

Appendix D. Visual Impact Analysis

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VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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From: Kristin Blackson, Harris & Associates
Subject: Removal of the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area from the Coastal Height Limit
Date: April 20, 2022

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VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Removal of the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area from the Coastal Height Limit

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This visual impact analysis has been prepared to assess the impacts of the removal of the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area (CP area) from the Coastal Height Limit (project). This action would amend the San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) to allow buildings to be built above 30 feet in height in the CP area. This measure does not approve any specific development and is limited to the CP area boundaries, and does not change the underlying base zone regulations. Any proposed future development must comply with all governing laws.

The purpose of this visual impact analysis is to evaluate and document the potential visual impacts resulting from implementation of the 2018 Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan (2018 Community Plan) under this action (i.e., removal of the 30-foot building height limit). This technical memorandum addresses the maximum height scenario for the CP area. The analysis discusses the existing visual environment, applicable planning documents, key observation points, viewer types, and anticipated viewer response. Potential visual impacts are assessed based on a hypothetical change to the visual environment through project implementation consistent with approved plans.

Section 1.0, Introduction, describes the project location and the regulatory setting that guides future development in the CP area. Section 2.0, Visual Environment, documents the existing visual resources and types of viewers in the CP area viewshed and describes the visual impact analysis methodology. The degree of visual change that is expected to result from development of buildings at the maximum height limit and an analysis of potential impacts are provided in Section 3.0, Visual Impacts. A summary of visual effects is presented in Section 4.0, Visual Impact Analysis Summary. Section 5.0, References, lists the references used for this technical memorandum.

1.1 Project Location

The CP area is in west-central City of San Diego (City), north of the San Diego International Airport (SDIA), south of Mission Bay Park, between the northern end of the Peninsula Community Plan area to the west and the Old Town San Diego Community Plan area to the east as shown on Figure 1, Project Location. The CP area encompasses roughly 1,324 acres of relatively flat land as shown on Figure 2, Existing Topography, and is generally characterized as a mix of commercial and industrial areas, with some residential areas, as shown on Figure 3, Existing Land Uses. The tallest existing structures in the CP area include the Education First building at approximately 140 feet in height and the Pechanga Arena at approximately 70 feet in height.

Generally, with the exception of projects on property owned by other government agencies, development in the CP area is subject to the development regulations of the underlying base zone as specified in the SDMC. In particular, standards that affect the building envelope include the maximum structure height and maximum floor area ratio. Table 1, Base Zone Development Regulations, presents the base zone, applicable maximum building height, and floor area ratio. This visual impact analysis analyzes a maximum height scenario using the maximum structure height for each base zone. The Coastal Height Limit does not apply to federal property, i.e. the Marine Corps Recruit Depot and Navy properties, shown on Figure 4, Government-Owned Properties. Nonetheless, plans for redevelopment of the Naval Base Point Loma

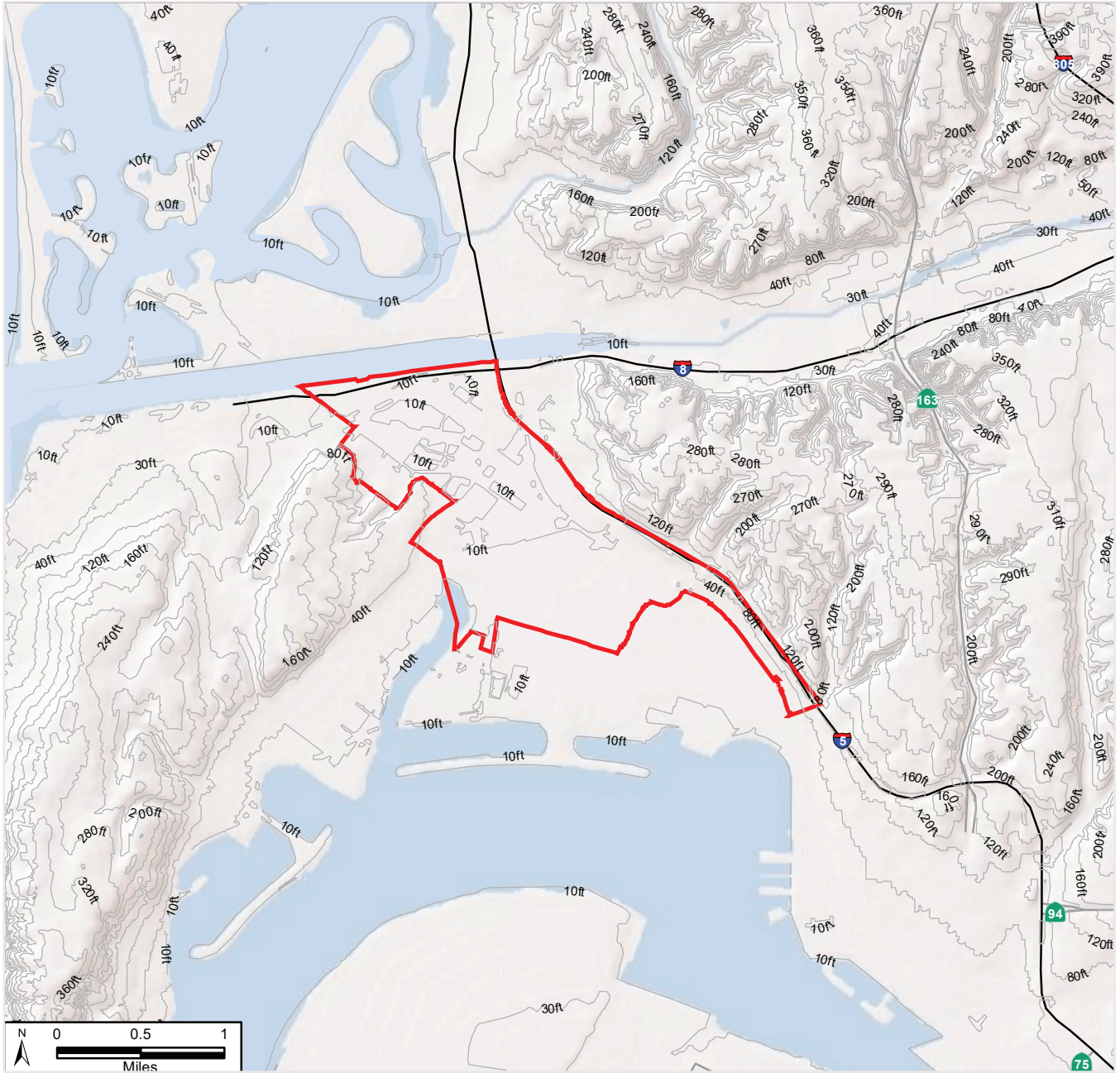
Figure 1. Project Location



Source: SanGIS Imagery 2017

- Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area
- Community Planning Area Boundary
- Transit Stop

Figure 2. Existing Topography



Source: San GIS 2022; SanGIS Imagery 2017



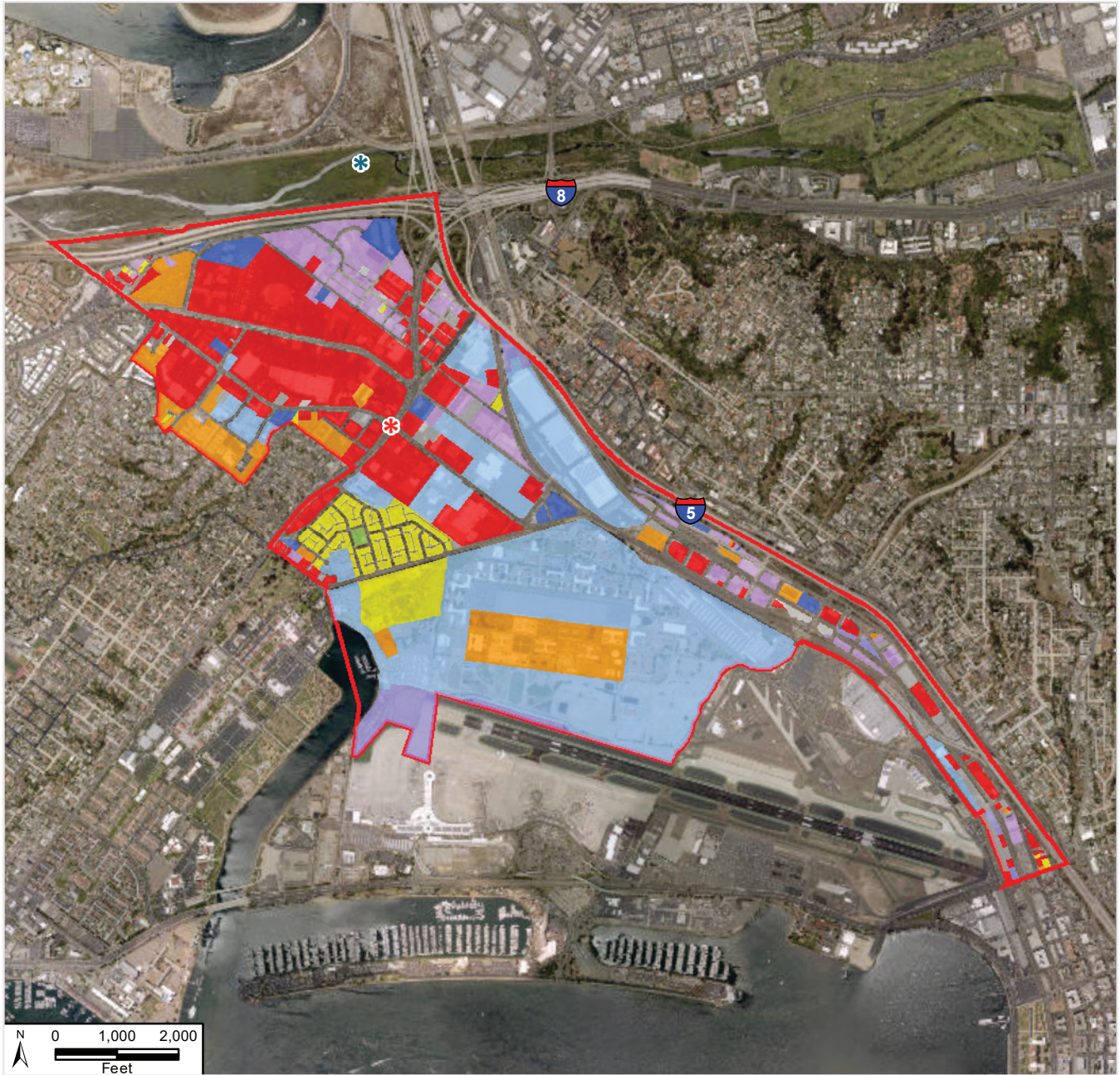
-  Contour Lines at 10-foot Intervals
-  Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area

Figure 3. Existing Land Uses



Source: San GIS 2022; SanGIS Imagery 2017

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
|  Single Family Residential |  Open Space |  Education First Building |
|  Multi-Family Residential |  Industrial |  Pechanga Sports Arena |
|  Commercial |  Transportation |  Midway-Pacific Highway
Community Planning Area |
|  Office |  Utilities | |
|  Institutional |  Vacant | |

Figure 4. Government Owned Properties



Source: San GIS 2022; SanGIS Imagery 2017











- | | | |
|--|---|---|
|  City of San Diego |  San Diego Metropolitan Transit System |  State of California |
|  County of San Diego |  San Diego Unified Port District |  U.S. Navy |
|  San Diego Community College District |  San Diego Unified School District |  U.S. Marine Corps |
| | |  Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area |

Figure 5. Maximum Building Height Limit



Source: San GIS 2022; SanGIS Imagery 2017

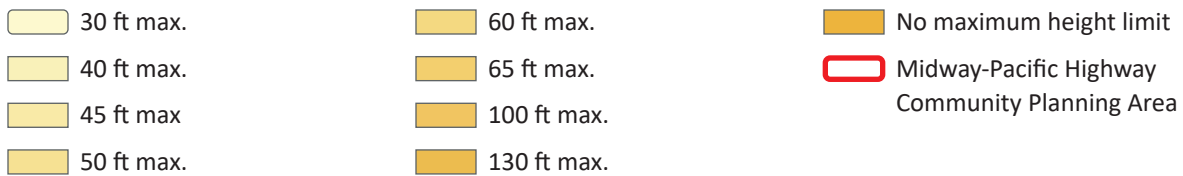


Table 1. Base Zone Development Regulations

BASE ZONE	ZONE NAME	MAX. HEIGHT	MAX. FLOOR-AREA-RATIO
RM-1-1	Residential-Multifamily-1-1	30 ft	0.75
RM-2-5	Residential-Multifamily-2-5	40 ft	1.35
RM-3-8	Residential-Multifamily-3-8	50 ft	2.25
RM-3-9	Residential-Multifamily-3-9	60 ft	2.70*
RM-4-10	Residential-Multifamily-4-10	NA	1.00
CN-1-6	Commercial-Neighborhood-1-8	65 ft	2.20*
CO-3-1	Commercial-Office-3-1	50 ft	3.00*
CC-1-3	Commercial-Community-1-3	45 ft	1.50*
CC-2-5	Commercial-Community-2-5	100 ft	4.00*
CC-3-6	Commercial-Community-3-6	65 ft	2.00
CC-3-7	Commercial-Community-3-7	65 ft	4.50*
CC-3-8	Commercial-Community-3-8	100 ft	2.00
CC-3-9	Commercial-Community-3-9	NA	5.00*
IS-1-1	Industrial-Small Scale-1-1	130 ft	2.00
IP-2-1	Industrial-Park-2-1	NA	2.00

Note: Asterisk (*) indicates where the maximum floor-area-ratio (FAR) includes an FAR bonus for residential mixed-use as specified in the City of San Diego's Municipal Code Chapter 13 Article 1.

Table 2. Assumed Scenario Buildout Capacity

BASE ZONE	TOTAL PARCEL AREA	ASSUMED FLOORS	TOTAL BUILDING AREA
RM-1-1	1,315,818 sf	3	No change
RM-2-5	305,239 sf	4	191,952 sf
RM-3-8	1,484,624 sf	5	2,857,981 sf
RM-3-9	68,037 sf	6	177,660 sf
RM-4-10	39,457 sf	9	129,600 sf
CN-1-6	421,145 sf	6	873,558 sf
CO-3-1	3,791,546 sf	4	5,768,089 ¹ sf
CC-1-3	5,802,570 sf	4	8,403,536 sf
CC-2-5	79,199 sf	9	198,810 sf
CC-3-6	5,399,599 sf	6	10,803,168 sf
CC-3-7	135,827 sf	6	591,318 sf
CC-3-8	3,362,416 sf	9	7,828,204 sf
CC-3-9	394,223 sf	9	1,935,657 sf
IS-1-1	1,482,668 sf	12	2,399,064 sf
IP-2-1	See Note 2.		

Note: 1. Does not include the Navy OTC development square footage for a portion of the CO-3-1 area owned by the U.S. Navy.

2. Navy OTC development includes the area zoned for IP-2-1 and a portion of the area zoned CO-3-1. The combined development total for these areas is 198,118,686 sf as described under Alternative 4 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Navy Old Town Campus Revitalization.

Old Town Campus (OTC) have been released for public review and, as such, the scenario analyzed in this visual impact analysis includes the highest intensity alternative analyzed under the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the OTC project (May 2021) for simulation purposes only. The scenario assumes no change on the Marine Corps Recruit Depot and Liberty Military Housing – Gateway Village. The maximum allowable building height for the base zones in the CP area is shown on Figure 5, Maximum Building Height Limit. The removal of the 30-foot height limit would not result in a change to total allowable buildout intensity in the CP area. Table 2, Assumed Scenario Buildout Capacity, presents the assumed buildout for the hypothetical scenario analyzed in this visual impact analysis.

1.2 Regulatory Setting

The following section briefly discusses relevant ordinances, plans, and guidance documents that influence or direct the building envelope of future development in the CP area.

SAN DIEGO GENERAL PLAN

The 2008 City of San Diego General Plan Update (General Plan) provides policies in the Land Use and Community Planning Element and the Urban Design Element on building height and views pertinent to this visual impact analysis as follows:

- LU-G.5. Implement the height standards used by the FAA [Federal Aviation Administration] as defined by Code of Federal Regulations Title 14, Part 77 through development regulations and zoning ordinances.
- UD-A.3.I. Protect views from public roadways and parklands to natural canyons, resource areas, and scenic vistas.
- UD-A.3.m. Preserve views and view corridors along and/or into waterfront areas from the public right-of-way by decreasing the heights of buildings as they approach the shoreline, where possible.
- UD-C.1.e.3. Provide standards [for mixed-use development] that address bulk, mass, articulation, height, and transition issues such as the interface with surrounding or adjacent development and uses, and minimize negative impacts on the community.

SAN DIEGO MUNICIPAL CODE (SDMC)

The SDMC implements the 2018 Community Plan policies through zoning, development regulations, and other controls pertaining to land use density and intensity, building massing, landscape, streetscape, and other development characteristics. Generally, with the exception of projects on property owned by other government agencies, development in the CP area is subject to the SDMC. Development regulations for underlying base zones, including maximum structure height, are in Chapter 13, Article 1 Base Zones.

MIDWAY-PACIFIC HIGHWAY COMMUNITY PLAN

An update to the previous 1991 Community Plan was adopted by the San Diego City Council in 2018. The 2018 Community Plan establishes a vision with policies to guide the future growth and development in the CP area consistent with the General Plan; provide strategies and implementing actions to accomplish the vision; provide guidance to design and evaluate development proposals and improvement projects; and provide the basis for plan implementation, including zoning, development regulations, and a public facilities financing plan.

The 2018 Community Plan policies are implemented through zoning and development regulations of the SDMC, and the Coastal Height Limit Overlay Zone limits the height of new buildings to protect coastal views. In the 2018 Community Plan, policies related to height are specified only for the Kettner District in the southern portion of the CP area and require compliance with development standards in the SDIA's Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) for noise and safety purposes.

CITY OF SAN DIEGO COMPLETE COMMUNITIES: HOUSING SOLUTIONS AND MOBILITY CHOICES

The City approved Complete Communities: Housing Solutions and Mobility Choice, on November 9, 2020. Complete Communities: Housing Solutions (Housing Solutions program) is an optional affordable housing incentive program aimed at encouraging the building of residences near high-frequency transit. In exchange for new development that provides affordable housing units and neighborhood-serving infrastructure improvements, additional building square footage and height beyond what is otherwise permitted in the respective base zone and 2018 Community Plan is allowed. The majority of the CP area is within a Transit Priority Area and, thus, the Housing Solutions program is applicable to zones in the CP area that allow multi-family residential uses.

SENATE BILL 743

Senate Bill 743, signed into law on September 2013, changed how transportation impacts were evaluated under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and limited the extent to which aesthetics and parking are defined as impacts under CEQA. Specifically, Section 21099 (d)(1) of the California Public Resources Code states that a project's aesthetic and parking impacts shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment if:

- The project is a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center project, and
- The project is located on an infill site within a Transit Priority Area.

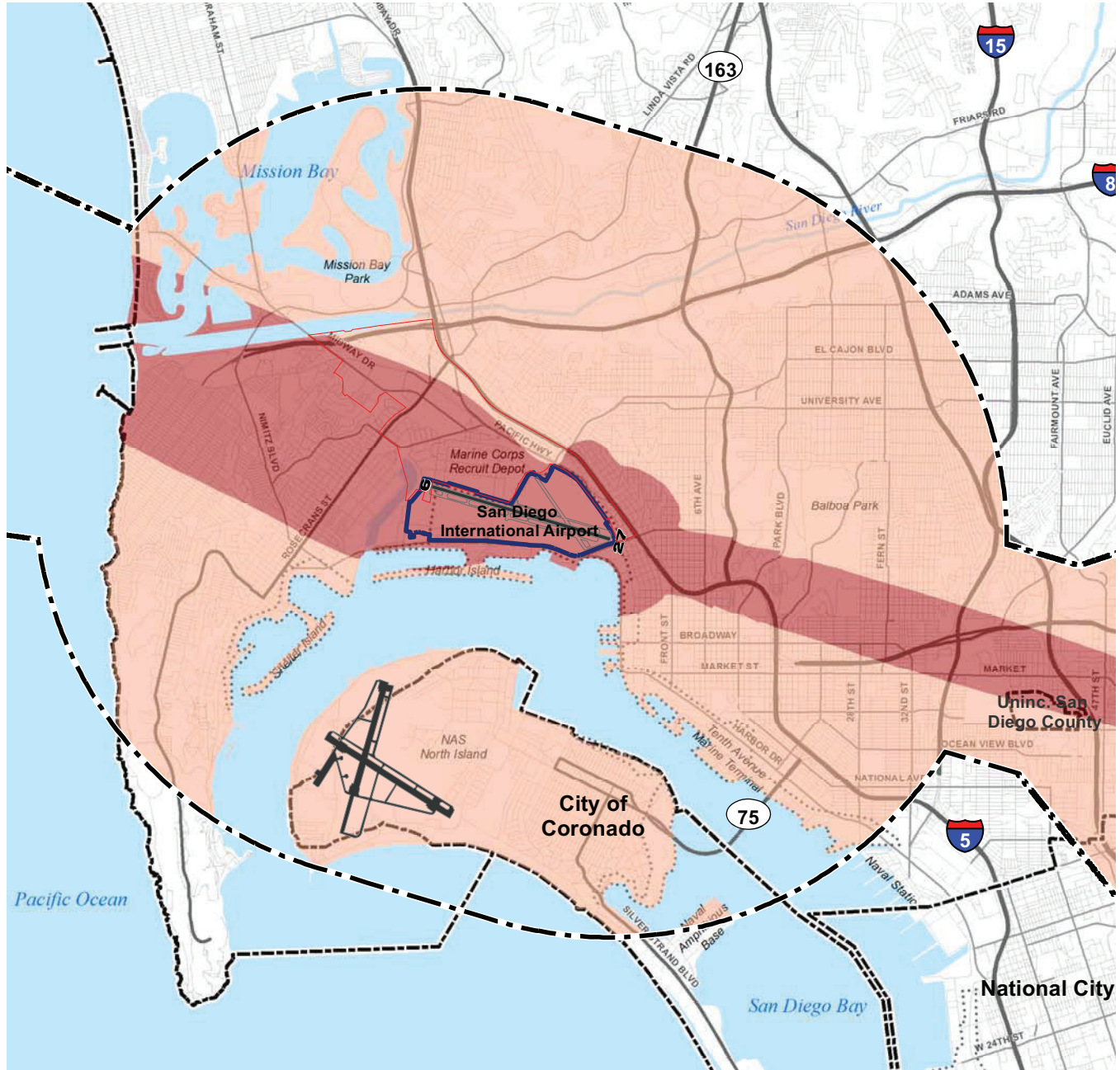
Most of the CP area is within a Transit Priority Area as it is within one-half mile of a planned transit center hub and includes mixed-use residential and employment uses per the 2018 Community Plan and SDMC.

SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S AIRPORT LAND USE COMPATIBILITY PLAN

The SDIA's ALUCP includes policies and standards that provide guidance on future development and redevelopment in the area surrounding the SDIA to promote compatibility between the airport and surrounding future land uses. Airspace protection policies and standards address height standards, and the ALUCP requires Federal Aviation Administration notification for projects exceeding certain heights that could potentially create a hazard or obstruction to air navigation.

Pertinent to this visual impact analysis, specific height limitations apply to areas at the ends of the airport runway with Threshold Siting Surfaces. The CP area is in Review Areas 1 and 2 of the Airport Influence Area as shown on Figure 6, SDIA Airport Influence Area, which requires Airport Land Use Commission review for land use plans and regulations proposing increases in height limits.

Figure 6. SDIA Airport Influence Area



Source: San GIS 2022; SanGIS Imagery 2017

- Airport Influence Area (AIA)
- Review Area 1
- Review Area 2
- San Diego International Airport Property Boundary
- Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area

1.3 Assessment Method

The methodology used to prepare this visual impact analysis is described below:

1. The visual environment and existing landscape characteristic/urban districts in the CP area were defined and documented. For the project, the visual environment was evaluated for the hypothetical development condition assuming maximum building heights.
2. Applicable planning documents were reviewed for pertinent policy, regulations, and guidance information.
3. Key observation points for the visual impact analysis were selected based on public viewing locations and typical viewing conditions from outside the CP area.
4. The type and degree of visual changes expected to result from buildout of the CP area at maximum building height were documented.

The geographic limits for the visual impact analysis consist of the viewshed boundary, or the area from which the project can be viewed. The viewshed boundary was determined through analysis of aerial maps. The character of the existing visual environment was then documented through field reconnaissance, photographic records, and aerial photograph interpretation. Viewer groups within the viewshed boundary were determined through field visits, land use maps, and other planning documents.

For the purposes of this analysis, several key views were selected to represent public views from both public streets and publicly accessible areas based on the major viewer groups potentially affected by the project. Key views were determined through analysis of site visits, aerial maps, and digital imagery of street views to show perspectives toward the CP area. A total of 10 key views were selected for analysis.

This visual impact analysis analyzes the project under a hypothetical scenario in which the CP area would be built out to the maximum building height limit per the development standards in the SDMC. The development scenario for buildout with maximum building height was interpreted from approved planning documents, including the 2018 Community Plan and the SDMC. It also assumes that U.S. Navy-owned properties would be built out at the highest intensity scenario (Alternative 4) identified under the Navy OTC Revitalization Environmental Impact Statement. The purpose of analyzing the maximum building height limit is to assess the worst-case scenario from a visual perspective as a result of the project. Because the Coastal Height Limit does not apply to federal property, the future Navy OTC development is not considered part of the project. As such, its potential impacts are addressed in this visual impact analysis but not included in the final determination of significance.

A three-dimensional wire-frame model of the maximum height scenario was created using computer-aided design software for two-dimensional and three-dimensional drawing. Imaging software was used to align the computer model to the site photographs. The computer model was then superimposed over photographs from each key view, and minor camera alignment changes were made to all known reference points within view. Buildings were color coded to distinguish the 30 ft height limit (red) and the Navy OTC development (gray). Estrada Land Planning developed the model and created the rendering perspectives for all 10 key views.

The computer-generated perspectives were used to analyze visual impacts from the 10 key views. Visual impacts resulting from development of the CP area were evaluated by viewing the existing visual character of the landscape from each key view and assessing the degree to which the construction of buildings at maximum height limits would change those views.

2.0 VISUAL ENVIRONMENT

2.1 Project Viewshed

A public viewshed is defined as the area visible from an observer's viewpoint, including the screening effects of intermediate vegetation and structures. Viewshed components include the underlying landform/topography (e.g., foothills, mountains, and flatlands) and the overlaying land cover (e.g., water features, vegetation, cultural sites, and buildings). For purposes of this visual impact analysis, the project viewshed generally includes the CP area, Old Town Community Plan area and portions of the Uptown and Peninsula Community Plan areas and Mission Bay Park. The SDIA is also within the project viewshed, including abutting portions of San Diego Bay.

The topography varies throughout the viewshed with elevated terrains in the Uptown and Peninsula Community Plan areas and a portion of Old Town Community Plan area. These Community Plan areas generally comprise residential neighborhoods and recreational open spaces.

The quality of views from surrounding areas toward the CP area varies from one location to another within the viewshed for many reasons: undulating terrain, urbanized level of development, mature vegetation growth, and elevation of roadways. Coastal views from surrounding residential areas are generally partially to completely blocked by vegetation, hillsides, buildings, or elevated roadways.

2.2 Viewers

Viewers are people whose views of the landscape may be altered by the project. For this visual impact analysis, viewers consisting of residents and visitors, including recreational users and motorists, to the areas in the project viewshed. The most sensitive viewers are typically residents in neighborhoods adjacent to the CP area and those at higher elevations than the CP area, such as in the Uptown and Peninsula Community Plan areas. Temporary viewers, such as recreational users and motorists, are considered less sensitive than residents due to the shorter length of exposure to the views and their volition in choosing to visit, or not, locations with view impacts.

3.0 VISUAL IMPACTS

Visual impacts are associated with changes in either the human-made or natural environment, can be short or long term in duration, and can be beneficial or detrimental. Changes to views during construction of the project is considered a short-term visual impact. Long-term changes are associated with altering the natural topography; building permanent structures (e.g., buildings, bridges, walls); and removing vegetation, including mature trees. The focus of this analysis is on long-term physical changes that are permanent in nature.

The evaluation of visual effects is largely subjective and depends on the degree of alteration, scenic quality of the area disturbed, and sensitivity of the viewers:

- The degree of alteration refers to the extent of change to the natural landform and the introduction of urban elements into an existing natural environment while acknowledging any unique topographical formations or natural landmarks.
- Sensitive viewers are those who use the outdoor environment or value a scenic viewpoint to enhance their daily activity and are typically residents, recreational users, or motorists in scenic areas.

For the purposes of this analysis, sight distance is defined as foreground (0–0.25 mile), midground (0.25–3 miles), and background (3 miles and farther).

3.1 Key Views

It is not feasible to analyze all views in which the project will be seen; therefore, 10 representative views were selected that demonstrate the change in views from surrounding areas adjacent to the CP area. For each of the 10 key views, the visual impact analysis evaluates the existing view and the hypothetical view resulting from the buildout of the CP area at maximum building height limits. The representative key views are shown on Figure 7, Key Views, and described in Table 3, Key Views. The views were taken from locations accessible to the public, including in residential neighborhoods and parks/trails, and in consideration of the various types of viewers. These key views also represent the viewer groups that have the highest potential to be affected by the project.

3.2 Impacts to Viewers

The visual impacts of the project to viewers were determined based on the degree of change to the existing setting based on the height of buildings that would be viewed as a result of the project; the degree to which these features would obstruct, diminish, or dominate existing view qualities; and the sensitivity of the viewer.

The 10 key views were assessed using the following criteria:

- **Low:** Minor adverse change in visual quality caused by the project only slightly affecting the resource. Viewers are not sensitive to change or the viewers are at a great distance from the change.
- **Moderate:** Major adverse change in visual quality caused by the project. Existing landscaping provides some coverage to help maintain visual quality. Viewers are not highly sensitive to change or the viewers are not in close vicinity of the change.
- **High:** Major change in visual quality caused by the project. Viewers are sensitive to change or the viewers are in close vicinity of the change.

The final determination of significance considered the existing visual quality and the anticipated viewer response. As noted above, the potential impacts of the future Navy OTC development are addressed in this visual impact analysis but not included in the final determination of significance because the Navy OTC development site is not part of the project. The following analyses discuss the visual impacts that would occur at each key view as a result of the project.

Figure 7. Key Views





-  Key View (cone indicates general direction of view)
-  Midway-Pacific Highway Community Planning Area

Table 3. Key Views

KEY VIEW	LOCATION & DIRECTION	VIEWER	VISIBLE FEATURES
1	View south from the Sea World Drive Bridge	Motorist	Road, vegetation, buildings
2	View south from Fiesta Island	Recreational User, Motorist	Road, water vegetation
3	View southeast from Old Sea World Drive	Recreational User, Motorist	Open space, vegetation, buildings
4	View east from Robb Field	Recreational User	Road, open space, vegetation, buildings
5	View southeast from San Diego River Trail	Recreational User	Road, vegetation, buildings, Arena
6	View east from the Famosa Slough	Resident, Recreational User, Motorist	Road, open space, vegetation, buildings
7	View west from Presidio Park	Recreational User	Road, parking, vegetation, buildings
8	View southwest from Old Town Historic Park	Recreational User	Open space, vegetation, buildings
9	View west from Andrews Street	Resident	Road, parking, vegetation, buildings, SDIA
10	View northeast from Liberty Station Park	Recreational User	Water, vegetation, boathouse, buildings

KEY VIEW 1: VIEW SOUTH FROM SEA WORLD DRIVE BRIDGE

Key View 1 represents the scene that is viewed looking south from the Sea World Drive bridge overpass where it crosses Interstate (I-) 5 toward the CP area. Views mainly consist of the freeway and landscaping adjacent to the freeway. Some buildings are visible to the southwest; however, the horizon is generally level.



Key Map

Resource Change

Visual changes are generally in the background views. Foreground and midground views would not change. Taller buildings are visible along the horizon, primarily toward the southeast, with development of the CP area at maximum building height. The most visible buildings are the Navy OTC buildings (shown in gray) in the center-left background view and buildings in the Sports Arena area (shown in beige) in the center-right background view.

Viewer Sensitivity

Key View 1 represents a typical view from a southbound I-5 traveler. Viewers will notice a change in the view; however, the level of impact on view quality would depend on distance from their vantage point and the density of traffic. There would be an increase in sense of direction and destination given the concentrated presence of taller buildings in the direction travelers are headed. Overall viewer response would be low to moderate depending on vantage point.

Significance Determination

Low to moderate level of change. This impact is potentially significant.



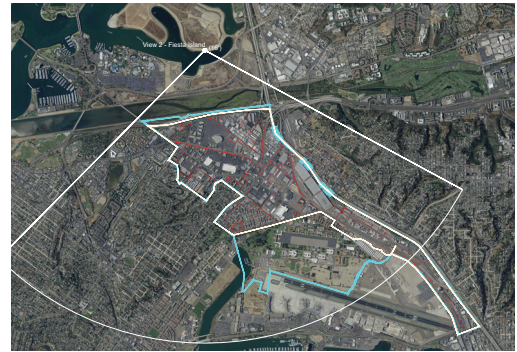
Existing Condition



Buildout Scenario

KEY VIEW 2: VIEW SOUTH FROM FIESTA ISLAND

Key View 2 represents the scene that is viewed looking south from the southern edge of Fiesta Island in Mission Bay toward the CP area. An embankment along the northern edge of Fiesta Island Road partially obstructs eye-level views from farther north in Fiesta Island toward the CP area. Scenery at this key view mainly consists of the water in Mission Bay and landscaping across the water at South Shores Park and palm trees along Sea World Drive. The Pechanga Arena is visible in the center background view.



Key Map

Resource Change

Visual changes occur in the background view with taller buildings primarily toward the southeastern horizon upon development of the CP area at maximum building height. The most noticeable potential changes would be seen in the left and center background portions of the view. Building heights above 40 feet can be seen from this key view, which changes the view quality of the horizon. The development would not obstruct views beyond the CP area due to the distance of the vantage point.

Viewer Sensitivity

Key View 2 represents a typical view from travelers (motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians) on Fiesta Island Road. Despite the change in horizon, the development would neither obstruct views beyond the CP area due to the distance of the vantage point nor change the views in the immediate vicinity, which attracts recreational users to the area. Overall viewer response would be moderate.

Significance Determination

Moderate level of change. This impact is potentially significant.



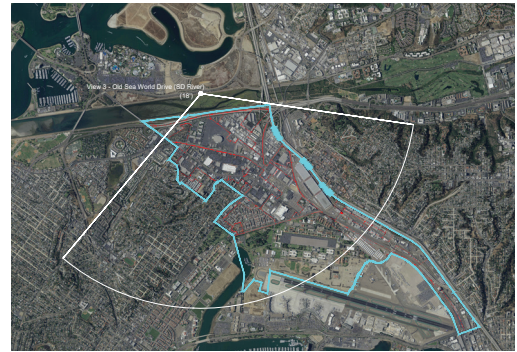
Existing Condition



Buildout Scenario

KEY VIEW 3: VIEW SOUTHEAST FROM OLD SEA WORLD DRIVE

Key View 3 represents the scene that is viewed from Old Sea World Drive, Sea World Drive, and the South Shores area of Mission Bay Park toward the CP area. Views comprise some landscaping, low-rise buildings directly across the San Diego River, and residential buildings at higher elevations in the Peninsula and Uptown Community Plan areas. The skyline of Downtown San Diego can be seen farther in the distance toward the southeast.



Key Map

Resource Change

Visual changes are in the midground views with significant potential changes of the horizon toward the CP area. The building heights would obstruct views toward Downtown San Diego and of higher elevation neighborhoods in the Peninsula and Uptown Community Plan areas. The tallest buildings in the Navy OTC development are visible, but the massing of the buildings in the Sports Arena area have the greatest potential impact on views from this vantage point.

Viewer Sensitivity

Key View 1 represents a typical view from recreational users and motorists, who are considered temporary visitors to the area, on Old Sea World Drive, motorists on Sea World Drive, and recreational users at South Shores Park. These viewers will notice a significant change in the view due to the proximity and heights of the development in the CP area. Overall viewer response would be high.

Significance Determination

High level of change. This impact is significant.



Existing Condition



Buildout Scenario

KEY VIEW 4: VIEW EAST FROM ROBB ATHLETIC FIELD

Key View 4 represents the scene that is viewed from Robb Athletic Field in the Ocean Beach Community Plan area as they look eastward toward the CP area. Foreground and midground views consist of open space and roadways. Background views consist primarily of mature vegetation that hides existing buildings to the east. The CP area is in the center and right background views.



Key Map

Resource Change

Visual changes in the background views show portions of buildings in the center-right view above 80 feet in height. The combination of undulating terrain and existing mature trees work to partially cover the buildings and lessen the impact to the skyline. The tallest buildings visible are within the Navy OTC development.

Viewer Sensitivity

Key View 4 represents a typical view from recreational users at Robb Athletic Field. Views in the immediate vicinity would not change, and due to the distance of the view and natural landscaping partially blocking the buildings, the development would not be highly noticeable. Overall viewer response would be low.

Significance Determination

Low level of change. This impact is less than significant.



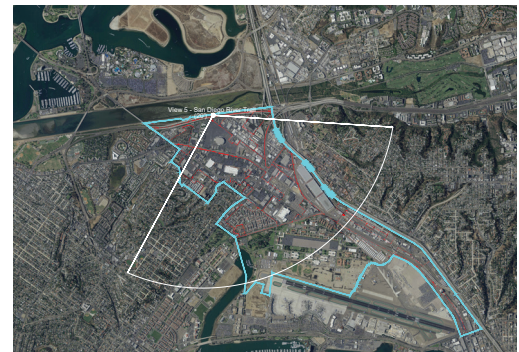
Existing Condition



Buildout Scenario

KEY VIEW 5: VIEW SOUTHEAST FROM SAN DIEGO RIVER TRAIL

Key View 5 represents the scene that is viewed from the San Diego River Trail that runs along the northern edge of the CP area. I-8 is slightly elevated between the trail to the north and development to the south. Existing views looking south primarily show building tops due to the lower elevation south of the I-8. The Pechanga Arena is the tallest existing building seen in the center background view. Industrial and commercial development is visible in the left and right background view along with palm trees south of I-8.



Key Map

Resource Change

The view would change significantly with development in the CP area at maximum height limits. Pechanga Arena would no longer be visible due to the new intervening development that could be constructed adjacent to the I-8, obstructing it from the Key View 5 location. The skyline would primarily comprise new development of 65- to 100-foot-tall buildings.

Viewer Sensitivity

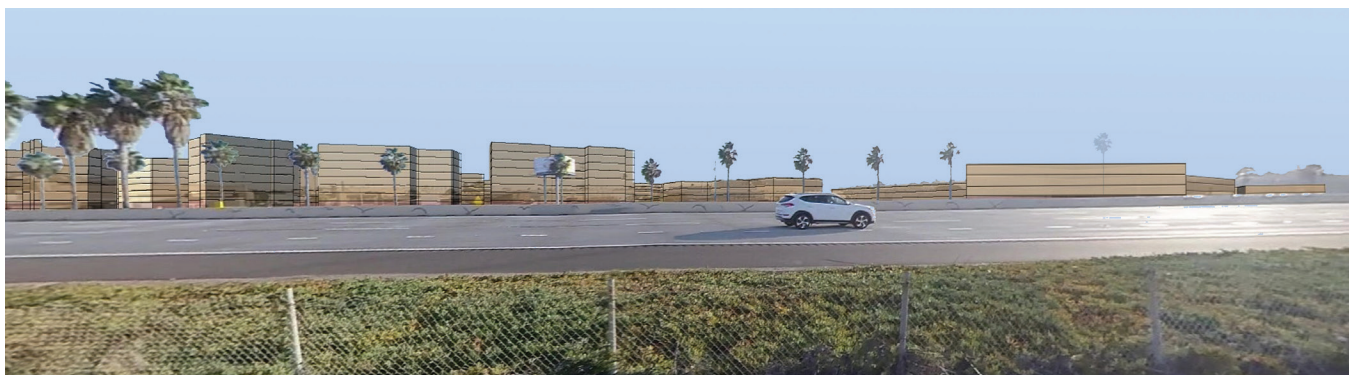
Key View 5 represents a typical view from recreational users on the San Diego River Trail. These viewers will notice a significant change in the view due to the proximity of the development in the CP area and the additional height of the buildings. Overall viewer response would be high.

Significance Determination

High level of change. This impact is significant.



Existing Condition



Buildout Scenario

KEY VIEW 6: VIEW EAST FROM FAMOSA SLOUGH STATE MARINE CONSERVATION AREA

Key View 6 represents the scene that is viewed from the Famosa Slough State Marine Conservation Area in the Peninsula Community Plan area along Famosa Boulevard looking east toward the CP area and West Point Loma Boulevard. The area between the slough and the CP area is built out with low-rise residential and commercial buildings shown in the midground and background views.



Key Map

Resource Change

Visual changes would occur in the background views past existing buildings and landscaping. Higher floors of the buildings in the Navy OTC development can be seen in the center background view but do not significantly change the view quality. Elevated terrain toward the southeast hides views of taller buildings in the industrial zones in the southerly portions of the CP area.

Viewer Sensitivity

Key View 6 represents a typical view from visitors to the Famosa Slough State Marine Conservation Area, a wetlands preserve and open space area within a built environment, and of residents, pedestrians, and motorists in the vicinity of West Point Loma Boulevard. These viewers will not notice a significant change in the view due to the elevated terrain of the Peninsula Community Plan area and the existing built environment. Overall viewer response would be low.

Significance Determination

Low level of change. This impact is less than significant.



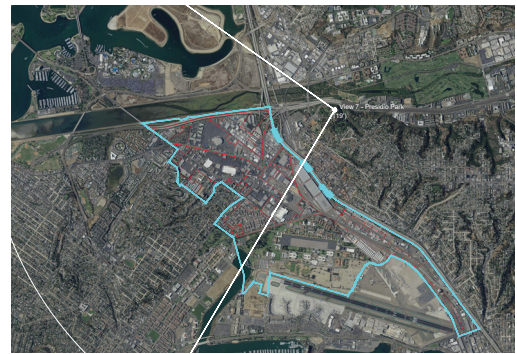
Existing Condition



Buildout Scenario

KEY VIEW 7: VIEW WEST FROM PRESIDIO PARK

Key View 7 represents the scene that is viewed from Presidio Park in the Old Town San Diego Community Plan area westward toward the CP area. The park lies atop a hill at a higher elevation than the CP area. The slopes in the midground view consist of dense, mature vegetation, roads, and parking areas within the park premises. Intermittent distant views of lower-lying development are visible in the background view in the Peninsula Community Plan area.



Key Map

Resource Change

Visual changes are primarily in the background views showing buildings of over 100 feet in height. There is little change to the horizon toward the CP area, with the exception of the Navy OTC buildings to the left of the view. Taller buildings in the Navy OTC development would be visible from some locations with wide open spaces. In general, the dense and mature foliage provides coverage of much of the built environment despite the elevated terrain at this vantage point.

Viewer Sensitivity

Key View 7 represents a typical view from a recreational user looking west at Presidio Park. Viewers will not notice a significant change in the view due to the distance, mature landscaping, and existing developed built environment below and west of the park. Overall viewer response would be low.

Significance Determination

Low level of change. This impact is less than significant.



Existing Condition



Buildout Scenario

KEY VIEW 8: VIEW SOUTHWEST FROM OLD TOWN SAN DIEGO STATE HISTORIC PARK

Key View 8 represents the scene that is viewed looking southwest from the Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. The park is adjacent to the easterly edge of the CP area in the Old Town San Diego Community Plan area. Existing views are generally limited to the immediate vicinity of the park. The mature landscaping and elevation of I-5 generally obstructs views of existing buildings in the CP area.



Key Map

Resource Change

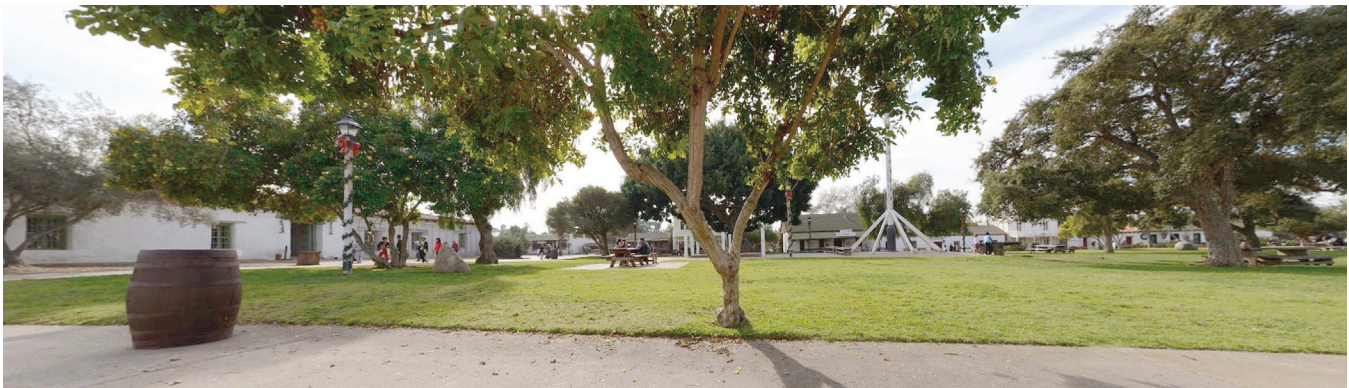
Visual changes would occur in the midground views, especially looking southwest toward the Navy OTC site. At the maximum 350-foot height, the large massing of the buildings in the Navy OTC development would, for the most part, intrude on views of the open sky, and future development that could occur in the CP area would be mostly obscured by the Navy OTC development.

Viewer Sensitivity

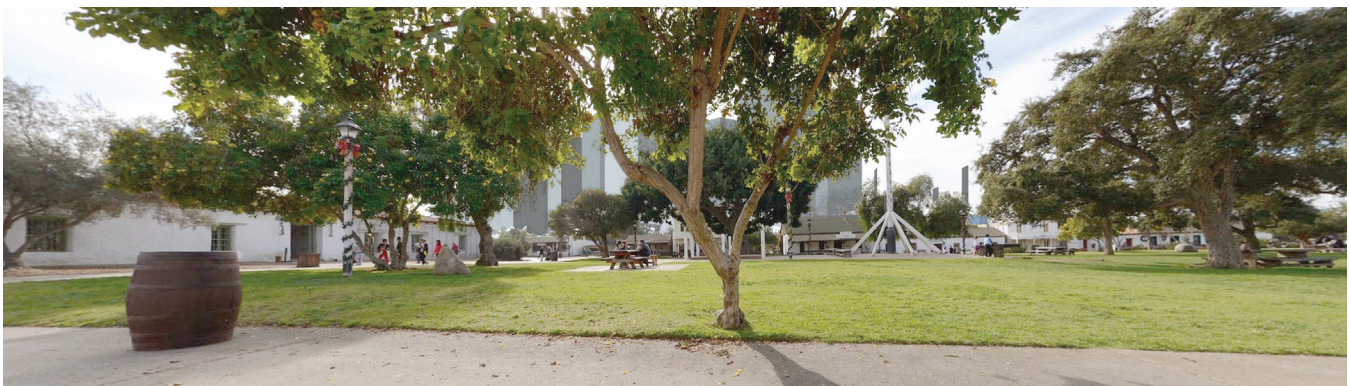
Key View 8 represents a typical view from a visitor at the Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. These viewers will notice a significant change in the view due to the proximity of the Navy OTC development in the CP area. However, the Navy OTC development is not part of the project because the City lacks land use jurisdiction over federal government property. Thus, overall viewer response to future development with the potential to be affected by the project would be low.

Significance Determination

Low level of change. This impact is less than significant.



Existing Condition



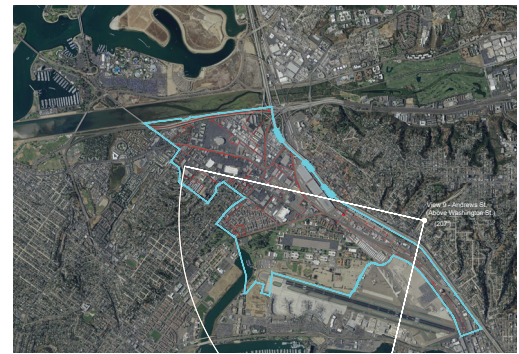
Buildout Scenario

KEY VIEW 9: VIEW WEST FROM ANDREWS STREET

Key View 9 represents the scene that is viewed from Andrews Street immediately south of West Washington Street in the Uptown Community Plan area. The residential neighborhood that the view is in is on higher ground than the CP area and has unobstructed views of the CP area, SDIA, and Peninsula Community Plan area.

Resource Change

Visual changes are visible in the midground views, which currently encompass existing development of low-rise structures, large parking surfaces, and the SDIA. Development in the CP area would change northwestern views due to building heights of 100 feet or more west of I-5. The Navy OTC development up to 350 feet in height would be visible in the right-midground view. However, the majority of the background view of the airport and the Peninsula Community Plan area would be unchanged.



Key Map

Viewer Sensitivity

Key View 9 represents a typical view from a resident in the western Uptown Community Plan area. These viewers will notice a change in the built landscape; however, the change may not be perceived as detrimental compared to the existing views. Overall viewer response would be low to moderate.

Significance Determination

Low to moderate level of change. This impact is potentially significant.



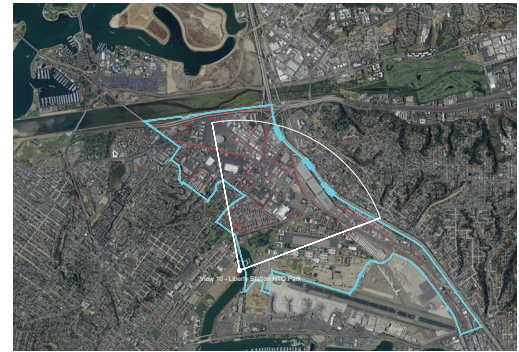
Existing Condition



Buildout Scenario

KEY VIEW 10: VIEW NORTHEAST FROM LIBERTY STATION NAVAL TRAINING CENTER PARK

Key View 10 represents the scene that is viewed from Liberty Station Naval Training Center Park just west of the CP area in the Peninsula Community Plan area. The park is a large open space with eye-level view of the CP area. The foreground view is of water in a channel that connects to San Diego Bay to the south with Marine Corps Recruit Depot Boathouse and Marina and mature landscaping in the midground view, which partially obscure existing low-rise buildings in the background view.



Key Map

Resource Change

Visual changes would occur in the background views primarily to the skyline in the center and right view areas. The changes are greater toward the north and south where buildings have a maximum height of 100 feet or more. The highest buildings visible are the Navy OTC development with heights up to 350 feet. The development would not additionally obstruct views beyond the CP area.

Viewer Sensitivity

Key View 10 represents a typical view from a visitor to the Liberty Station Naval Training Center Park. These viewers will notice a change in the view along the skyline; however, due to distance and existing vegetation between this vantage point and the larger buildings in the CP area, the overall viewer response would be low.

Significance Determination

Low level of change. This impact is less than significant.



Existing Condition



Buildout Scenario

4.0 VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS SUMMARY

This visual impact analysis analyzes the project under a hypothetical scenario in which the CP area would be built out to the maximum building height limit per the development standards in the SDMC. U.S. Navy-owned properties would be built out at the highest intensity scenario (Alternative 4) identified under the Navy OTC Revitalization Environmental Impact Statement. As noted above, the potential impacts of the future Navy OTC development are addressed in this visual impact analysis but not included in the final determination of significance because the Navy OTC development site is not part of the project.

The visual impact of these taller buildings, built on relatively low ground, would have both negative and positive effects on the scenic quality of the immediate area. Negative effects include the intrusive nature of taller structures on existing views and the change in character of the neighborhoods to a more urban built environment. Positive effects include the creation of a visually distinct urban district and perceived revitalization of the CP area. Table 4, Summary of Visual Impacts, summarizes the visual impact analysis findings based on resources changes, viewer sensitivity, and significance of changes for all 10 key views.

Table 4. Summary of Visual Impacts

KEY VIEW	RESOURCE CHANGE	VIEWER SENSITIVITY	SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATION
1	Moderate	Low	Potentially Significant
2	Moderate	Moderate	Potentially Significant
3	High	High	Significant
4	Low	Low	Less than Significant
5	High	High	Significant
6	Low	Low	Less than Significant
7	Low	Low	Less than Significant
8	Low	Low	Less than Significant
9	Moderate	Moderate	Potentially Significant
10	Low	Low	Less than Significant

5.0 REFERENCES

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