Commission to study and define design issues to safeguard neighborhoods.
- **Policy 2-11.5.** Encourage designs and building layout that promote defensible spaces; discourage lengthy, blank walls.
- **Policy 2-12.3.** Encourage new developments to incorporate drought-tolerant and native landscaping that is pedestrian-friendly, attractive, and consistent with the landscaped character of Claremont.
- **Policy 2-12.4.** Encourage all new development to preserve the natural topography of a site and existing mature trees.
- **Policy 2-13.1.** Maintain and enhance the City's collection of street trees, and improve Claremont's image of a "City with trees."
- **Policy 2-13.2.** Strive to ensure that street design appropriately pairs the aesthetic quality of a street with its functional aspects.

#### 5.1.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

##### Visual Character

As shown in Figure 3-1, *Aerial Photograph of Project Area*, the Project Area is vacant and contains undeveloped, disturbed land with the exception of a concrete slab on the northern portion of the site; ruderal vegetation including shrubs and trees are scattered throughout the site. Imported materials (mostly sand, gravels and cobbles, and scattered boulders) have been stockpiled over time in the southwest quadrant of the Project Area.

The Project Area is bounded by La Puerta Sports Park to west and residential uses to the north, east, and south. The area surrounding the Project Area is urbanized and is characterized as a residential neighborhood.

##### Visual Resources

As noted above, the Project Area is vacant and undeveloped, and its surroundings are developed with residential uses and the La Puerta Sports Park. Although the Project Area is vacant and contains some ruderal (weedy) vegetation, there are no visual resources onsite or in the immediate surrounding areas.

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#### Landform

The Project Area is relatively flat with gentle southwesterly slopes. The surrounding area is also generally flat with gentle slopes. There are no significant landforms (e.g., rock outcroppings, steep or rolling hills) on or around the Project Area.

#### Scenic Vistas and Corridors

Sycamore Canyon Park and Claremont Wilderness Park are located approximately 0.16-mile north/northwest and 1.25 miles north of the Project Area, respectively. Views of the hills at Sycamore Canyon Park and hillsides and mountains of Claremont Wilderness Park and San Gabriel Mountains can be seen from various vantage points of Project Area and its surroundings.

#### 5.1.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that, “except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099,” a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- AE-1 Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- AE-2 Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
- AE-3 In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.
- AE-4 Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

#### 5.1.3 La Puerta School Site Specific Plan Regulations and Guidelines

The following regulations and guidelines can be found in Chapter 2, Land Use Regulations, and Chapter 4, Design Guidelines, of the La Puerta School Site Specific Plan:

##### 5.1.3.1 CHAPTER 2: LAND USE REGULATIONS

Table 5.1-1, *Proposed Specific Plan Development Standards*, in Section 5.1, *Aesthetics*, of this DEIR includes the development standards for the Project Area as listed in the proposed Specific Plan.

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#### 5.1.3.2 CHAPTER 4: DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following methods, which are stated in Chapter 4 of the Specific Plan, are required to be implemented to achieve the design goal of providing a neighborhood design that borrows from the classic design elements found in Claremont's quality neighborhoods:

- Provide pedestrian connectivity through the neighborhood.
- Orient homes towards Forbes Avenue so as to fuse this new enclave with the existing neighborhood.
- Provide architecture that minimizes the garage and pushes the living space forward, maximizing the elevation aesthetic.
- All primary homes shall have private outdoor living space (yards, courtyards, and/or porches are encouraged).

For residential lot design, the Specific Plan would allow lots to be configured as either a “z-lot” configuration or as conventional rectangular lots (see Figures 3-7, *Conceptual Z-lot Configuration*, and 3-8, *Conceptual Conventional Lot Configuration*). The z-lot configuration is a design that enables efficiency in overall project design and development while providing similar advantages of conventional single-family lots.

To accommodate the City's preference for creating an appearance more similar to the homes on the east side of Forbes Avenue, all homes in the proposed Specific Plan along Forbes Avenue would be required to be designed as traditional lots. Homes along the interior streets are permitted to be designed in the z-lot configuration.

Regarding architecture, the design guidelines allow for flexibility. It is not the intent of the design guidelines to require that all of the identified design components and elements be incorporated into the actual building designs. Rather, the guidelines serve as a “palette” of character defining elements that can be used to create authentic and distinct architecture. Additional styles are permitted to be proposed however, they are required to follow the same principles and attention to detail as the specific styles provided. Newly introduced styles are required to be compatible with the overall Project Area community aesthetic. The following architectural styles are included in the Specific Plan:

- American Cottage
- California Bungalow
- California Craftsman
- Spanish

For landscape design, the Specific Plan's landscape concept seeks to unify new development in the Project Area. The Specific Plan calls for the planting of streets trees, some of which are of mature size at installation. Onsite landscaping would include the use of native and naturalized plant materials. The Specific Plan includes a detailed planting palette for the Project Area. The primary goal is to incorporate species that are already well established

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in Claremont, including a variety of traditional trees and shrubs historically found in the area. For an overview of the landscape palette, refer to Table 4-1 of the Specific Plan.

#### 5.1.4 Environmental Impacts

The following impact analysis addresses thresholds of significance for which the Notice of Preparation disclosed potentially significant impacts. The applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

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**Impact 5.1-1: Development accommodated by the Specific Plan would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. [Threshold AE-1]**

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**Impact Analysis:** For purposes of determining significance under CEQA, a scenic vista is generally considered a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. Some scenic vistas are officially designated by public agencies, and some are informally designated by tourist guides. Vistas provide visual access or panoramic views to a large geographic area and are generally located at a point where surrounding views are greater than one mile away. Panoramic views are usually associated with vantage points over a section of urban or natural areas that provides a geographic orientation not commonly available. Examples of panoramic views might include an urban skyline, valley, mountain range, a large open space area, the ocean, or other water bodies. A substantial adverse effect to a scenic vista is one that degrades the view from such a designated view spot.

The City of Claremont considers the Claremont Wilderness Park, natural hillside areas, San Gabriel Mountains, Sycamore Canyon Park, views from Thompson Creek Trail, and from City streets toward these hillside features to be scenic vistas or view corridors (Claremont 2006a). There are no officially designated corridors, vistas, or viewing areas in or around the Project Area. Views of the hills of Sycamore Canyon Park (approximately 0.16-mile to the north/northwest) and hillsides and mountains of the Claremont Wilderness Park (approximately 1.25 miles to the north) and San Gabriel Mountains are available from the Project Area and its surroundings. It should be noted that views of these hills and mountains are partially obstructed from different vantage points in and around the Project Area by existing mature trees and residential structures.

Forbes Avenue, which runs north/south and forms the eastern Project Area boundary, offers backdrop views of the Claremont Wilderness Park and San Gabriel Mountains to motorists and passersby traveling north on Forbes Avenue. Development accommodated by the Specific Plan would not obstruct views of the wilderness park or mountains from motorists or passersby traveling north on Forbes Avenue (a City public street), as development of the Project Area would occur on the west side of Forbes Avenue and the viewshed is to the north.

Forbes Avenue also offers backdrop views of Sycamore Canyon Park to motorists and passersby traveling north on Forbes Avenue; views of the park area and features are afforded to the northwest. Development accommodated by the Specific Plan would obstruct views of Sycamore Canyon Park from motorists or passersby traveling north on Forbes Avenue (which forms the western Project Area boundary), as two-story single-family homes would front onto Forbes Avenue. However, views of Sycamore Canyon Park are already

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partially obstructed from certain vantage points along Forbes Avenue by mature trees within and abutting the Project Area. Forbes Avenue is not designated as a view corridor in the Claremont General Plan.

Views of Claremont Wilderness Park and San Gabriel Mountains are also available from approximately seven single-family homes that abut the southern boundary of the Project Area. As shown in Figure 3-2, *Conceptual Site Plan*, the proposed design of the new residential community would include a landscape buffer and a private street along the southern Project Area boundary. The introduction of two-story single-family structures and trees through the Project Area would partially obstruct views of the Claremont Wilderness Park and San Gabriel Mountains. However, the provision of a landscape buffer and private street immediately adjacent to the southern Project Area boundary would help minimize the obstruction of views of these scenic features by providing an ample gap between the existing single-family homes to the south and the first row of residential homes within the Project Area. The provision of two north-south private streets and the north-south linear spaces that would be provided between the single-family homes (see Figure 3-2) would provide view windows towards these scenic features. Private views of the mountains from residences are not protected by the Claremont General Plan or any City ordinance.

Views of the Claremont Wilderness Park and San Gabriel Mountains from Thompson Creek Trail (which forms the northern Project Area boundary) would not be impeded or impacted in any way as a result of development that would be accommodated by the Specific Plan, as development would occur within the boundaries of the Project Area, which is south of the Thompson Creek Trail.

Based on the preceding, impacts to scenic vistas would be less than significant.

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**Impact 5.1-2: Implementation of the Specific Plan would not alter scenic resources within a state scenic highway. [Threshold AE-2]**

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**Impact Analysis:** Scenic highways are a unique component of the region's circulation system as they traverse areas of scenic or aesthetic value. According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), a highway may be designated as scenic depending on how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view (Caltrans 2022a).

According to the California State Scenic Highways mapping system of Caltrans, there are no scenic highways on or near the Project Area or in the City of Claremont. The nearest eligible State Scenic Highway is State Route (SR) 39, approximately 10 miles northwest of the Project Area in the San Gabriel Mountains. The nearest official designated State Scenic Highway is SR-2, approximately 20 miles northwest of the Project Area in the San Gabriel Mountains (Caltrans 2022). in an urbanized area of the City (see Figure) Due to distance and intervening land uses, no portion of the Project Area is visible from either of the aforementioned scenic highways. There are no rock outcroppings or historic buildings within the Project Area.

Therefore, implementation of the Specific Plan would not alter scenic resources within a state scenic highway. No impact would occur.



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**Impact 5.1-3: Development accommodated by the Specific Plan would alter the visual appearance of the Project Area, but not in a manner that would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. [Threshold AE-3]**

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**Impact Analysis:** Aesthetics generally refers to the identification of visual resources and their quality, as well as an overall visual perception of the environment. A project is generally considered to have a significant aesthetic impact if it substantially changes the quality or character of the project such that the site becomes visually incompatible with or visually unexpected in its surroundings.

The Project Area is located in an urbanized area as defined by CEQA Guidelines 15191(m)(1). For an incorporated city, “Urbanized area” means the city that either by itself or in combination with two contiguous incorporated cities has a population of at least 100,000 persons. In 2020, the City of Claremont had a population of approximately 37,266 persons (see Table 5.12-1, *City of Claremont and Los Angeles County Population, 2010–2020*, Section 5.12, *Population and Housing*). As such, Claremont meets the criteria for an urbanized area.

The Project Area is in an area of Claremont that is characterized by flat topography and urban development. Existing land use and conditions of the Project Area and its surroundings are depicted in Figure 3-2, *Aerial Photograph of Project Area*. As shown in Figure 3-2, the Project Area is vacant and contains undeveloped, disturbed land with the exception of a concrete slab on the northern portion of the site; ruderal vegetation including shrubs and trees are scattered throughout the site. Additionally, imported materials (mostly sand, gravels and cobbles, and scattered boulders) have been stockpiled over time in the southwest quadrant of the Project Area. Surrounding land uses consist mainly of residential uses and the La Puerta Sports Park.

Following is a discussion of the potential impact to the visual character or quality of the Project Area and its surroundings resulting from the construction and operational phases of development accommodated by the Specific Plan.

### Project Construction Phase

Development accommodated by the Specific Plan would result in construction activities that would temporarily change the appearance of the Project Area and lead to a permanent change in the visual character of the Project Area. Construction activities would involve site clearing, grading, building, and site improvements. Construction staging areas, which may include earth stockpiling, storage of equipment and supplies, and related activities would contribute to a generally “disturbed site,” which can be considered a visual impact. However, these effects would be typical of any site in the City that is developed or redeveloped.

Project development is anticipated to be completed in three phases—clearing, grading, and construction. Construction activities may be unsightly during the site preparation and construction phases, but they are not considered significant because they are temporary, occurring only during construction and resolved with the finished constructed homes.

Additionally, and where necessary, construction areas would be temporarily fenced and screened for security purposes and to help shield the construction areas. The typical fencing to be provided (i.e., chain-link fencing with mesh fabric or similar screening material) would screen views of the construction sites, including

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stockpiles, graded areas, construction equipment, and building materials. Large equipment such as cement mixers, backhoes, dump trucks, and paving machines may be visible even if the staging areas for building materials are fenced and screened. However, due to the temporary nature of construction, development accommodated by the Specific Plan would not have a significant effect on the existing visual character or quality of the Project Area and its surroundings. Therefore, construction-related impacts would be less than significant.

#### Project Operation Phase

The Specific Plan would accommodate the development of detached single-family homes within the Project Area, along with all associated access, circulation, infrastructure, and hardscape/landscape improvements, which are described in detail in Chapter 3, *Project Description*. All proposed homes would be two stories (up to a maximum of 35 feet in height) and include a two-car garage, driveway, and private yard.

The Specific Plan provides design guidelines intended to ensure that the future residential development within the Project Area is visually compatible with surrounding land uses and establishes detailed development standards that address land use compatibility. The Specific Plan would promote context-sensitive design within the Project Area through implementation of the design guidelines and development standards. Compliance with the design guidelines and development standards would be ensured through the City's development review and building plan check process.

Specifically, future development within the Project Area would be required to comply with design guidelines of Specific Plan. The design guidelines provide the design framework for streetscape, landscape and buildings to convey a unified and unique community character for the Project Area. They establish a direction to ensure a high-quality and aesthetically cohesive environment. As stated in the Specific Plan, the guidelines can accommodate changes in lifestyles, consumer preferences, economic conditions, community designs and the marketplace, as necessary.

The following methods, which are stated in Chapter 4 of the Specific Plan, are included to achieve the design goal of providing a neighborhood design that borrows from the classic design elements found in Claremont's existing neighborhoods:

- Provide pedestrian connectivity through the neighborhood.
- Orient homes towards Forbes Avenue so as to fuse this new enclave with the existing neighborhood.
- Provide architecture that minimizes the garage and pushes the living space forward, maximizing the elevation aesthetic.
- All primary homes shall have private outdoor living space (yards, courtyards, and/or porches are encouraged).

For residential lot design, the Specific Plan would allow lots to be configured as either a "z-lot" configuration or as conventional rectangular lots (see Figures 3-7, *Conceptual Z-lot Configuration*, and 3-8, *Conceptual Conventional Lot Configuration*).

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Also, to accommodate the City's preference for a streetscape similar to the homes to the east, across Forbes Avenue, all homes proposed along Forbes Avenue would be required to be designed as traditional lots. Homes along the interior streets are permitted to be designed in the z-lot configuration.

Regarding architecture, the design guidelines allow for flexibility. The design guidelines do not require that all of the identified design components and elements be incorporated into the actual building designs. Rather, the guidelines serve as a "palette" of character defining elements that can be used to create authentic and distinct architecture. Additional styles are permitted; however, they are required to follow the same principles and attention to detail as the specific styles provided. Newly introduced styles are required to be compatible with the overall Project Area community aesthetic. The following architectural styles are included in the Specific Plan:

- American Cottage
- California Bungalow
- California Craftsman
- Spanish

For landscape design, the Specific Plan's landscape concept seeks to unify new development in the Project Area. The Specific Plan calls for the planting of streets trees, some of which are required to be a mature size at installation. Onsite landscaping would include the use of native and naturalized plant materials. The Specific Plan includes a detailed planting palette for the Project Area. The primary goal is to incorporate species that are already well established in Claremont, including a variety of traditional trees and shrubs historically found in the area.

Table 3-1, *Proposed Specific Plan Development Standards*, includes the development standards applicable to future residential development, such as setbacks, density, building heights, private open space, and so forth, for the Project Area as provided in the Specific Plan. Compliance with the development standards of the Specific Plan would ensure that all new residential development that would be accommodated by the Specific Plan is built to share similar character and style to unify the overall Project Area and be compatible/complimentary with the surrounding neighborhoods. For example, minimum and maximum setbacks and building heights have been established in the Specific Plan to create a consistent street scene and visual character.

Residential homes in the Project Area's surroundings are one and two stories in height, and include driveways, garages, and yards. The Specific Plan would result in homes that have similar architectural styles and features as the homes in the surrounding area and would not degrade the visual character or quality of the surrounding area, but instead, create a more compatible character compared to existing conditions (given that the Project Area is currently undeveloped and vacant).

Development accommodated by the Specific Plan would be consistent with applicable policies of Chapter 2, Land Use Character, Community Character, and Heritage Preservation Element, of the Claremont General Plan. For example, Policy 2-2.4 calls for the protection of neighborhoods from non-residential uses; the Specific Plan would introduce residential uses within an existing neighborhood. Policy 2-11.1 encourages a variety of architectural styles for new structures that reflect the local architectural characteristics; the Specific Plan would

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accommodate the construction of a variety of architectural styles, including American Cottage, California Bungalow, California Craftsman, and Spanish. Policy 2-11.2 calls for strengthening neighborhood identity with new development that is architecturally compatible with surrounding structures and Policy 2-11.3 requires new construction and infill developments to be sensitive to neighborhood context and building forms and scale; the Specific Plan would accommodate the construction of homes that are similar in architectural style and building form with existing homes in the neighborhood.

Based on the preceding, operational-related impacts would be less than significant.

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**Impact 5.1-4: Development accommodated by the Specific Plan would generate additional light and glare sources in and around the Project Area, but not in a manner that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. [Threshold AE-4]**

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**Impact Analysis:** Lighting effects are associated with the use of artificial light during the hours of darkness. There are two primary sources of light: 1) light emanating from building interiors passing through windows and openings, and 2) light from exterior sources (i.e., street lighting, architectural building illumination, security lighting, parking lot lighting, landscape lighting, and signage).

Excessive light and/or glare can impair vision, cause a nuisance, affect sleep patterns, and generate safety hazards when experienced by drivers. Uses such as residences, elderly care facilities, schools, and hotels are considered light sensitive, since occupants have expectations of privacy during evening hours and may be subject to disturbance by bright light sources. Light spill or trespass is considered a nuisance and is typically defined as the presence of unwanted light on properties adjacent to the property being illuminated.

The degree of illumination may vary widely depending on the amount of light generated, height of the light source, presence of barriers or obstructions, type of light source, and weather conditions.

Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence, caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light on surfaces of buildings or objects, including highly polished surfaces such as glass windows or reflective materials and, to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Perceived glare is the unwanted and potentially objectionable sensation experienced by a person as they look directly into the light source of a luminaire.

Daytime glare is common in urban areas and is typically associated with buildings with exterior façades largely or entirely composed of highly reflective glass. Daytime glare can also be generated by light reflecting off passing or parked cars. Glare is produced during evening and nighttime hours by the reflection of artificial light sources such as automobile headlights. Glare generation is typically related to either moving vehicles or sun angles, although glare resulting from reflected sunlight can occur regularly at certain times of the day and year. Excessive glare not only impedes visibility, but also increases the ambient heat reflectivity in a given area. Glare-sensitive uses include residences, hotels, transportation corridors, and aircraft landing corridors.

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the Project Area is in an urbanized area of Claremont and is surrounded by residential uses and the La Puerta Sports Park. The Project Area is currently vacant and undeveloped and contains no sources of light or glare. However, there are numerous sources of light and glare surrounding the Project Area.

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Following is a discussion of the potential day- and nighttime light and glare impacts in and around the Project Area resulting from the construction and operational phases of development that would be accommodated by the Specific Plan.

#### **Project Construction Phase**

Construction activities associated with development accommodated by the Specific Plan would be limited to daytime hours. With the exception of illumination during nighttime hours for safety and security purposes, no other nighttime lighting would be required until development is operational. Nighttime security lighting would only be used for the duration of the temporary construction process. Additionally, construction activities are not anticipated to result in flat or expansive, shiny surfaces that would reflect sunlight or cause other natural glare. Therefore, no short-term, construction-related impacts associated with light and glare would occur. Impacts would be less than significant.

#### **Project Operation Phase**

##### *Daytime Glare*

Compared to existing conditions of the Project Area (vacant and undeveloped), development accommodated by the Specific Plan would increase sources of daytime glare in and around the Project Area. Development would include building materials, architectural treatments/elements, and non-architectural elements that could cause daytime glare, but not to such an extent that they would result in a significant impact. For example, the architectural treatments of the proposed buildings would include building materials such as stucco walls, tile or concrete tile roofs, glazing (glass windows) and other decorative elements (see building elevations and renderings in Figures 3-3, *Conceptual Z-Lot Configuration*, and 3-4, *Conceptual Conventional Lot Configuration*), as well as mechanical elements (e.g., HVAC equipment, gas and electric meters, exterior landscape/lighting equipment). Daytime glare could also result from cars parked in the Project Area.

With the exception of the glass windows, the building materials and architectural treatments would be nonreflective and would therefore not create substantial day or nighttime glare. Additionally, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 2, Land Use Regulations, of the Specific Plan, mechanical equipment would be required to be screened from public view and where feasible, be located in the side or rear yards. Glare from the aforementioned sources is typical of residential neighborhoods and would be similar to glare from the surrounding residential uses.

Therefore, implementation of the Specific Plan would not substantially increase daytime glare and impacts would be less than significant.

##### *Nighttime Light and Glare*

Under existing conditions, the Project Area is undeveloped and void of any sources of artificial lighting. The Specific Plan would accommodate the development of a new residential community that would introduce new sources of artificial light and glare in and around the Project Area. Nighttime light sources would include exterior lighting of residences/garages and landscaping and interior lighting for the new residential homes.

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New sources of glare may also result from nighttime lighting and light shining on the exterior glazing (windows and doors) and finished surfaces the residential structures in the Project Area.

Although development accommodated by the Specific Plan would introduce new light sources to the Project Area, the proposed light sources would be similar to light sources in the surrounding residential areas. Considering the existing sources of lighting in the surrounding vicinity, the amount and intensity of nighttime lighting proposed in the Project Area would not be substantially greater than existing lighting. It is unlikely that conventional lighting and illuminated operations under buildout of the Specific Plan would discernibly, much less adversely, affect ambient light conditions.

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 2, Land Use Regulations, and Chapter 4, Design Standards and Guidelines, of the Specific Plan, outdoor light fixtures are required to be designed, installed, and maintained so as to direct light only onto the property on which the light source is located. For example, Section 4.12, Lighting, of Chapter 4 indicates that outdoor lights shall be functional and not create light spill, and that they shall be located and shielded so as not to impact the adjacent property owners. Also, development accommodated by the Specific Plan would be required to be in compliance with Chapter 16.154, Environmental Protective Standards, of the Claremont Municipal Code, which would ensure light and glare impacts are reduced.

All proposed exterior lighting would be designed, arranged, installed, directed, shielded, operated, and maintained in such a manner as to contain direct illumination onsite and prevent light and glare impacts offsite in accordance with the provisions of the Specific Plan and Claremont Municipal Code, preventing excess illumination and light spillover onto surrounding residential and nonresidential land uses and/or roadways. Through the City's established site plan review processes, the City would ensure that final design of development within the Project Area complies with the requirements of the Specific Plan and Claremont Municipal Code and thus precludes or effectively minimizes potential light/glare overspill onto adjacent properties or roadways.

Therefore, implementation of the Specific Plan would not significantly increase nighttime light and glare and impacts would be less than significant.

#### 5.1.5 Cumulative Impacts

The methodology used for the cumulative impact analysis is described in Chapter 4.0, *Environmental Setting*, of this DEIR. Aesthetic impacts are localized to the Project Area and its immediate surroundings. No development or redevelopment projects are currently approved, planned, or anticipated in the immediate vicinity of the Project Area. Therefore, there are no cumulative projects that are close enough to the Project Area to create cumulative impacts regarding views, visual character, and light and glare. Each cumulative project in other areas of the City would be required to adhere to applicable requirements of the Claremont Municipal Code and implement the City's architectural design guidelines, as applicable. Therefore, the contribution to cumulative aesthetic impacts as a result of development accommodated by the Specific Plan is less than cumulatively considerable, and therefore, less than cumulatively significant.

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#### 5.1.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Upon implementation of regulatory requirements, the following impacts would be less than significant: 5.1-1, 5.1-2, 5.1-3, and 5.1-4.

#### 5.1.7 Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts related to aesthetics were identified and no mitigation measures are required.

#### 5.1.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

No significant adverse impacts related to aesthetics were identified.

#### 5.1.9 References

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2022a. Scenic Highways: Frequently Asked Questions. <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways-faq2>.

———. 2022b. Scenic Highways. <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>.

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